

SEEKING UNITY

The following steps are offered as guidance and counsel in situations where the normal process of achieving unity appears excessively strained or completely blocked within a committee. We offer these guidelines in the full awareness of the diversity of concerns and personalities that occur within a committee or groups, and especially with the awareness that consensus development is a subtle and intricate process not easily or appropriately subjected to rigid rules of procedure.

1. The basic Quaker principle of expectant waiting is most important at moments of acute stress. Waiting upon divine guidance through silent meditation and prayer can both break tension and open the way to unity. Silence may take the form of:
 - a. A brief period within the committee meeting.
 - b. A special Meeting for Worship of the committee itself to wait in the Light.
 - c. A special called Meeting for Worship of the Meeting as a whole, upon request of the involved committee, to seek, through silent worship and prayer, the focusing of a spirit of love upon the matter at hand. Such a meeting should not be called casually, but only when a committee's difficulty in reaching consensus has become prolonged and grave.
2. When immediate resolution of an issue is not required by the Meeting or by the situation, postponement of consideration for a specified interval should be considered.
3. Assistance on points of concern may be sought. Such assistance may include, but is not restricted to, readings from appropriate materials, invitations to specified individuals to meet with the committee, and clearness committees of the Monthly Meeting.
4. Committees exist to do the preparatory work towards decision-making by the Monthly Meeting and to carry out the charges delegated to them by the Meeting. If a committee cannot complete a charge and further action is desired, the Meeting will determine appropriate steps to take.
5. If an issue before a committee involves a conflict of interest or personal involvement on the part of a member of that committee, and resolution within the committee is preferred, the member is advised to step aside from the committee deliberations on that particular issue but with the opportunity for full presentation of his or her position. If appropriate, a person designated by the Clerk shall substitute for the individual stepping aside (for the consideration of the issue only).

When seeking unity, Red Cedar Friends Meeting makes no distinction between members of record and attenders.