

## THE WORK of the ELDER

Discernment ~ Spiritual Nurturing ~ Encouraging Faithfulness

<i>Focus of Concern</i>	<i>Object of Support</i>	<i>Type of Work</i>
Ministers	Vocal ministry; Travel in ministry; Speaking engagements	Private individual contact, incl. correspondence; Companionship in travel; Oversight of arrangements
Individuals	Personal spiritual faithfulness & growth	Private individual contact; Correspondence
Other elders	Work of elders, individually and as a body	Pray and worship together; Reflect together on Scripture and other writings; Share joys and problems in their eldering
Meetings	Gathered faith community	Keep open “inward listening space toward God” for the meeting; Pray during meeting for its spiritual condition; Provide for right order during worship; Signal close of meetings for worship; Keep principles clear during decision making; Organize groups for prayer, healing, discussion, work, etc., as needed; Discern and call out gifts for benefit of the community

### *Methods Used*

In Words with Others	In Personal Life
Affirming faithfulness Listening Questioning to draw out Questioning to provoke reflection Cautioning Rebuking Encouraging stepping forward when led Clarifying distinctions Prayer	Testing and acting on one’s own leadings (= Discernment and obedience) Modeling corporate values and traditions Prayer

Compiled by Susan Smith (5-2001) from various sources, including Fran Taber’s “Applying and Adapting the Tradition of Eldering for Today” (OYM, 1996), and Kenneth Sutton’s 6-11-98 comments on Quaker-L, and works by Jan Hoffman.

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