

FGC
Stakeholder
Survey
2012

A Summary of Survey Results

FGC Stakeholder Survey

- This survey was initiated to better understand the needs of Friends across the United States and Canada and to test program priorities and directions.
- The results are assisting the FGC board in our discernment related to programming and budgeting priorities. From 2007-2011, many of FGC's programs saw a planned temporary increase in funding due to our Stoking the Spiritual Fires of Quakerism campaign. With our campaign goals reached (thank you again if you gave) and our funding levels set to shrink slightly post-campaign, we are reallocating our resources to serve the priority needs of Friends while being fiscally sustainable.
- Over 9,000 Friends were asked via e-mail to take the survey. Requests were also sent to Yearly Meeting (YM) clerks, Quakers on Facebook & the Young Adult Friends (YAF) group.
- This survey was created with guidance from focus groups held at FGC's annual board meeting in 2011 and a separate survey taken by the board.
- There were 988 respondents to this survey and 89 to the board survey. We are grateful for the strong response.

Q1: What do you hope to experience by living out a faithful Quaker life?

- 75%: Community for spiritual discernment
- 75%: Vibrant, deep, community worship
- 73%: Community for life's challenges
- 72%: Grow deeply with others
- 72%: Express beliefs through direct action and service
- 72%: Become a more loving and compassionate person



Q2: What do you see as the 3 to 5 key challenges for the religious society of friends in becoming a more vital, healthy, growing faith community?

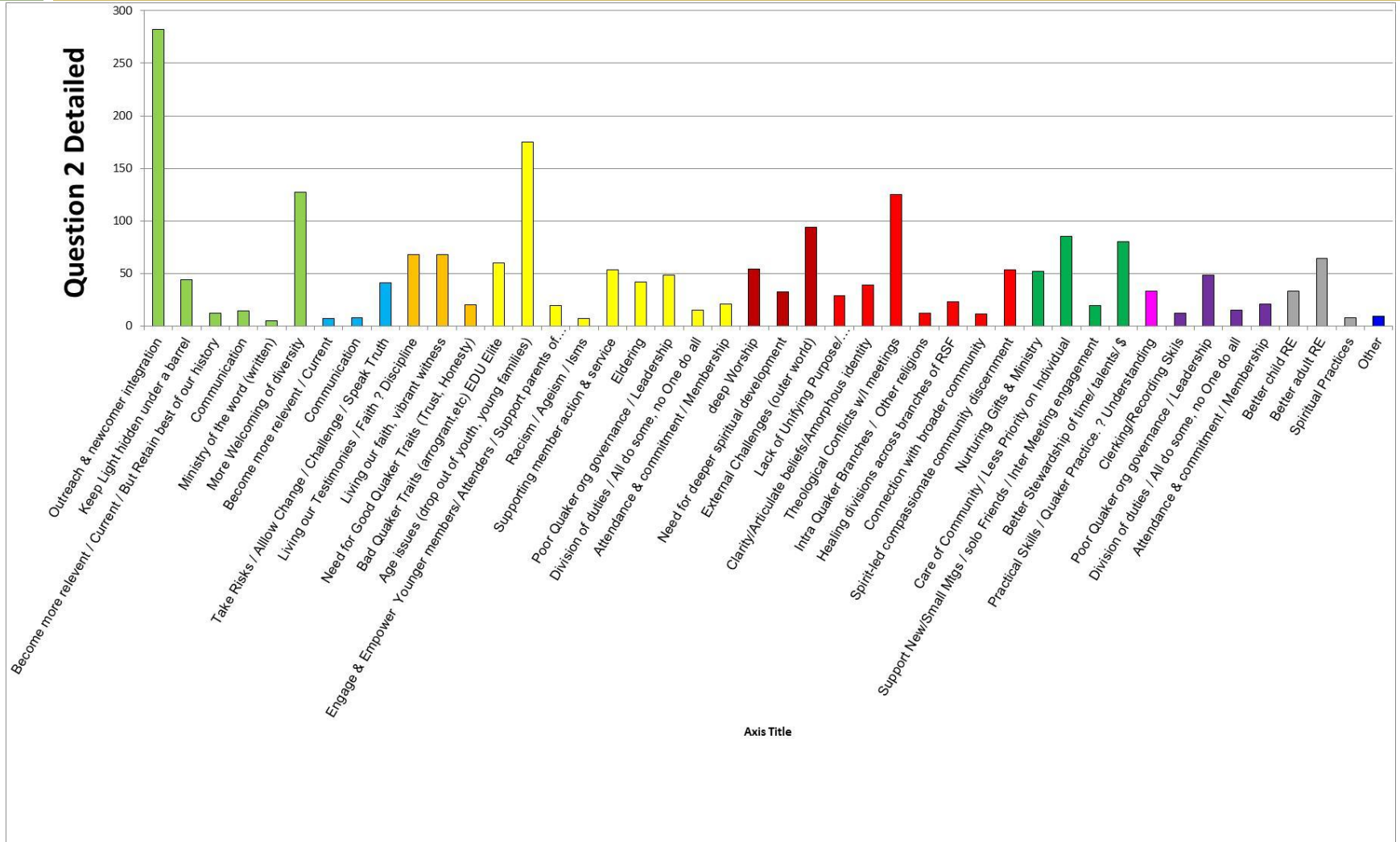
2,126
individual text
responses
(some
compound)

44 categories

10 broad
areas for
each category

- Outreach (#1 challenge)
- Engaging & Leading by Example (#2)
- Unifying Purpose & Identity (#3)
- Care of Community & Stewardship (#4)
- Deep Worship (#5)
- Becoming Relevant/Open to Change
- Living our Faith
- Practical Skills/ Qprocess/ Qunderstanding
- Leadership/division of duties
- Religious Education & Spiritual Practice

