

Youth Institute II:

Living Into Community Together

At Powell House

NYYM Quaker Conference and Retreat Center

Old Chatham, NY

April 22-24, 2016



This is the second Youth Institute offered under the auspices of New York Yearly Meeting's Youth Committee. The institutes are open to anyone interested in making their meeting a multigenerational faith community.

The average human body replaces nearly all its atoms every year but personality that has developed, memories that have been lived, knowledge that has been gained remain. Some things do fade with time or grow and change as the body ages but still each body is distinct, precious and infused with spirit. Meetings are organic entities as well. Older friends move on, new friends arrive. People change in what they can offer and what they need from a meeting. Working with youth you see those changes in a shorter span but they exist at all stages. Meetings that are intentional in passing on their culture and that are at the same time open to the living Spirit are more likely to evolve, thrive and nourish their members and the communities around them.

The Youth Institutes celebrate this intentional work, drawing on the experience of people from meetings throughout New York Yearly Meeting and neighboring yearly meetings.

On **Friday** night, we will spend some time reflecting on why we do this work and what is important to us to pass on.

On **Saturday** there will be hands-on workshops to choose from with take-back-to-your-meetings activities and resource lists. Plenary sessions will focus on:

- Sharing among ourselves what is working in monthly meetings and regions
- Creating safe spaces for children and adults

Sunday we'll look at next steps and close with experimental worship leading into traditional worship.





We have found that there is much joy and a first hand experience of a rich multigenerational community forming over the course of the conference. In the words of last years participants:

- The small group discussions were great, especially the queries Saturday night.
- So glad I came!
- Loved the listening exercises.
- This is what I enjoyed: adults of varying ages being playful and vibrant, games that made us think, challenging games, games that left us in a pile of laughs, games that left us centered, games that sparked our creativity, and being part of a community that was open to discussing and thinking about a lot of topics that might be particularly hard or challenging.
- I attended the creativity and spirituality session. I loved the focus on “defining your own criteria.”
- Teen spirituality: really good and important conversations. Great, intimate group discussion, great topic and question sheet, stimulating, relaxed guidance.
- Community building: it was great, personally, to get to play. Something I have been lacking in my life. I feel a lot more comfortable with initiating community building games and play now.
- Gender and Sex workshop: I found it very enlightening and interesting and realized I had much to learn. I also realized that the young people were much more versed in the subject than I am.
- You can be sure that I will be at the next one, and am looking forward to it with joyful expectations.

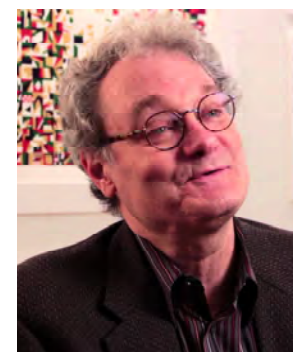


Workshops and Facilitators

Exploring Spirituality Through Creativity

How does creativity connect with our lives? Where does creativity reside within us? And how do we stifle creativity? When we think of the word “Creativity” we sometimes imagine bursts of energy exploding around us, and as this may be true, we can also create from a quiet place, from a place where words and thoughts aren’t needed. All that is needed is an open mind, open heart and the willingness to let your hands lead for a little while as we work and play.

Mark LaRiviere (15th Street MM) is an artist and founding program director of the Children’s Arts Guild, an in school program that supports children (and adults) in becoming emotionally intelligent, socially engaged, and productive citizens of the world. Creativity-education helps them resist limiting expectations and build emotional competence, confidence, and social skills. He works at encouraging children to embrace, value, and express their own experiences, and in the process discover the joy and excitement of learning.



Empathy Labyrinth: Explorations in Mindfulness, Self-Empathy, and Compassionate Communication

What is most alive for you in the present moment? The empathy labyrinth is a tool that guides you from self-criticism and blame through the feelings underlying our self-talk to considering met/unmet needs and finally, to requests for action. This tool can be used to help you better understand yourself by embodying a consciousness of greater awareness, harmony and abundance. After explaining and modeling the process, we will spend most of our time exploring the empathy labyrinth in pairs. Visit <http://www.TheEmpathyLabyrinth.com/> to learn more about this transformative approach to self-empathy.

Rebecca "Ohgistohkwiyo" Wolf (Rochester Meeting) is a reading & writing specialist and has been teaching all ages from preschool to college since 1997. She is passionate about helping her students realize their full potential. She enjoys clerking and has worked on many committees within Rochester Monthly Meeting. The Quaker process of finding unity is one that she strives to emulate in all of her relationships. Rebecca lives in Pittsford, NY with her husband, two vivacious daughters, and one fluffy Siberian cat.



Friendly Sex

Let's come together to explore how Quakers approach sex and sex education in our communities, and with our youth. We'll create a safe space to ask questions, and share new and old Quaker approaches to supporting youth in having consensual, happy, and healthy sexual experiences.

Natalie Braun (Old Chatham Meeting) has a Master's of Public Health in sexual and reproductive health and maternal and child health. She has worked as a peer sexual health educator and youth worker with a variety of groups over the past 10 years, including as a Young Friend in Residence with New York Yearly Meeting. In her work, she strives to create safe spaces for youth and adults to learn, grow, and question.



