

Lesson 4

S.P.I.C.E.S.

SUMMARY FOR ADULTS

Testimonies are our values and commitments put in practice. Six of the basic ones for Quakers are Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (or Sustainability). These are not doctrine but are generally accepted among most Quakers. Certainly, there are others as well. This lesson is but a brief introduction to these six basic testimonies, and we note that many other cultures have worthwhile testimonies to guide adherents along an ethical, moral road. There is much more to explore in further activities and discussions, and you will see these themes repeated throughout all our studies.

For younger children: This lesson describes six superheroes – the IMANI – who each embody one of the six testimonies. IMANI is the Swahili word for faith. Cut six superheroes out of cardboard and decorate them with your own ideas of super equipment or powers as you go through each section. This lesson is quite long and can be broken down into multiple sessions.

For older children and adults: You may wish to bring in blank trading cards and colored pencils so they can each make their own IMANI trading cards depicting the heroes and powers. These can be used as an activity at the conclusion of the lesson. Or acquire small wooden models and bring in scissors, glue, paint, fabric and odd bits to make models of the heroes. Work on your cards or models as you read each of the following sections and discuss these testimonies. For adults you may just want to list attributes and qualities on the cards.

“El Hombre Que Se Levanta Es Aún Más Grande Que El Que No Ha Caído.”
(The man who stands up is greater than the one who has not fallen.
Concepción Arenal

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LESSON FOR CHILDREN

Imagine there's a fantastic group of superheroes called the IMANI. These awesome heroes have a special mission: To make human beings kinder and more understanding. They're peacekeepers. And they do it by always trying to be the very best versions of themselves.

What gives the IMANI their power is that they believe deep down, that every person has something super special inside them, like a shining light brightening the world around them. They believe that guided by that light in all of us we can live better lives and find a way forward peacefully together.

With these powers, they can do amazing things like being super nice to their friends and seeing the truth, even when it's tough. They can stop fights and arguments, ask questions, make people see things more clearly and encourage everyone to do better. They also make their world cleaner and their communities more helpful. And they never get distracted from their important mission - even when they run into problems or obstacles.

What's the code they follow? We call them "Testimonies". These are their guiding beliefs. These testimonies help them to remember to be kind, peaceful, focused, and thoughtful. They inspire them to bring out the best in themselves and in others.

So, the IMANI are a team. They need each other the way our hearts and minds must work together. They need all the Testimonies working in harmony to spread kindness, clarity and peace wherever they go.

Here are the six IMANI and their powers:

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1. SIMPLICITY

“The cares and pleasures of this life choke and destroy the seed of the kingdom, and quite hinder all progress in the hidden and divine life.”

William Penn, No Cross, No Crown, 1682

The first IMANI is SIMPLICITY. She can use her SUPER SIMPLICITY VACUUM to suck up all those extra toys, clothes and junk around people’s lives. She can vacuum up activities or projects that are a waste of time or too much to handle. She can even vacuum up unnecessary thoughts and worries! After she vacuums up, she uses her SUPER LASER FOCUS TELESCOPE to focus on the things that are really important.

- **Herself:** SIMPLICITY takes care of herself and loves discovering who she is.
- **Her Health:** She eats well, stays active, and keeps her body feeling good.
- **Her Family:** SIMPLICITY loves and spends time with her family.
- **Her Friends:** She's a good loyal friend to others and enjoys their company.
- **Wonder:** SIMPLICITY also takes time to notice and appreciate all the wonderful and natural things in the world around her.

SIMPLICITY understands that there are friends of hers that don’t have as much money, so she tries not to make them feel bad by acquiring things they can’t have. She tries to spend her time and money and thoughts on things that are important. So, that's how SIMPLICITY stays happy and focused.

SIMPLICITY also means Quakers don’t focus on rituals or special clothing or special prayers. We believe in an ongoing revelation - that our perception of the Divine is always changing and growing, so we don’t want to get stuck in habits or old ways of doing things. We don’t want rituals to get in the way of our appreciation and understanding of other faiths.

QUERY

What could I vacuum up with the SUPER SIMPLICITY VACUUM or focus on with the SUPERLASER FOCUS TELESCOPE?

ACTIVITY

Build a model, create a song, draw a picture, paint a model or trading card of SIMPLICITY using her superpowers on your life: (simplifying photos, online game subscriptions, clothes, toys, apps on your phone etc.)

