

ABOUT EXPERIMENT WITH LIGHT

Experiment with Light is a Quaker practice which is based on early Friends' discoveries. It was devised in 1996 by Quaker and theologian Rex Ambler following his study of early Friends' writings. Rex had two motives for wanting to discover what was really behind the profound changes in early Friends' lives.

The first related to early Friends. What was it that made them so sure, so centred, so willing to suffer such privations to keep alive their faith? How did they bear the persecution and pain - their own and their families' and Friends' - and how was it that what they had found was worth dying for? What was the Light within early Friends consciences? (Such a contrast when we look at the Religious Society of Friends in Britain today.) More pressing on a personal level was a seemingly intractable problem of his own which he had been wrestling with for a long time.

These factors, one an intellectual set of questions and the other very much heart driven, led Rex to a thorough search of Fox's *Journal* and letters and other contemporary source material to discover what information there was about how to access this Light within. During his studies, while he found no written step by step formula, he found many clues to how this might have worked. After much patient sifting of the material, he discovered, and experimented himself, with a definite process by which this light may be accessed. This can be separated into four main steps with an invitation first to BE STILL:

- 1) Mind the Light (pay attention to what's going on inside you, particularly where there's something that makes you feel uncomfortable)
- 2) Open your heart to the truth (don't run away from anything that's difficult or that you don't want to face, but keep a little distance from it: 'be still and cool in thy mind')
- 3) Wait in the Light (be patient, let the Light show you what is really going on, ask questions if what is being offered to you isn't clear or

you want to know more, and wait for the answers to come, don't try to explain)

- 4) Submit (accept and welcome the information or images, and the insights, dreams and perceptions that may come later, and allow them to show the truth)

Trying this for himself, Rex found ways to move forward on his own issues and gain the inner peace he was looking for. So, as a personal experiment it definitely worked! Trying it on a group of others there were similar breakthroughs and expressions of wonder and gratitude for this simple tool which can bring such profound change. Since then the Experiment with Light has found ready participants both in the UK and throughout the world.

What is a Light Group?

A Light Group is a gathering of people interested in exploring Experiment with Light. There are two ways to get a Light Group started:

- 1) for one or more of those interested to attend a workshop - information about central workshops can be found on the Events page of the website;
- 2) to arrange for a day workshop for your own meeting with a team of people from the Experiment with Light Network, already experienced in this work and trained to introduce it to others. If this is of interest, go to the contacts page on the website and ask about arranging a day for your meeting.

As part of the workshop there is not only the opportunity to experience the meditation for yourself and find out more about its origins but also guidelines for starting your own Light Group, should you decide to do so.

There is also ongoing help and support for Light Groups if this is required.

The Experiment with Light can of course be practised alone; it is a valuable meditation to do as a regular practice. There is, however, also great benefit

in the group experience: trust grows as the group learns to share its experiences openly. Early Friends found this experience of opening to the Light in groups led to great love between them and enabled them to support each other unconditionally during times of great hardship. In our own time it has been found that an active Light Group in a Meeting can have a profound effect, nourishing and deepening its spiritual life. There are active Light Groups in many places around the world.

Resources

This practitioners' pack includes written material outlining the Experiment and its importance, individuals' experiences, the fundamental concepts in Quakerism and information for groups. It consists of the following:

- **Why Experiment with Light is Important to Quakers Today** - a brief overview of the Experiment, its fundamental relationship to our Quaker way, what it involves, and the possible outcomes which may unfold as we engage with it.
- **Daring to Stand in the Light** - the experience of one Experimenter - outlining the transformation from selfish to 'holy' - the journey to wholeness
- **Reflections on Key Words in the Quaker Tradition** - Rex Ambler's reflections on the words: Light, Truth, Life, Silence, That of God, examined from the perspective of experience of the Light within through the practice of the Experiment with Light
- **Worship Sharing and Creative Listening Groups** - Quaker Faith and Practice 12:21
Key to a successful Light Group is effective sharing - this extract from QFP provides clear guidelines for good practice.
- **Guidance for Light Groups** -

All you need to know about starting a Light Group and maintaining good practice

Navigating the website: www.experiment-with-light.org.uk

- **MEDITATIONS:** The texts and recordings of all the meditations currently in use
- **EVENTS:** a continuously updated list of all the workshops available
- **RESOURCES:**
 - the Practitioner's Pack (download as separate files - see above)
 - introductory talk by Rex Ambler
 - readings from 'Truth of the Heart'
 - cover illustrations for two books (available from Friends House)
 - Light to Live By - by Rex Ambler
 - Seeing, Hearing, Knowing - ed John Lampenprovide a further window to:
 - a list of suggestions for further reading
- **CONTACTS:** if you want an Experiment with Light workshop or more information, contact details are on this page