Q2: 44 categories of challenges for the RSOF from open-ended responses



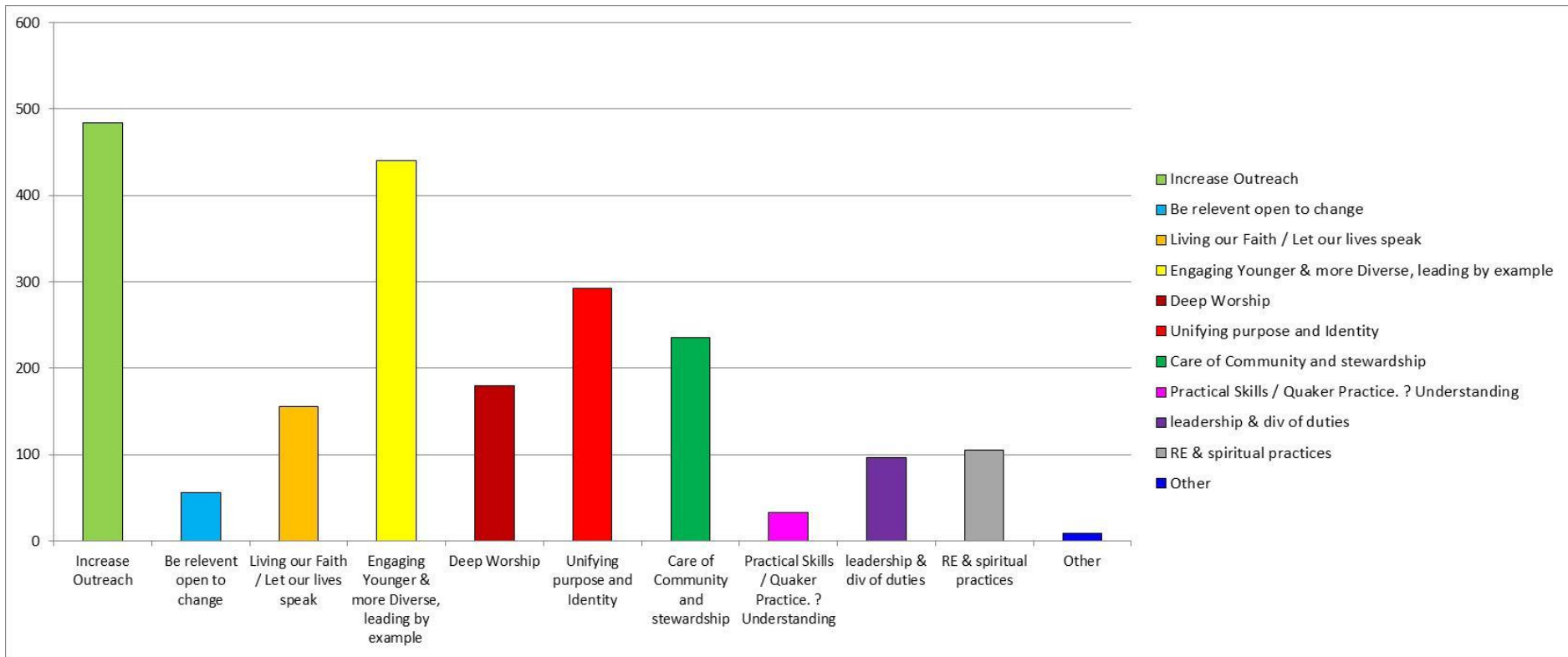
Q2: RSOF Challenges Categories

- Outreach & newcomer integration
- Keeping Light hidden under a barrel
Becoming more relevant & current while retaining best of our history
- Communication
- Ministry of the word (written)
- More Welcoming of diversity
- Becoming more relevant
- Taking Risks / Allowing Change / Challenge / Speaking Truth
- Living our Testimonies
- Faith & Discipline
- Living our faith, vibrant witness
- Need for Good Quaker Traits (Trust, Honesty)
- Bad Quaker Traits (arrogant, etc); EDU Elite
- Age issues (drop out of youth, young families)
- Engaging & Empowering Younger members & attenders / Supporting parents of young kids
- Racism / Ageism / Isms
- Supporting member action & service
- Eldering
- Poor Quaker org governance

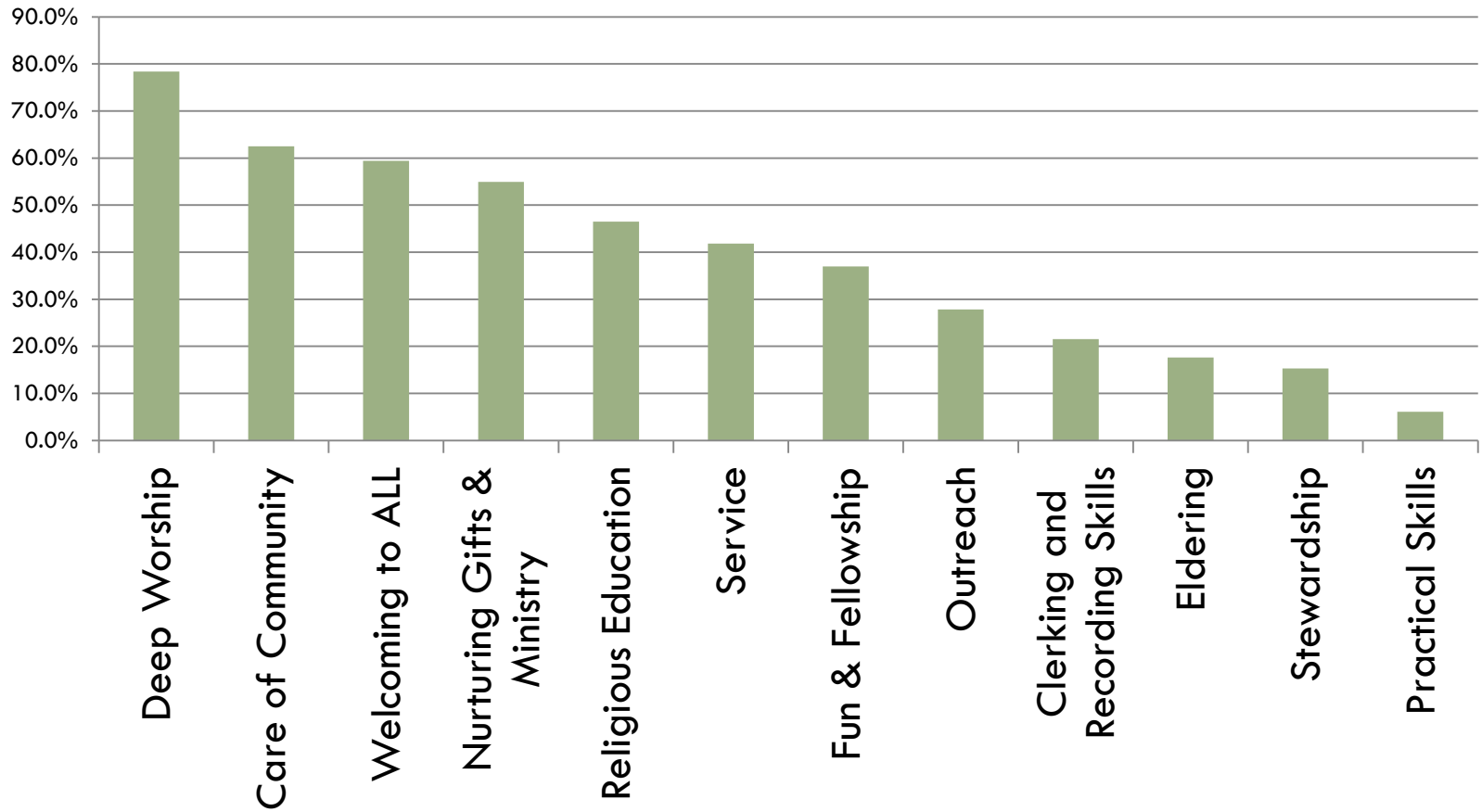
Q2: categories continued...

- All need to do some of the work, not having “One do all”
- Attendance & commitment / Membership
- Deep Worship
- Need for deeper spiritual development
- External Challenges (outer world)
- Lack of Unifying Purpose/ values/Identity Clarity/Articulate beliefs/Amorphous identity
- **Theological Conflicts w/i meetings**
- Intra Quaker Branches / Other religions
- Connection with broader community
- Spirit-led compassionate community discernment
- Nurturing Gifts & Ministry Care of Community /
- Less Priority on Individual Support
- New/Small Mtgs / solo Friends / Inter Meeting engagement
- Need for better leadership division of duties
- Healing divisions across branches of RSF