Listen to and learn the song. Make a dance out of it: Tis a gift to be simple

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2. PEACE

PEACE uses her SUPER PEACE LASSO and throws it around arguments with her family and friends to bring them together. When she disagrees with someone, instead of arguing, she tries something else: She uses her T.H.I.N.K.S. HAT to filter what she is going to say.

- **She Listens:** PEACE listens carefully to why the other person thinks differently.
- **She thinks Clearly** and discerns what she thinks is real or not.
- **She Explains Kindly:** Then, she talks to them in a nice way about why she thinks the way she does. Peace thinks carefully about what she needs to disclose and what she needs to say. Its more important to Peace that she says something with love that leaves everyone feeling safe - so she may hold back some details.
- **Together,** they try to figure out a way so that both of them can understand each other better and both get what they really need.

So, PEACE doesn't fight when she disagrees with someone; she listens and talks kindly. She works to promote respect and understanding between people, for fairness, forgiveness, justice and for making the world safe for everyone.

QUERY

When would I like to throw a PEACE LASSO around people?

Activity:

Build a model, create a song, draw a picture, paint a model or trading card of PEACE throwing her SUPER PEACE LASSO over something in your life or using her T.H.I.N.K.S HAT.

Listen to and learn the song. Make a dance out of it - Let There Be Peace on Earth.

Balance. Take a long measuring stick. For extra credit balance a paper cup with water on it. The group has to balance the object on their outstretched index fingertips together and lower it to the ground.

Affirmations Game. People write something positive and true about another person on a piece of paper without naming them. The papers are then shuffled. One Affirmation is drawn out and people try to guess who this affirmation applies to.

Review T.H.I.N.K.S. in Lesson 3.

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3. INTEGRITY

INTEGRITY uses her SUPER INTEGRITY VACCINE SHOT to give her the strength to stand up for the right thing, for herself and others. She says what she means and she means what she says. What she believes on the inside IS what her actions are on the outside. So when she thinks something is good and fair, she doesn't just talk about it – she acts! For example, if she sees someone being treated unfairly, she'll stand up for them and try to make things right or tell an adult or teacher about it. She sticks up for herself too and knows that she is important and deserves to be treated fairly and with kindness and love. If INGRITY is tempted to cheat at a game or steal something, she doesn't, even if that is hard to do. Instead she summons her strength to be strong and do the right thing. And if she does fail, she admits it and tries to make amends and do things differently next time.

QUERY

Is it hard to do the right thing sometimes? When could you use a SUPER INTEGRITY VACCINE SHOT to be stronger?

ACTIVITIES

Build a model, create a song, draw a picture, model or trading card of INTEGRITY and her SUPER INTEGRITY VACCINE SHOT.

Read folk tales or fables about integrity. Some ideas are:

The Story of the Lost Axe (失斧的故事) BY Lieh Tzu

In China, there was a woodcutter who used to depend on woods for his living. One day, the woodcutter went out to cut some firewood and discovered that his favourite axe was missing. He couldn't find it anywhere. Then he noticed his neighbour's son standing near the woodshed. The woodcutter thought, 'Aha! That boy must have stolen my axe. I see how he lurks about the shed, shifting uneasily from foot to foot, greedy hands stuffed in his pockets, a guilty look on his face.

I can't prove it, but he must have stolen my axe.' A few days later, the woodcutter was surprised and happy to come upon the axe under a pile of firewood. "I remember now," he said, "Just where I'd left it!" He felt very sad that he was thinking that the boy had taken his axe. The next time he saw his neighbour's son, the woodcutter looked intently at the boy, scrutinizing him from head to toe. 'How odd!' he thought, 'This boy has lost his guilty look. We always doubt wrong things when we are in trouble.'

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The Purse of Gold

A Jewish Folktale

A beggar found a leather purse that someone had dropped in the marketplace. Opening it, he discovered that it contained 100 pieces of gold. Then he heard a merchant shout, "A reward! A reward to the one who finds my leather purse!"

Being an honest man, the beggar came forward and handed the purse to the merchant saying, "Here is your purse. May I have the reward now?"

"Reward?" scoffed the merchant, greedily counting his gold. "Why the purse I dropped had 200 pieces of gold in it. You've already stolen more than the reward! Go away or I'll tell the police."

"I'm an honest man," said the beggar defiantly. "Let us take this matter to the court."

In court the judge patiently listened to both sides of the story and said, "I believe you both. Justice is possible! Merchant, you stated that the purse you lost contained 200 pieces of gold. Well, that's a considerable cost. But, the purse this beggar found had only 100 pieces of gold. Therefore, it couldn't be the one you lost."