I had been taught, and come to believe in my own experience, that taking Quakerism seriously and listening for the leadings of God could potentially change my approach to everything: what kind of media I consumed, what I ate, what kind of student I was. Now I wanted to know how to have sex like a Quaker—not because I expected there to be one correct, seal-of-approval way, but because I suspected there was some potential connection, and I wanted to uncover it.

-Kody Hersh, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting





Games in Spiritual Work

Explore the art of community building and broaden your repertoire of group activities. It's a play as you go workshop where you'll learn a variety of activities. We'll reflect on how they foster spiritual growth in a group and develop skills vital to Quaker practices. We'll evaluate how and why the activities work and look at ways to modify them for specific situations.

Chris DeRoller (Old Chatham Meeting) is a Youth Director at **Powell House**. She has spent the past 20 years working with children, teens, young adults and older adults to create supportive, happy, spirit-filled spaces.



Quaker Teens, Feminism and Intersectionality



What is feminism today? What is intersectionality? And why are they important to Quaker teens?

Leila Archibald (Manhattan MM) is a senior in high school. She has been active in Quaker circles for many years and is passionate about bringing Quaker values to

what's happening in the world today.

Sense of the Meeting

Sense of the meeting is a core tenet of Quaker Business Practice. What is it? How do we find it? How do we help create spaces where it flourishes?

Teaching Quaker Process to Children/Teens

Leading youth through a step-by-step introduction to Quaker business practice begins with identifying business that is meaningful to the participants. How do you get started? What works well? Where do you go next?

Mary Harpster (Rahway and Plainfield Meeting)

has served on Ministry & Counsel and Religious Education Committees; as a First Day School teacher she develops programming that gives the students input into Meeting life.

Calling JYM Teen Clerks Past, Present & Future

This year we'll be offering the Clerking Workshop "Sense of the Meeting" in the morning for all ages. Current JYM teen clerks are asked to attend this workshop. In the afternoon past, present and future clerks will go over the specific role of the high school clerks in Junior Yearly Meeting – what it's been, what it is and what it might become. Rebecca Wolf and Matt Lindop will facilitate this



Service-Learning Programs for Teens

Identify opportunities within your meetings and your local communities, as well as farther a field and in other countries. Share your experiences in providing opportunities that are meaningful for the youth and the people they work with. Explore the benefits of varied approaches and talk about what's important to consider, whether you are going down the block for an afternoon or to another country for a couple weeks.

Mike Clark (Old Chatham Meeting), a Powell House youth program director since 2000, has designed and led experiential learning programs for Peace Corps volunteers, Guatemala Ministry of Agriculture workers, and parents and staff in Head Start and migrant pre-school programs in Florida. He has led NYYM high school service-learning trips to Honduras and to El Salvador. He also took a group of 30 youth to the people's Climate March.



Worshipping with Youth

Come explore the myriad ways of Quaker worship with youth of all ages. Our self-examination of worship will be group shared and used to delve into how we can help younger Quakers experience and benefit from meeting for worship. How do we explain "centering down", "hearing Gods voice", "holding in the light" and "connecting with the God within"? Activities, book list and great fun will result from an hour and a half together.

Theresa Oleksiw (Portland Meeting) has been teaching Quaker youth, and their teachers, for several decades. She has served as the Youth Minister at Durham Friends, a youth leader at New England Yearly Meeting retreats and sessions, as well as a 3rd grade leader at New York Yearly Sessions.





Youth and Spirituality

How can we be present to encourage spiritual growth in our youth and ourselves? If our spirituality involves continuing revelation, and not a creed, what tools are useful to practice and pass on? We will look at listening, in its many forms as a spiritual practice. We will consider the ministry of listening. How can we listen to our youth to hear them deeply and make them feel cherished? How do we help them learn the spiritual joys of listening?

Julie Glynn (Brooklyn Meeting) is a mother of three teens and a long time First Day School teacher. She grew up in Brooklyn Meeting and likes to bake and ask questions.



Powell House Quaker Conference and Retreat Center is located at 524 Pitt Hall Road, Old Chatham, NY.

There are two residential buildings, Pitt Hall and the Anna Curtis Center, on 57 acres of grounds with hiking trails and two ponds. The Wilson Powell Bird Sanctuary is within walking distance, offering numerous trails and views of the Catskills.

Accommodations include linens and towels. Pitt Hall has rooms with private or shared baths. Two rooms downstairs share an accessible bathroom. The Anna Curtis Center has a fully accessible first floor including bedrooms, bathrooms, meeting room, dining room, library and game room. Single rooms are available for an additional fee on a first come basis.

We serve home-style meals and breads baked on the premises. Vegetarian and vegan options are available if noted on the registration in advance. As part of our commitment to create community and be a place that is affordable, guests bus their own tables and assist in mealtime chores.



Cost for the Youth Institute
(Includes shared accommodations, 6 meals and program)

Register by April 12th:

\$230 adults, \$115 ages 13-22, \$57.50 infants-12
After April 12th \$20 additional fee per registration

Childcare will be provided with 3 weeks notice

Register on line at www.powellhouse.org or e-mail info@powellhouse.org or call 518-794-8811