

Reflections

By Barbara Childs, Okehampton Quaker Meeting

Quakers have a short booklet containing 42 paragraphs called "Advices and Queries" which are intended to challenge and inspire us.

One that interests me at the moment says: "Every stage of our lives offers fresh opportunities. Responding to divine guidance, try to discern the right time to undertake or relinquish responsibilities without undue pride or guilt. Attend to what love requires of you, which may not be great busyness."

There seems to be an infinite range of responsibilities which we can undertake, especially in a small town like ours. Children's activities need adult helpers; voluntary organisations need committee members; charities need fund raisers; churches and other groups need people to help them function. And that is on top of all the other day to day jobs we have to do. I am certainly grateful to all those people who take on so many of these roles with enthusiasm and efficiency.

However, I can easily feel burdened if I agree to do too many tasks and am conscious that I do not always do them to the best of my ability. So it has been helpful to me to accept that "great busyness" might not be what is required of me at this particular stage of my life, especially while my children are still young. It is probably better for my family, and those organisations to which I am committed, that I take on only a few responsibilities and do those well. In a few years time it may well be time for me to undertake more.

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Barbara Childs