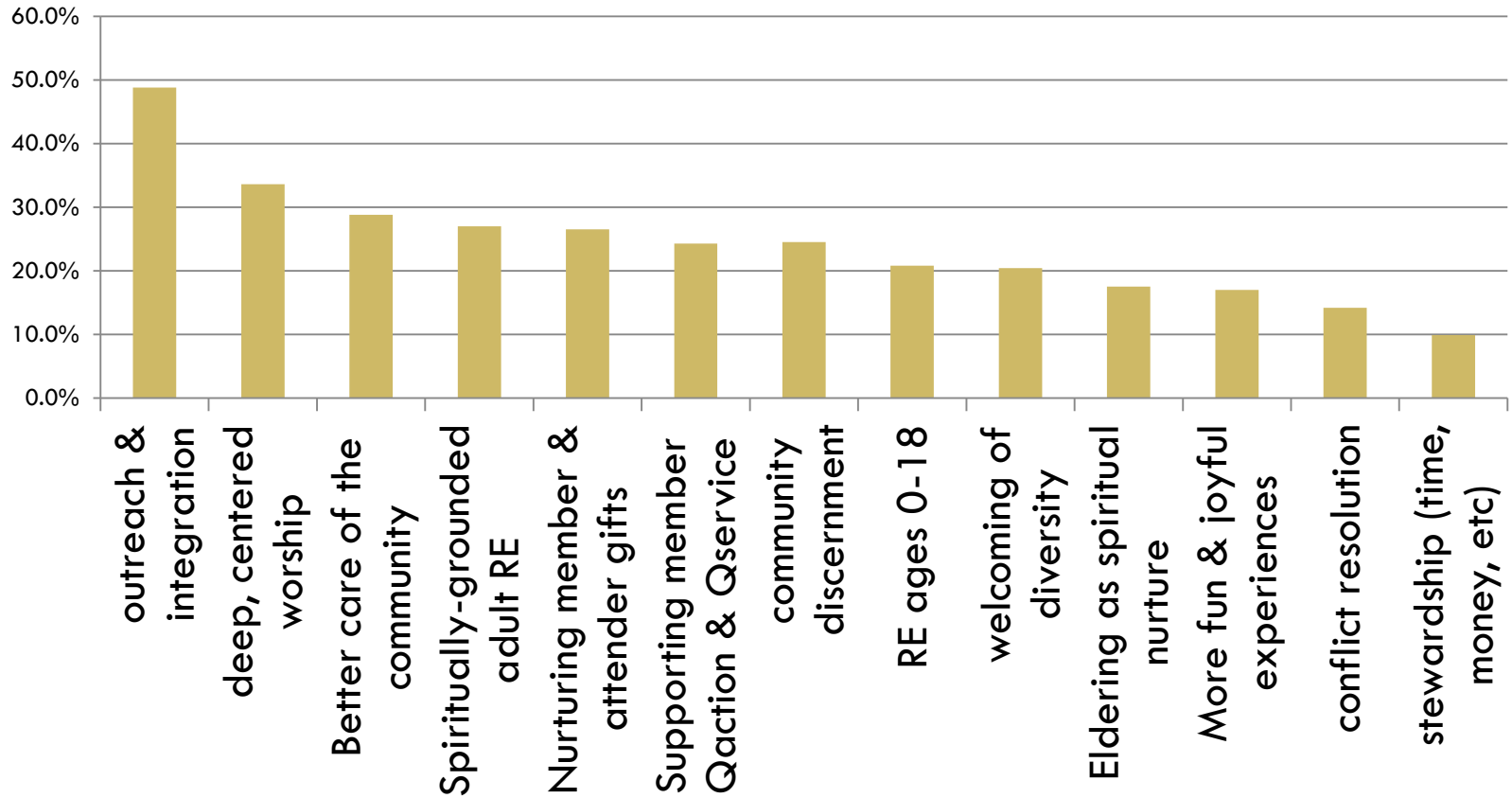
Q2: 10 broad areas of challenges for the RSOF condensed from the 44 categories



Q3: What are the 3 to 5 characteristics you believe best describe a vibrant or healthy monthly meeting?

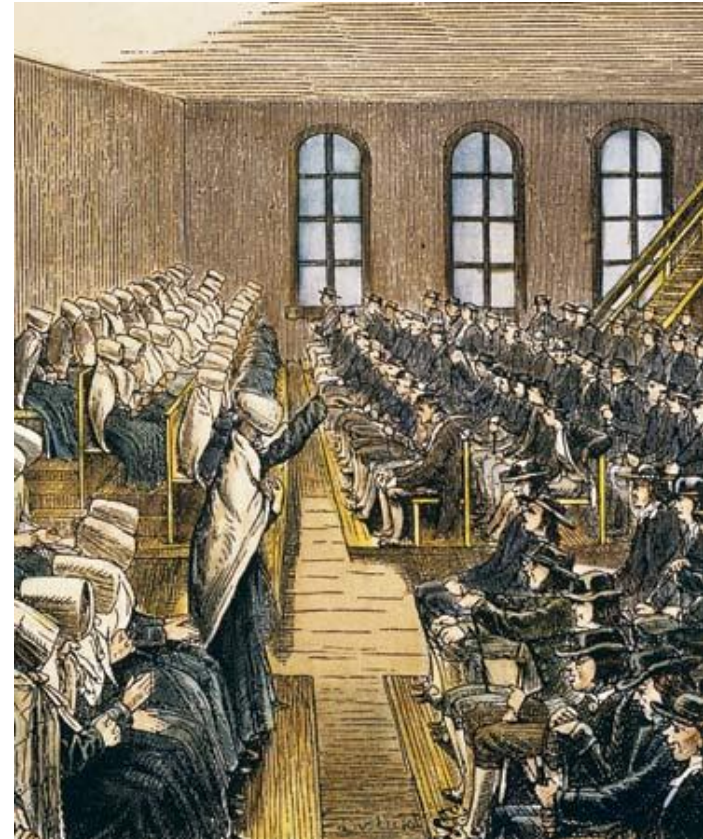


Q4: Choose 3 areas where you'd like to see growth in YOUR MM, YM, WG.

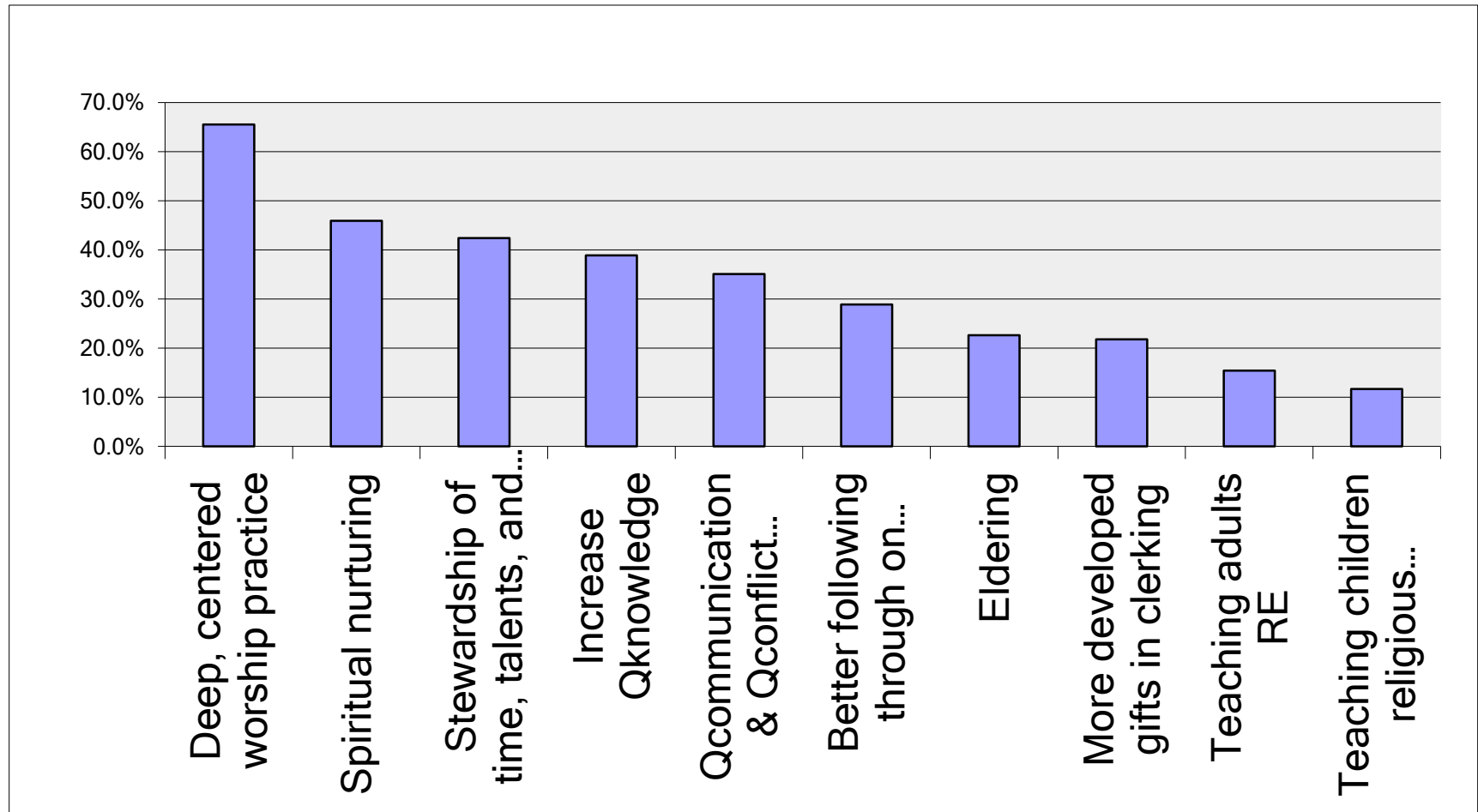


Q5: Top 6 priorities for YOUR monthly Meeting

1. Better outreach to seekers & Integration of newcomers
2. More Deep, centered worship
3. Better care of the community
4. Spiritually-grounded adult RE
5. Nurturing member & attender gifts
6. Supporting member Qaction & Qservice based on testimonies



Q5: What are areas you would like to grow in personally?

