

## **Four Pillars of Meeting for Business**

by [Debbie Humphries](#) on September 1, 2009, Friends Journal

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The Quaker tradition challenges us to relate to others in ways that call forth and resonate with the good within them, however deeply it may be buried. Quakerism is an optimistic tradition, as we believe that hearts can change and the good can be raised up. The potential for growth in the Spirit is there for each of us. Our worship and our business practice, at their core, are about creating the conditions for hearts to change. By using these corporate practices we are also learning how to act toward others in ways that honor that of God in them.....

### **Business Meeting Decisions Will Be by Sense of the Meeting**

One of the assumptions in Quaker business practice is that something more than the best wisdom of the group will be achieved—that those present are listening for something more than what each person thinks. Working toward a sense of the meeting is about listening for what Spirit would have us do in this instance. It is not a negotiated settlement or compromise, giving each person some of what they want. Rather, it is a *moving toward*, which does not require logical agreement.

Barry Morley's Pendle Hill Pamphlet, *Beyond Consensus: Salvaging a Sense of the Meeting*, is a wonderful description and invitation into the power of waiting and listening for a sense of the meeting.

At its best, Quaker business builds the worshiping community, strengthens relationships, and encourages each of us to grow. When our corporate decisions are faithful to this Spirit, they not only change the participants; they hold the seeds that change the world.