And, with that, the judge gave the purse and all the gold to the beggar.

(From Storyarts.org)

Read stories of heroes, (see Reading and Resources).

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4. COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY is like a detective of goodness! She uses her SUPER MAGNIFYING GLASSES to look for the special things that make each person unique and awesome. She can see that everyone has something to contribute to our community. Some people are good at helping others. Some people make us laugh. Some people invent new things or make our cities work well. Some people help us stay healthy or grow our food or help keep our parks clean and safe. Some people educate us, take care of children, and others make music or movies that we enjoy. So many gifts!

QUERY

What communities do I have in my life? What gifts do I have?

ACTIVITY

Build a model, create a song, draw a picture, paint a model or trading card of COMMUNITY using her SUPER MAGNIFYING GLASSES.

Big Wind Blows - Form a circle of chairs one less than the number of participants. One person stands in the center and says “The Big Wind blows for anyone who.....” and finishes the sentence with something that is true for themselves. Anyone else in the circle who agrees with this statement must get up and find another seat. The person in the center finds a seat and another person is left in the center.

Rope Exercise - Tie a long, very sturdy rope in a circle. Sit everyone down in a circle and everyone takes a portion of the rope. Now lean back and try to stand up together. Be aware of everyone’s abilities and be careful not to let anyone fall.

Community Bingo. Use the template BINGO cards. Each person gets a card and writes something about themselves in each of the squares, such as ‘likes potato chips’, ‘Born in a foreign country’, ‘Likes to sing’, ‘Has two brothers’ Etc. Then go to the community and try to find another person with that attribute. Once they find a person they can fill in the bingo square. One person per square.

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A Flock of Birds

A Folktale from India

There was once a flock of birds peacefully pecking seeds under a tree. A hunter came along and threw a heavy net over them. He said, "Aha! Now I have my dinner!"

All at once the birds began to flap their wings. Up, up they rose into the air, taking the net with them. They came down on the tree and, as the net snagged in the tree's branches, the birds flew out from under it to freedom.

The hunter looked on in amazement, scratched his head and muttered, "As long as those birds cooperate with one another like that, I'll never be able to capture them! Each one of those birds is so frail and yet, together they can lift the net."



(From Storyarts.org)

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5. EQUALITY

EQUALITY treats every person with equal respect. She has a SUPER EQUALITY BOAT that everyone fits into. It doesn't matter where they're from, how old they are, how much money they have, or who their friends are, she believes that everyone deserves to be treated kindly and thoughtfully, just like how she would want to be treated.

Equality is about fairness and making sure that everyone has the same chances to succeed and be happy, no matter who they are. It's an important idea that helps make the world a better place for everyone.

QUERY

How do I get to know people who are different from me in some way?

ACTIVITIES

Build a model, create a song, draw a picture, paint a model or trading card of EQUALITY in her SUPER EQUALITY BOAT with everyone in it.

Draw a giant flower. It should have a round center and an equal number of petals to the number of participants in the group. Each participant should fill their petals with something unique about themselves- anything that makes them stand out from others. However, physical characteristics should be ignored. Then the center of the flower should be filled with the things they have in common.

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6. STEWARDSHIP or SUSTAINABILITY

STEWARDSHIP loves to explore the outside world. She really likes all the plants and animals she sees, and she thinks they're amazing. She loves the mountains, forests and rivers, and at night, when she looks up at the shining stars, she thinks they are mysterious and wonderful.

But STEWARDSHIP wants this beauty to last a long time. She doesn't want to destroy the natural world we now live in. She recognizes that she is as much a part of nature as all the plants, animals and natural wonders. So, she uses her SUPER STEWARDSHIP CHOICE TRIDENT to always put her trash, compost, and recyclables in the right bins. She chooses to buy items that are reusable so as not to create more pollution, and looks for other ways to make sustainable choices.

QUERY

How do I take care of my beautiful world? What other choices could I make that are more sustainable?

ACTIVITY

Build a model, create a song, draw a picture, paint a model or trading card of STEWARDSHIP and her CHOICE TRIDENT

Game Truth be Told... One of the players asks a question, Truth Be Told, my favorite out-door destination is The player writes their answer and all the players write what they think the first player's answer is on a piece of paper. The papers are shuffled and the host reads out all the answers. Players try to guess the right answer. Then look at that favorite place on your phones.

Read Why the Sky Is Far Away (Nigerian): This African folk tale explains why the sky is so high above the Earth. It centers on a woman who takes more than she needs resulting in life being more difficult for everyone.