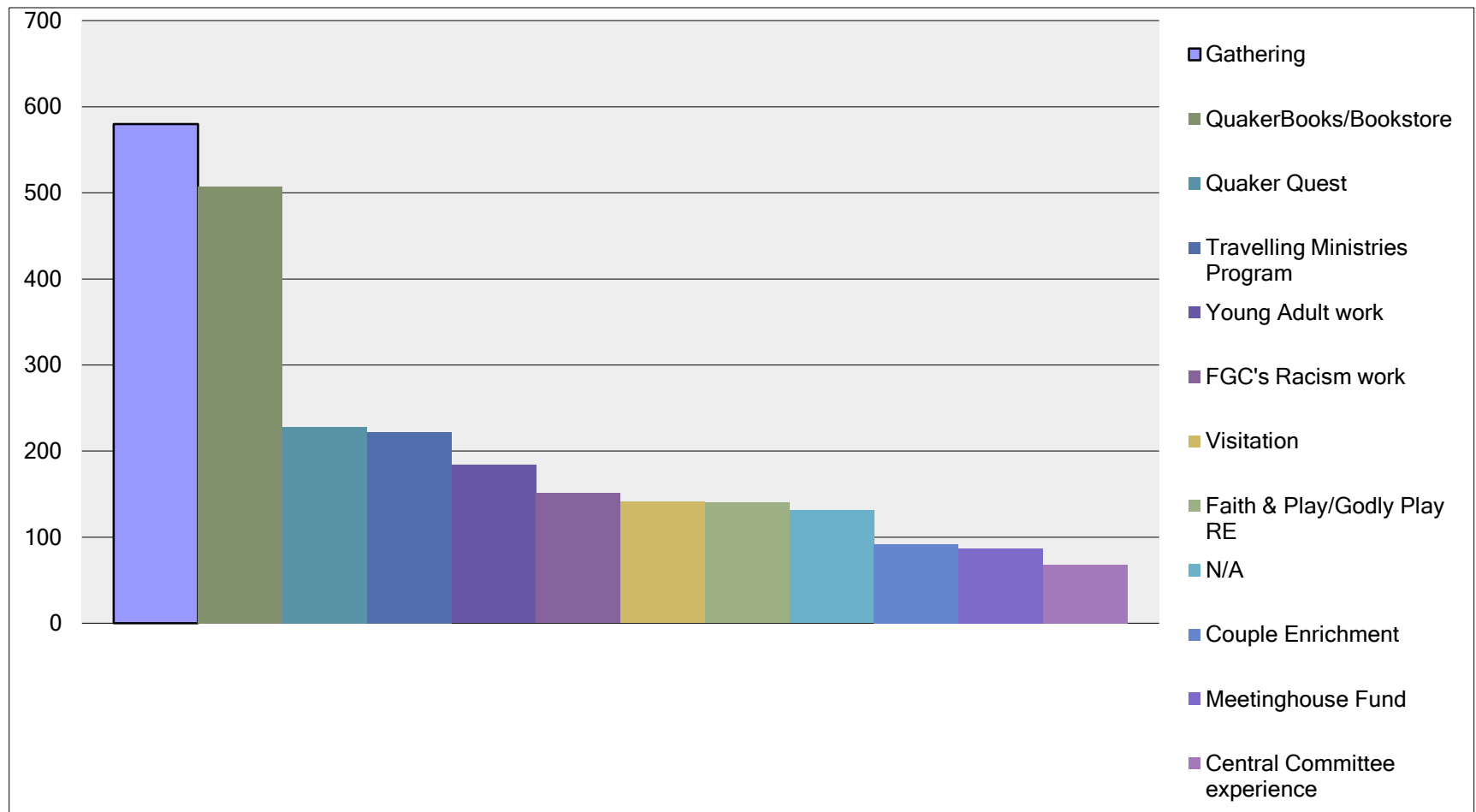


Q5: Top 8 Personal Growth Areas

1. Deep, centered worship practice
2. Spiritual nurturing
3. Stewardship of Time, Talents & Money
4. Increased Quaker Knowledge
5. Better Quaker communication & conflict resolution skills
6. Better following-through on Quaker-related tasks & responsibilities
7. Eldering
8. More developed gifts in clerking



Q6: Choose the top 3 FGC projects, events, and programs that, in your experience, have had the most positive impact on individuals and monthly and/or yearly meetings.



Q6: The top FGC projects, events, and programs that, in your experience, have had the most positive impact on you.

1. **Gathering (59%)**
2. **Quaker Books (51%)**
3. **Quaker Quest (20%)**
4. **Travelling Ministries Program (20%)**
5. **Young Adult work (18%)**
6. **FGC's Racism work (15%)**
7. **Visitation (14%)**



Q7: Choose up to 3 things you would most like FGC to do to help address Friends' and Meetings' needs, challenges, and desires for growth and deepening.

- Facilitate Friends and Meetings sharing spiritually transformational experiences and resources. (432/44%)
- Create a spiritual gift mentorship program to increase the number of Friends comfortable in using their gifts in their MMs/YMs. (385/39%)
- Expand Travelling Ministries Program to send more seasoned Friends to consult with meetings. (372/38%)
- Have online e-published FAQs, guidelines, and toolkits meant to increase Quaker knowledge & develop spiritual gifts. (353/36%)
- Support & Coordinate Quaker volunteers working to build vital MM & YMs across North America. (351/35%)
- Create online programs to help develop gifts/abilities that benefit meetings (clerking, recording, conflict resolution, eldership) (344/34%)

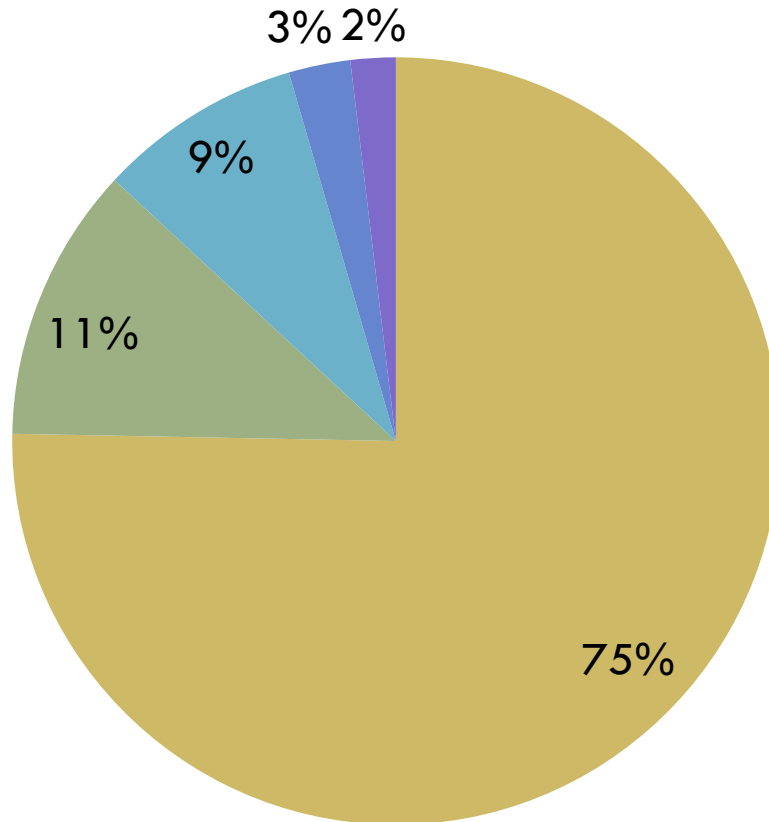
Q7: What did we miss? Tell us what you would like to see FGC do. (255 responses) Below are selected quotes

- Find ways to educate seekers about who we are and that we welcome them.
- Bring social injustice issues to the forefront of Quaker concern and action
- More available as an intro to Quakerism
- Develop the gifts of young people - parallel to or in concert with the spiritual gift mentorship program.
- I want all FGC meetings to feel a direct connection to the fabulous resource that is FGC.
- Promote the RSoft in the media. Provide YMs, QMs and MMs materials to do the same.
- I'm not sure I want FGC to do anything more than organize the annual Gathering.
- Promote religious education programs for small monthly meetings.
- Support trainings in Quaker decision-making and clerking for the non-Quaker community
- I like the idea of volunteers traveling, listening, and sharing in other's meetings.

