

Epistle from the First International Gathering of the Experiment with Light (EWL) held at Woodbrooke on the 27th - 29th September 2013

Greetings to all Friends everywhere.

'How far, how deep, how wide can you go this weekend?' was the question Rex Ambler asked us to consider as seventy-one of us from the UK, Palestine, Finland, Russia, South Africa, Austria, Canada, Sweden, Norway and the USA gathered in the Cadbury room.

'If we are to deepen our meditation,' he went on, 'we need to risk facing unpalatable facts about ourselves and risk speaking about this with our group, not get stuck at a comfortable level which we feel safe sharing with others.

'How wide can we go? A group of non-religious friends trying the Experiment said they were happy with the words "the Spirit within you".

'How far can we go? A woman in a Muslim group who had started doing the Experiment with Light said that as a result of taking part she was able to cry for the first time for her son who had disappeared.

'We can take the Experiment with Light farther, deeper and wider. That is our challenge.'

On Saturday after a meditation together and a sharing in small groups – and of course a break for coffee and hot chocolate... we came together to share our experiences with Experiment with Light that morning, in our groups at home or on our own. These were some of them:

'The words of George Fox, "Come in to the new world", came to me with depth. And with it a feeling of immense gratitude. We must try to keep the freshness of "a new world".

'This is the first time I've done Experiment with Light. I've searched many places for a profound experience like this. The phrase, "Why do you hide your Light under a bushel?" comes to mind.'

'I offer EWL to those who are not Quakers. I always feel anxious wondering if it's going to work. But there is always someone who experiences something profound. It is an exercise in faith – faith in the process, but even more so, faith in the Light.'

'Two words come to mind, trust and perseverance. Trust, that this experiment has been tested and is on-going. Perseverance, in that it's not easy; we need to keep working at it, not just accept we've found a nice easy form of meditation.'

'Waiting without expectation for the Light to reveal itself requires the ego to step aside.'

'It is open to seemingly absurd coincidences. In my meditation I had an image of myself stuck on an electro magnet. The best solution is to turn off the power, I thought. At that moment a Friend got up and switched off the light...'

'My experience of EWL fills me with joy. Will it last? Then I think, it's like couch grass, the kind you can't get rid of; it'll be here when I'm gone. The Experiment with Light will spread – within my own life, within my own meeting, within the world.'

'It is important to allow our body to experience our feelings.'

'EWL is for everyone. I introduced it to a non-Quaker friend when we were sitting under a tree. She loved it, and wanted to pass it on to others. We need to experiment with EWL!'

In the afternoon we had a Meditation on the World. We connected deeply with the problems – the suffering and conflicts - in the world, yet we could also see hope, and as a result ended with renewed will to act in the various ways we were led, as well as collectively. There was also optimism based on the concept that the world is a self-renewing organism and that balance can be regained, (Gaia principle).

The shared entertainment in the evening was the best we have ever experienced. Songs, dance, games, music and poems were enjoyed by all. It showed the Light and beauty that we all have to offer.

We invite Friends everywhere to see how far, deep and wide they can take the Experiment with Light.