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CONCLUSION: The IMANI SUPERHEROES

So the IMANI are a team of powers that can help us live our best lives. IMANI is the word for Faith in Swahili, so it means that when we use our faith to follow our testimonies, we can live our best lives and help others live theirs.

QUERY

What testimony speaks to me the most? Which ones make me most uncomfortable? Are there any others to add to the list? Which of your own superheroes or heroes embody these testimonies? What are real life teams of heroes? Can we be heroes?

Display. Take all the IMANI heroes you have drawn and cut them out and put them up on the wall or display them. If you made models display those.

IMANI trading cards. Everyone makes a set of cards of Testimonies. Draw a card of each of the six Imani and any other testimony they admire as elaborately or as simply as one likes. Now Take a current news item discussing a current problem, or bring up a possible dilemma in one's own life. Each person has to play the card they think would solve or contribute to the solution of the problem most effectively and discuss why they think its appropriate. Remember the Imani are a team - how can these testimonies work together to solve the problem?

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ACTIVITIES

Look up other superhero teams or testimonies: Perhaps your culture has testimonies of their own, or check out the Kachina of the Hopi, Zuni and Pueblo, the deities that represent positive aspects in the African, Mexican, Hindu, Asian or Egyptian mythic world to name just a few superhero teams (every culture has them). For instance, the testimonies of Kwanza are interesting to compare to the S.P.I.C.E.S:

1. contentment
2. forgiveness
3. self-control
4. truthfulness
5. abstention from anger
6. abstention from stealing and cheating
7. observing physical and mental purity
8. having sexual relations with one's spouse only
9. pursuit of knowledge [concerning the world]
10. pursuit of wisdom [concerning the Ultimate Reality]

FIELD TRIPS

Visit teams of real life heroes in our community (Fire Station, Hospitals, Volunteer help lines etc.)

READINGS AND RESOURCES

Story Time with Kaluhya is a youtube channel for video readings of stories

Of thee I Sing : a letter to my daughters by Obama Barack

Chicken Sunday by Patricia Polacco (Integrity)

The Kindest Red: A Story of Hijab and Friendship by Ibtiyah Muhammad (Integrity)

The Slave Who Went to Congress - Benjamin Turner by Mari Rosner and Frye Gaillard

We Dream a World: Carrying the Light by Yolanda Renee King

Me, Frida, and the Secret of the Peacock Ring by Angela Cervantes (Integrity)

Farah Rocks Fifth Grade by Muaddi Darraj (confronting bullying)

111 Trees: How One Village Celebrates the Birth of Every Girl by Rina Singh (Integrity)

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The School that Escaped the Nazis: the true story of the school teacher who defied Hitler by Deborah Cadbury (Integrity)

The One Thing You'd Save by Linda Sue Park (simplicity)

Blackout by John Rocco (simplicity)

Kiki and Jax by Marie Kondo (simplicity)

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Other Testimonies

Wabi Sabi: Japanese principles - Kanso (simplicity); Fukinsei (asymmetry or irregularity); Shibumi (beauty in the understated); Shizen (naturalness without pretense); Yugen (grace and subtlety); Datsuzoku (Freedom); Seijaku (Tranquility).

Kwanza: In addition to the 10 testimonies, Kwanza lights seven candles to celebrate their holiday: Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity), and Imani (faith),

The Ten Commandments from the Bible:

- Thou shall have no other God' before me
- Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images
- Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
- Remember the Sabbath day and keep it Holy
- Honor your father and mother.
- Thou shalt not kill
- Thou shalt not commit adultery
- Thou shalt not steal
- Thou shalt not bear false witness
- Thou shalt not covet.

Taoist Principles: Inaction; Simplicity; and Living in *harmony with nature*. Taoist philosophical principle rested on a belief in the law of unity of the two opposite forces: *yin* and *yang*.

Islam's 75 Good Manners:

1. Don't lie (22:30)
2. Don't spy (49:12)
3. Don't exult (28:76)
4. Don't insult (49:11)
5. Don't waste (17:26)
6. Feed the poor (22:36)
7. Don't backbite (49:12)
8. Keep your oaths (5:89)
9. Don't take bribes (27:36)
10. Honour your treaties (9:4)