Q8: FGC Identify & Spread Best Practices?

- There is no "right" way to develop & sustain vital MM and YM communities -- or a vital personal spiritual practice. However, there are best practices that can make it a more joyful, Spirit-led journey.
- FGC is considering working with YMs and MMs and individual Friends to identify best practices and services that help to develop and sustain vital meeting communities.
- Once these are identified, FGC is thinking of offering learning modules, presentations, workshops, and other opportunities for individuals, committees, and meetings.
- We asked: What do you think about that?

Q8: FGC Identify & Spread Best Practices?

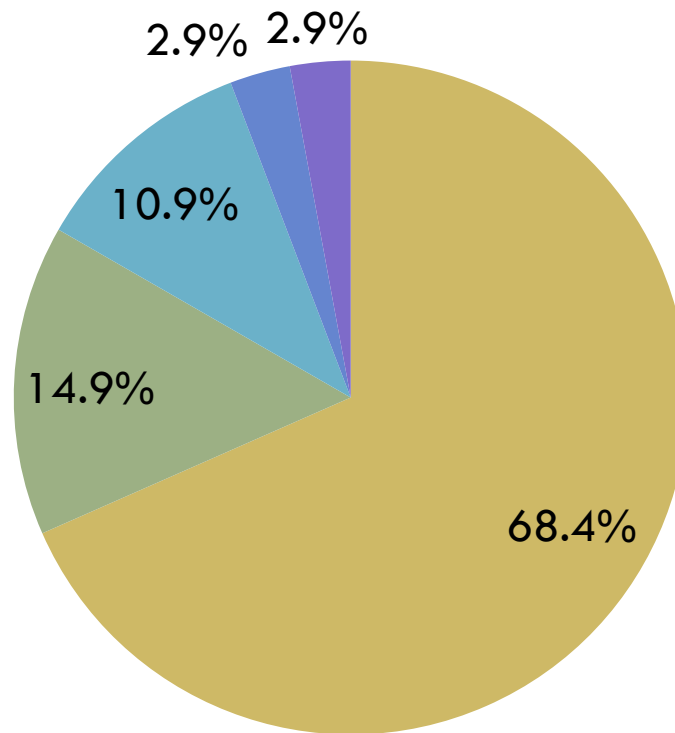


- This would be very useful for me or my monthly meeting
- We don't need it, but I can see other Friends and monthly meetings benefiting.
- Do it now! I'd donate to make this happen.
- Sounds terrible.
- What FGC is offering now works fine. Don't change.

Q9: Online Quaker Education

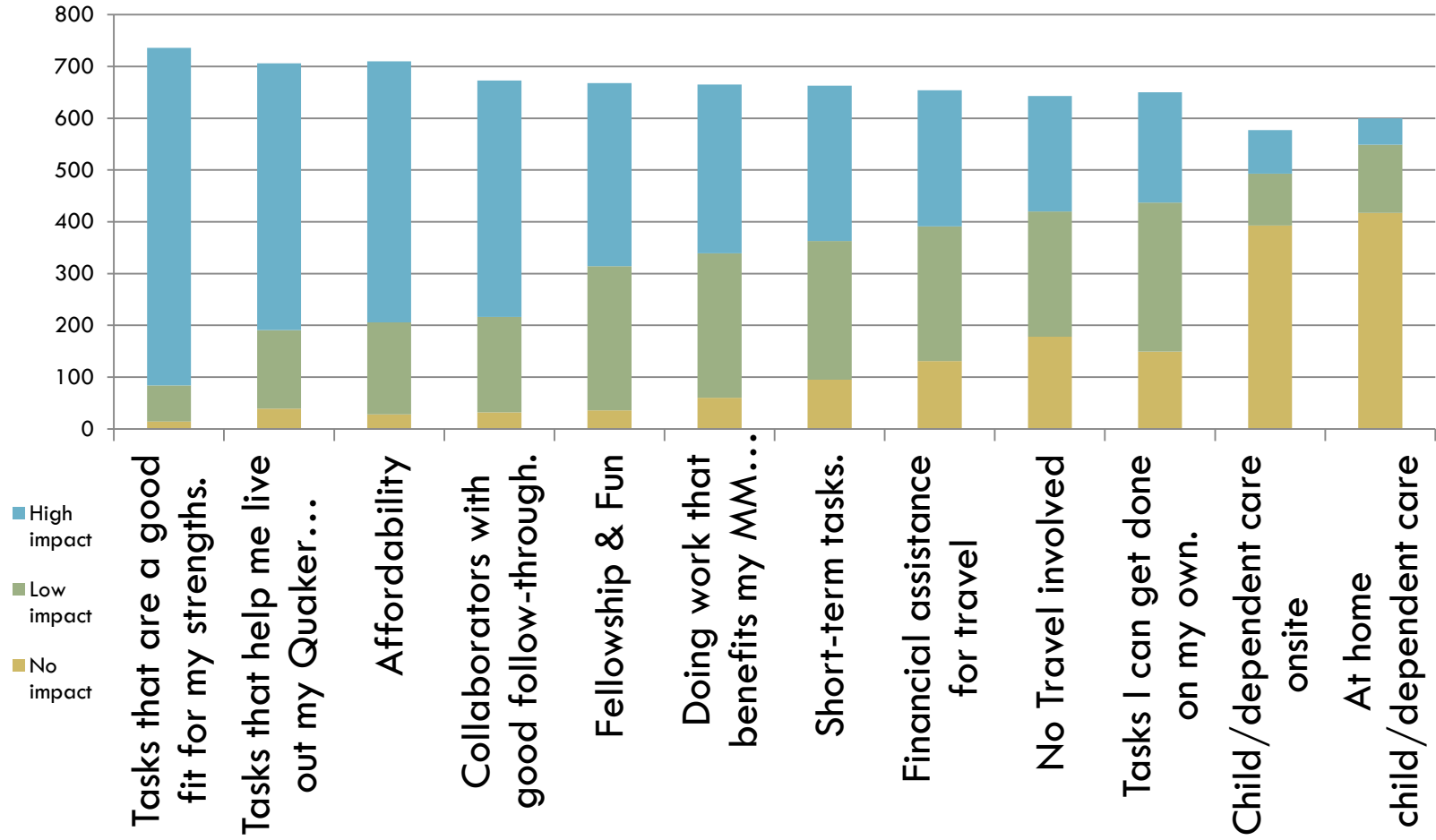
“Would it be helpful to you or to members of your meeting if FGC created an online education program that introduced you to aspects of Quaker faith & practice from various viewpoints, in individual modules so you could easily learn about and experience the variety of practices in a clear way?”

Q9: Online Quaker Education



- This would be very useful for me or my monthly meeting
- Do it now! I'd donate to make this happen.
- We don't need it, but I can see other Friends and monthly meetings benefiting.
- What FGC is offering now works fine. Don't change.
- Sounds terrible.

Q10: What are the things that are most important to creating your ideal Quaker volunteer opportunity and would impact your willingness to volunteer on FGC projects?



