

Trust

By Brian and Cynthia Higbee, Okehampton Quaker Meeting

Trust me, I'm a Quaker

Early Quakers gained a reputation for always telling the truth. Like the other nonconformists of the early 1800s they were barred from entry to the professions this meant that many of them went into business; Cadbury's, Rowntree's and Fry's were very successful Quaker businesses. They prospered because they treated their staff well but also their trustworthiness meant that their contemporaries were able to have complete faith in their business dealings.

It has been evident over the past few months that trust in society is at a low ebb. The revelations of the Leveson Inquiry and the latest investment scandals at Barclays are evidence of this state of affairs. We were waiting for MPs and others to take the stand so that we could be sure to hear the truth about what had transpired. Why do we need to wait for someone to take an oath before the truth can be told? What sort of example are we giving to our young people about the values in our society?

There is a benefit to us all if we cultivate an ethos of trust. You may remember the fable about 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'. During the story the boy showed that he could not be relied upon, so when he cried 'WOLF!' everyone thought he was being economical with the truth again and ignored his cries. Although we can point the finger at leaders, bankers, the press requiring them to be more trustworthy and truthful the best place to start is with the example we ourselves set in all our relationships.

Trust is the cement that binds us together, loose it and we all suffer.

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