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11. Restrain your anger (3:134)
12. Don't spread gossip (24:15)
13. Think good of others (24:12)
14. Be good to guests (51:24-27)
15. Don't harm believers (33:58)
16. Don't be rude to parents (17:23)
17. Turn away from ill speech (23:3)
18. Don't make fun of others (49:11)
19. Walk in a humble manner (25:63)
20. Respond to evil with good (41:34)
21. Don't say what you don't do (62:2)
22. Keep your trusts & promises (23:8)
23. Don't insult others' false gods (6:108)
24. Don't deceive people in trade (6:152)
25. Don't take items without right (3:162)
26. Don't ask unnecessary questions (5:101)
27. Don't be miserly nor extravagant (25:67)
28. Don't call others with bad names (49:11)
29. Don't claim yourselves to be pure (53:32)
30. Speak nicely, even to the ignorant (25:63)
31. Don't ask for repayment for favours (76:9)
32. Make room for others at gatherings (58:11)
33. If enemy wants peace, then accept it (8:61)
34. Return a greeting in a better manner (4:86)
35. Don't remind others of your favours (2:264)
36. Make peace between fighting groups (49:9)
37. Lower your voice and talk moderately (31:19)
38. Don't let hatred cause you to be unjust (6:108)
39. Don't ask too many favours from people (2:273)
40. Greet people when entering their home (24:27)
41. Be just, even against yourself & relatives (4:135)
42. Speak gently, even to leaders of disbelief (20:44)
43. Don't criticize small contributions of others (9:79)
44. Don't call the Prophet how you call others' (24:63)
45. Try to make peace between husband & wife (4:128)
46. Don't call the Prophet from outside his rooms (49:4)
47. Oppression/corruption is worse than killing (2:217)
48. Preach to others in a good and wise manner (16:125)
49. Don't accuse others of immorality without proof (24:4)

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50. Consider wives of the Prophet like your mothers (33:6)
51. Don't raise your voice above that of the Prophet's (49:2)
52. Don't call someone a disbeliever without knowing (4:94)
53. Seek permission before entering someone's room (24:59)
54. Know your enemies can become your close friends (41:34)
55. Don't wrongly consume the wealth of the vulnerable (4:29)
56. Don't turn your cheek away from people in arrogance (31:18)
57. Forgive others, as you would like Allah to forgive you (24:22)
58. Seek Prophet's permission when leaving his gathering (24:62)
59. Don't hold secret meetings for sin, rather do so for piety (58:9)
60. Don't order others to do good while forgetting it yourself (2:44)
61. Be patient with your teacher & follow his instructions (18:67-69)
62. Don't frown, turn away or neglect those who come to you (80:10)
63. If unable to help a needy person, at least speak nice words (17:28)
64. Be lenient to those under you, and consult them in matters (3:159)
65. Verify information from a dubious source before acting upon it (49:6)
66. Don't remain in the Prophet's home unnecessarily after a meal (33:53)
67. Those who can should continue to spend on those less fortunate (24:22)
68. Don't enter homes without permission & return if refused entry (24:27-28)
69. Don't sit with those who mock religion until they change the subject (4:140)
70. Say it's not appropriate to talk of slander when it's mentioned to you (24:16)
71. If required to ask the Prophet's wives, then do so from behind a screen (33:53)
72. Divorce in an amicable manner instead of keeping & harming your wife (2:231)
73. Punish in an equivalent manner to how you were harmed or be patient (16:126)
74. Differences in color & language are signs of Allah, not means of superiority (49:13)
75. Don't take women by force, nor take back bridal gift without a valid reason & live with them in kindness (4:19)

Hindu: Hindus don't have any commandments by a god, but have advice, guidance or instruction from scholars and law-givers. There is an absolute moral code (*loka-dharma*) which is applicable to every society and all humankind. One is assured of spiritual progress and the Grace of God if one follows this code (Manu 7:92) regardless of one's theological or philosophical convictions or lack thereof.

Another list of instructions are given by the sage Patañjali in his Yoga Sūtras 1.

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YAMAS - Practices of self-restraint

1. *ahimsa* — abstention from injury to sentient beings.
2. *satyam* — speaking the truth.
3. *asteya* — refraining from taking that which is not given.
4. *brahma-carya* — lit moving in the divine — continence.
5. *aparigraha* — non-possessiveness or non acceptance of gifts

NIYAMA - Self-development.

1. *śauca* — purity, hygiene
2. *santośa* — contentment
3. *tapas* — austerity - living a simple life or practicing forbearance
4. *svādhyāya* — study – self-reflection and assessment as well as study of philosophy.
5. *īśvara-praṇidhāna* — contemplation upon, or surrendering to the Divine.

Confucianism: Respect for elders and Parents, Harmony between individuals, Justice, Loyalty to family and friends.