Q10: Ideal Volunteer

FGC Stakeholder Top 6

1. Tasks that are a good fit for my strengths.
2. Tasks that help me live out my Quaker Testimonies
3. Affordability
4. Collaborators with good follow-through.
5. Fellowship & Fun
6. Doing work that benefits my MM and YM.

CC Member Top 6

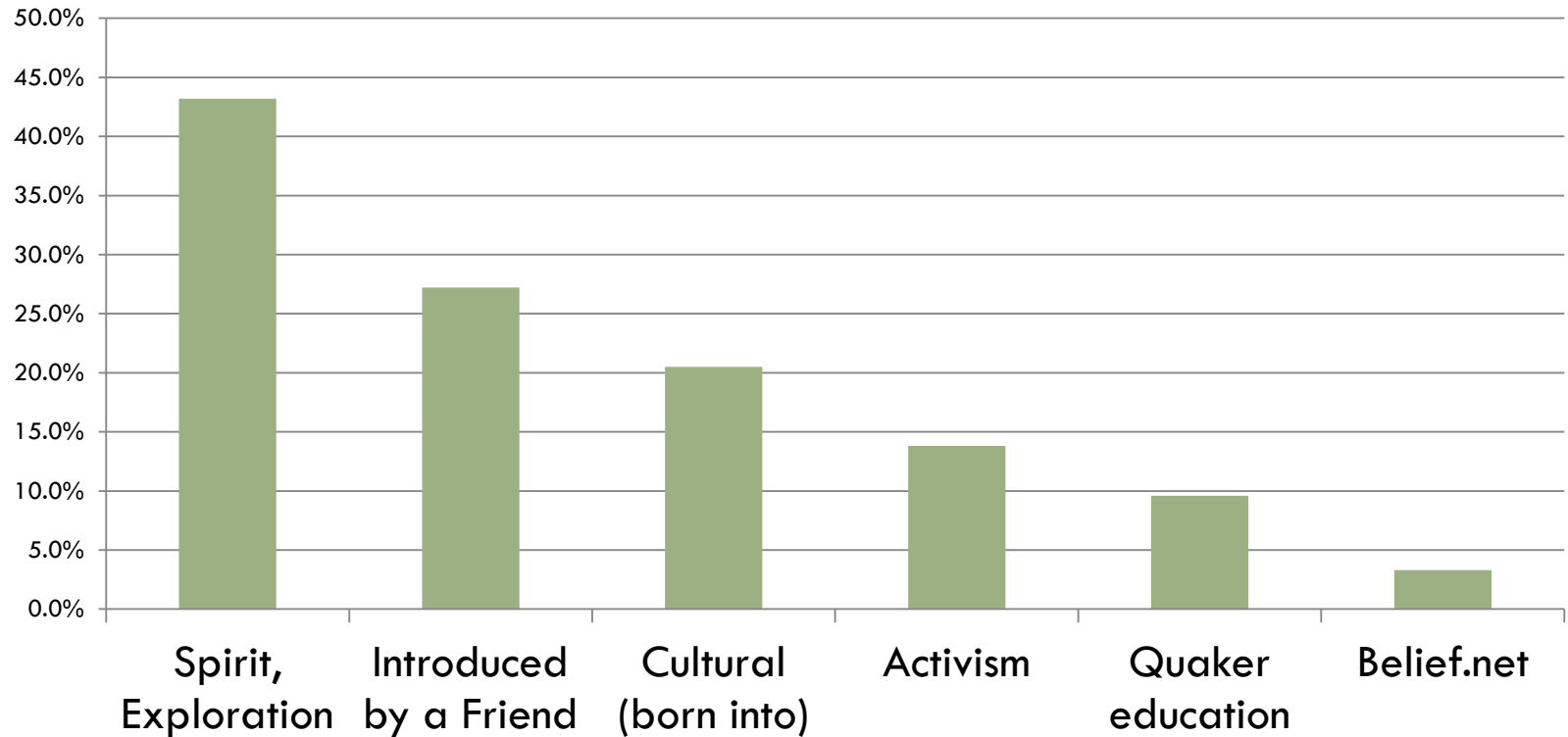
1. Tasks that are a good fit for my strengths.
2. Tasks that help me live out my Quaker Testimonies
3. Collaborators with good follow-through.
4. Helping me feel I belonged
5. Doing work that benefits my MM and YM.
6. Affordability

Q11: Please tell us any ideas you have for FGC's processes or administration to become more faithful, serviceable, and productive.

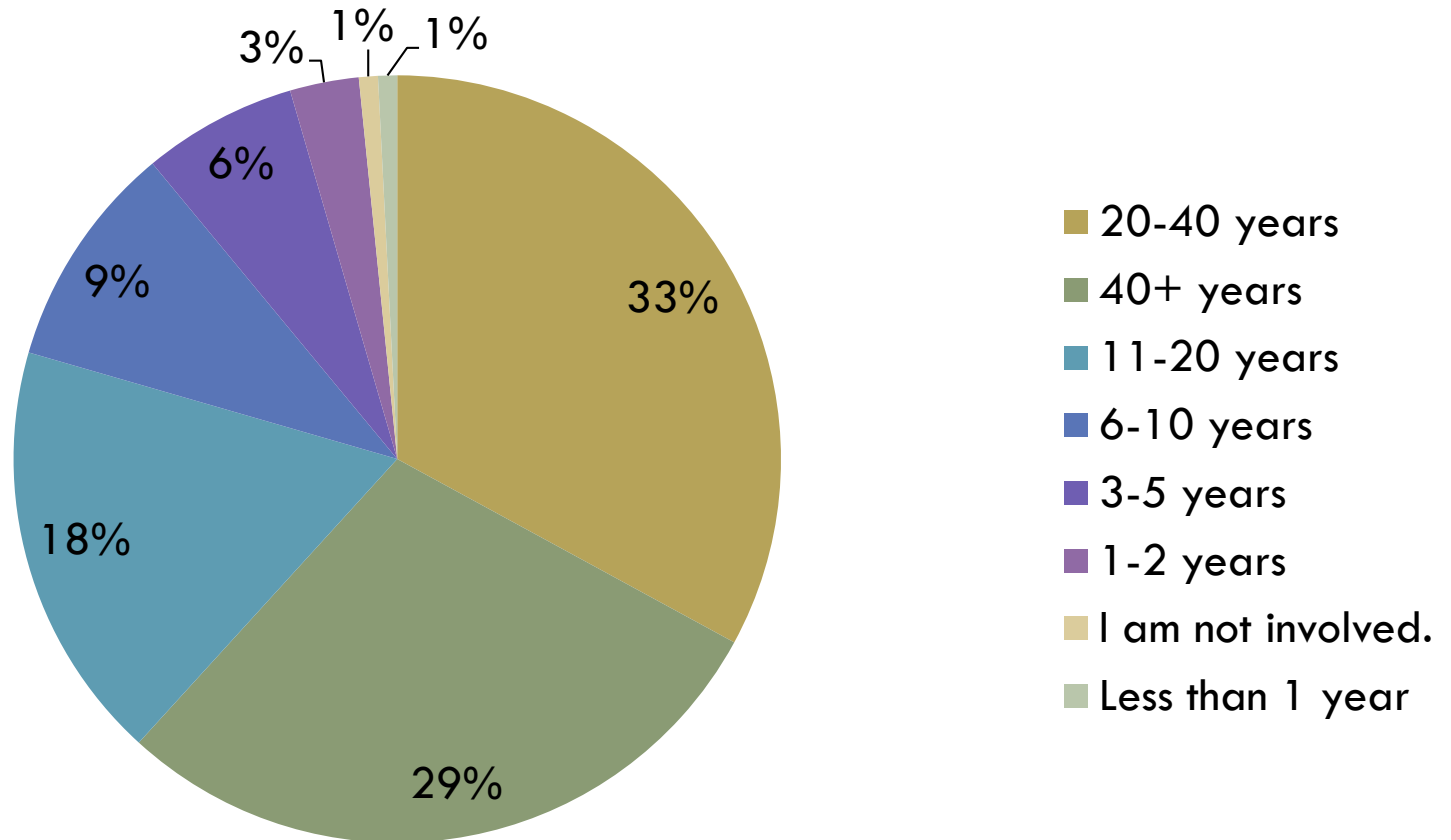
FGC: open
text 217
Responses

- 52 comments re: FGC structure
- 25 comments re: Communication
- 18 comments re: Online ideas
- 18 comments about the LOCATION of FGC services
- 17 comments re: Gathering
- 17 positive comments re: FGC
- 15 comments re: Travelling Ministry

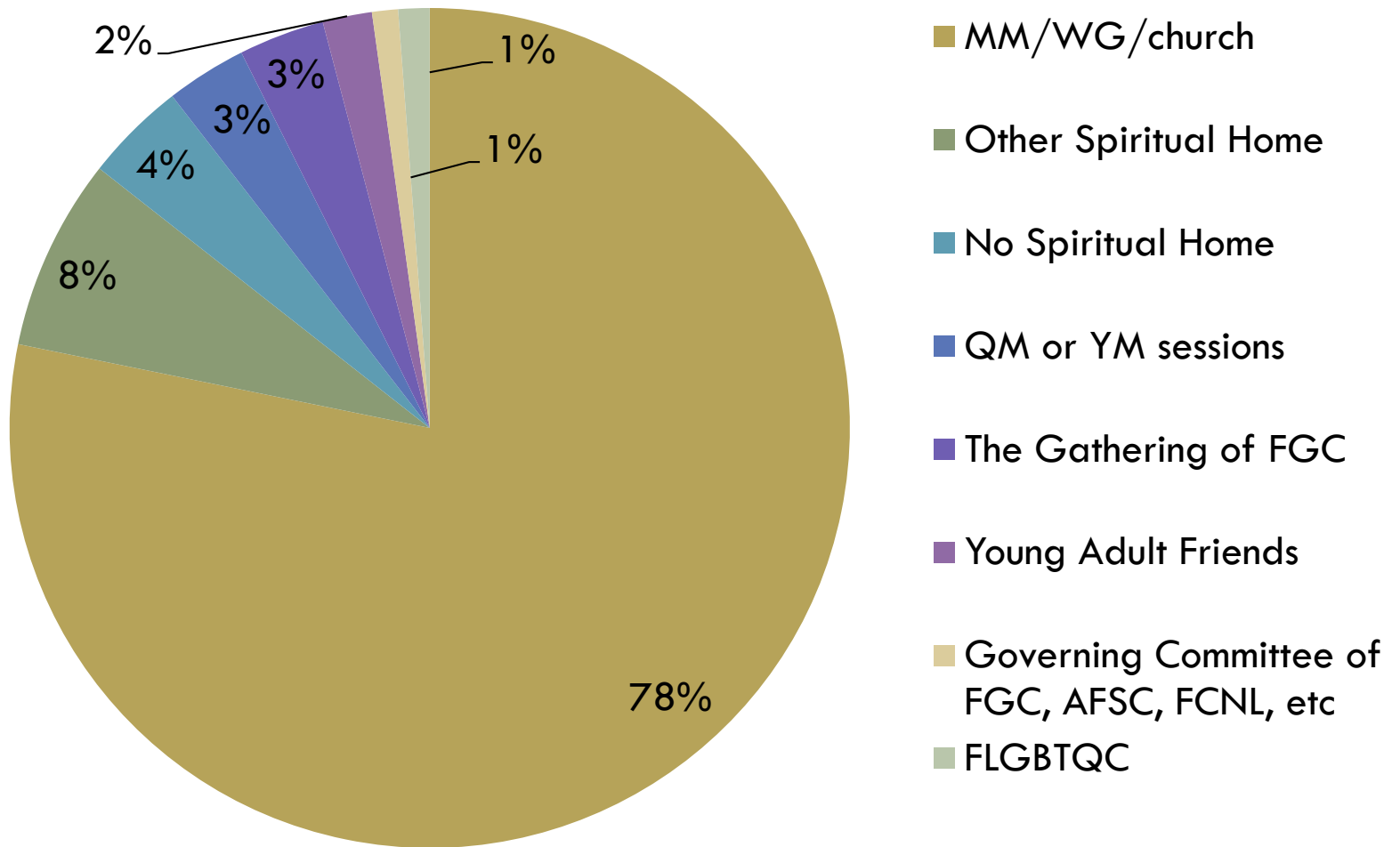
Q12: What brought you into the RSOFF?



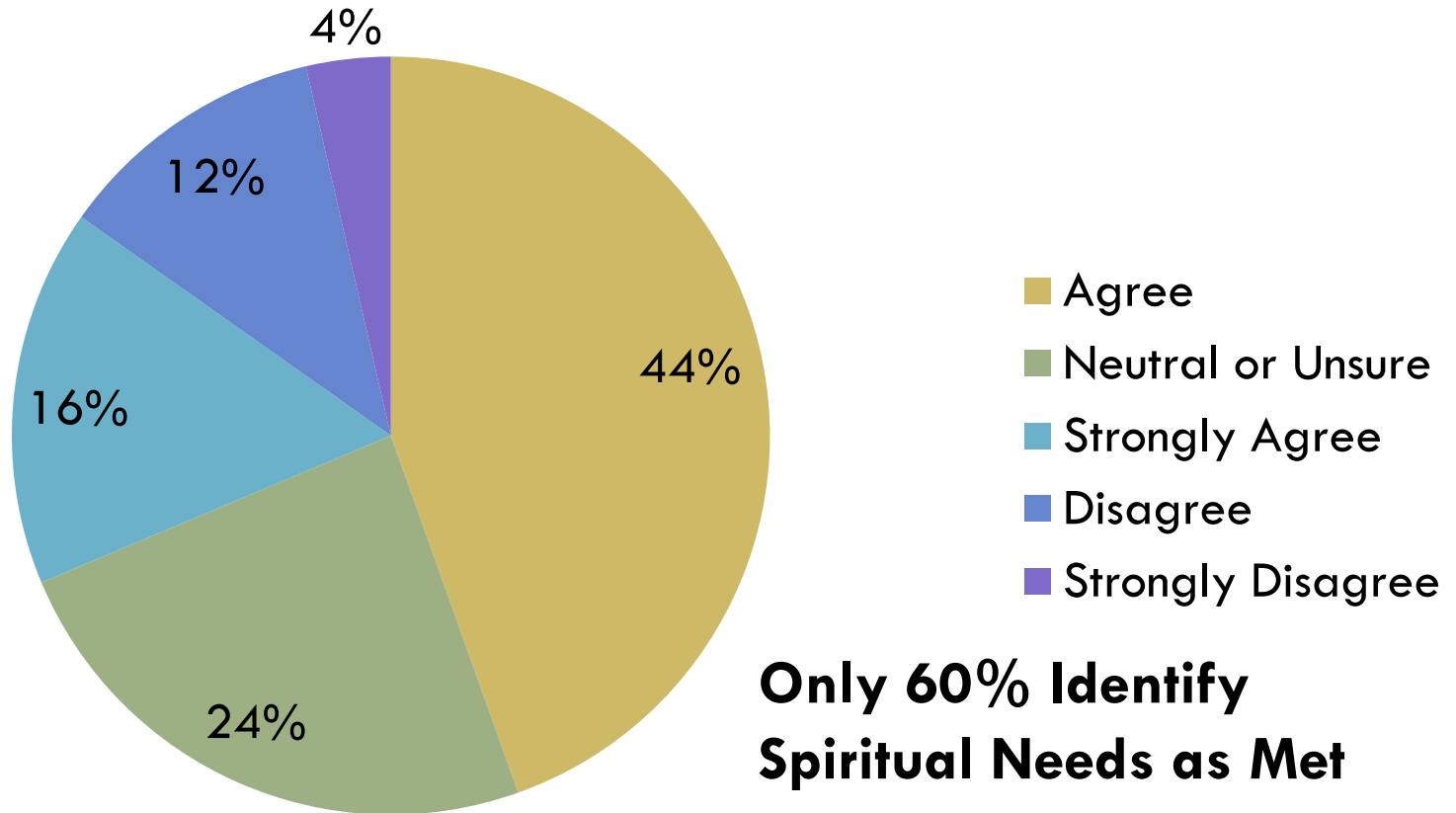
Q13: How long involved w/ RSOF?



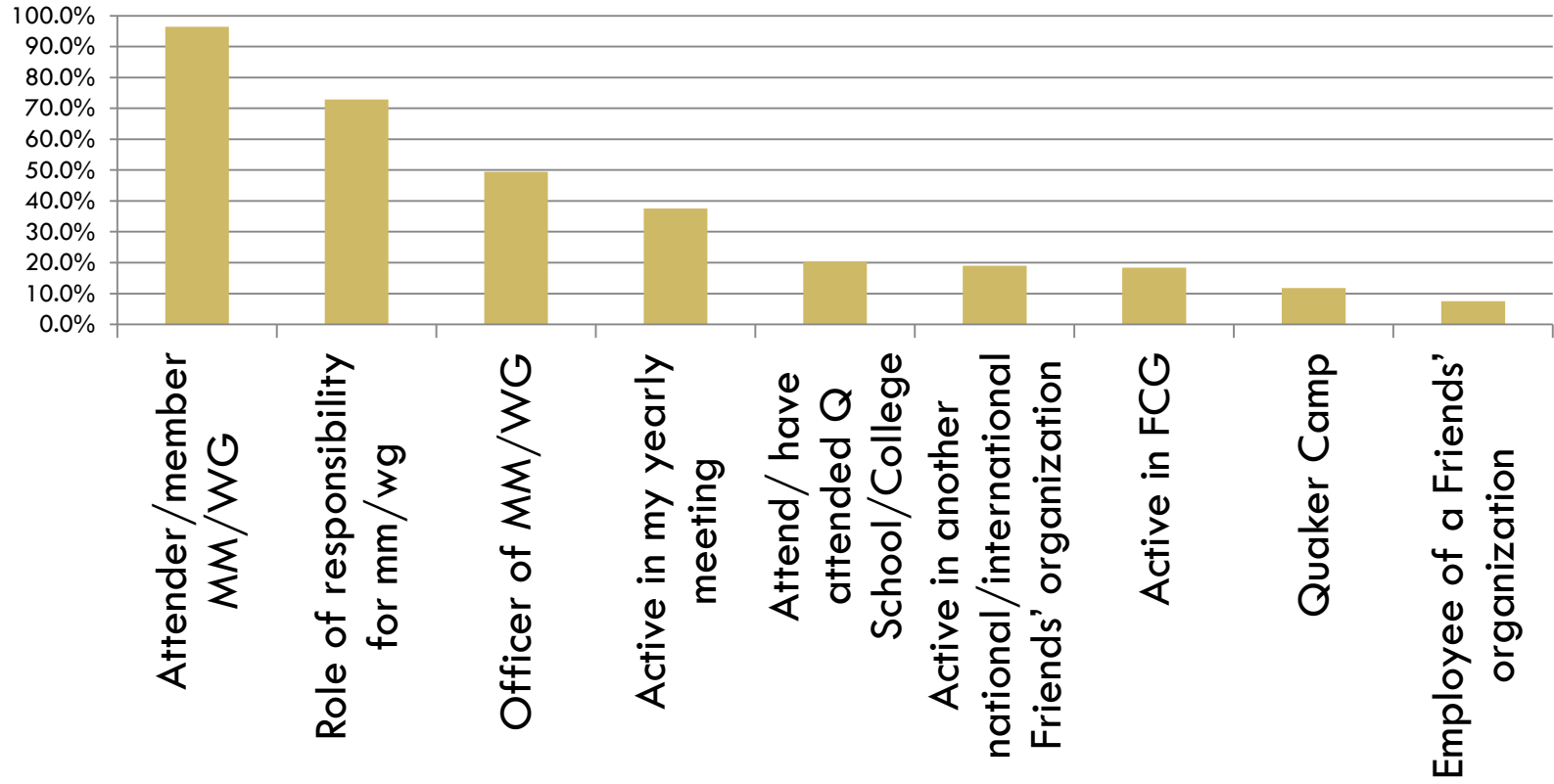
Q14: Primary Spiritual Home



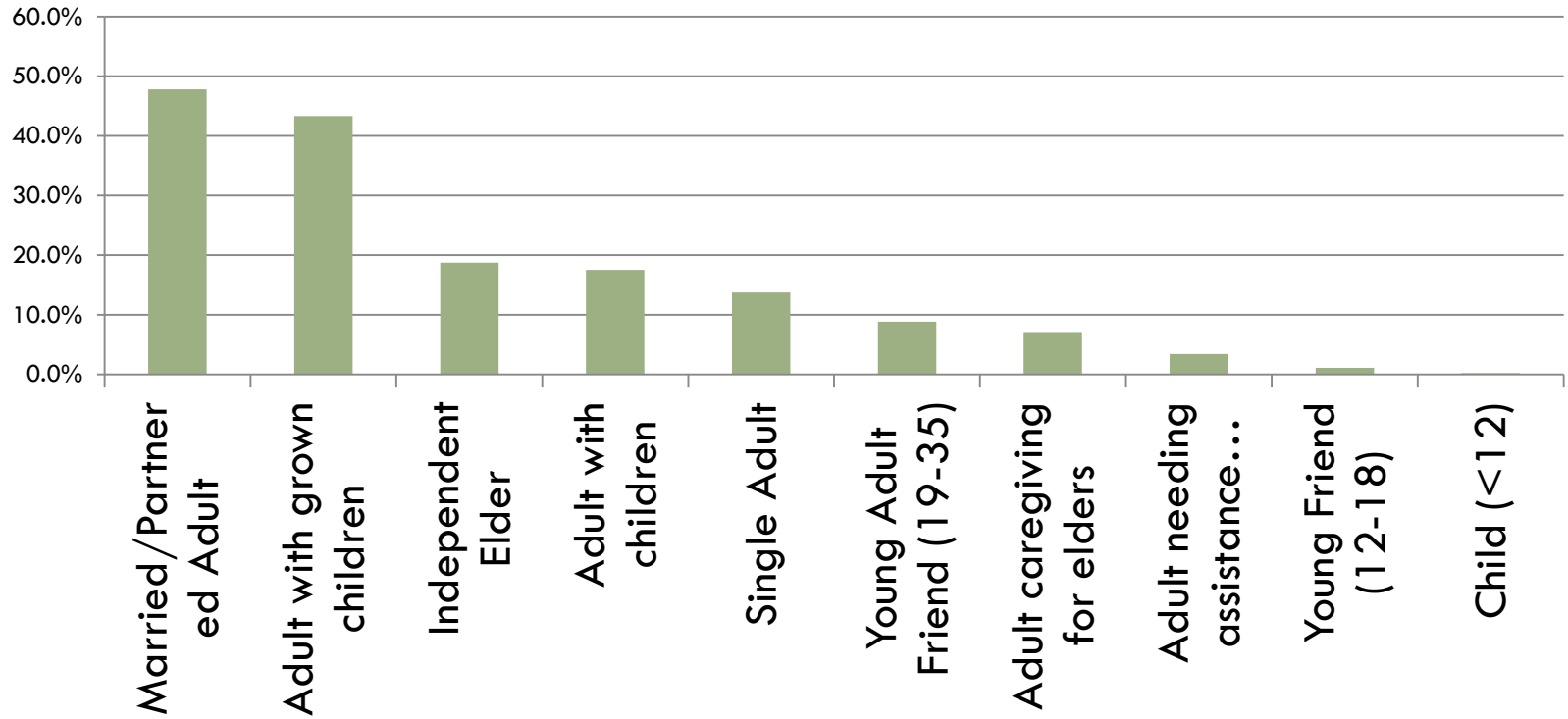
Q15: Spiritual Needs met in meeting/community?



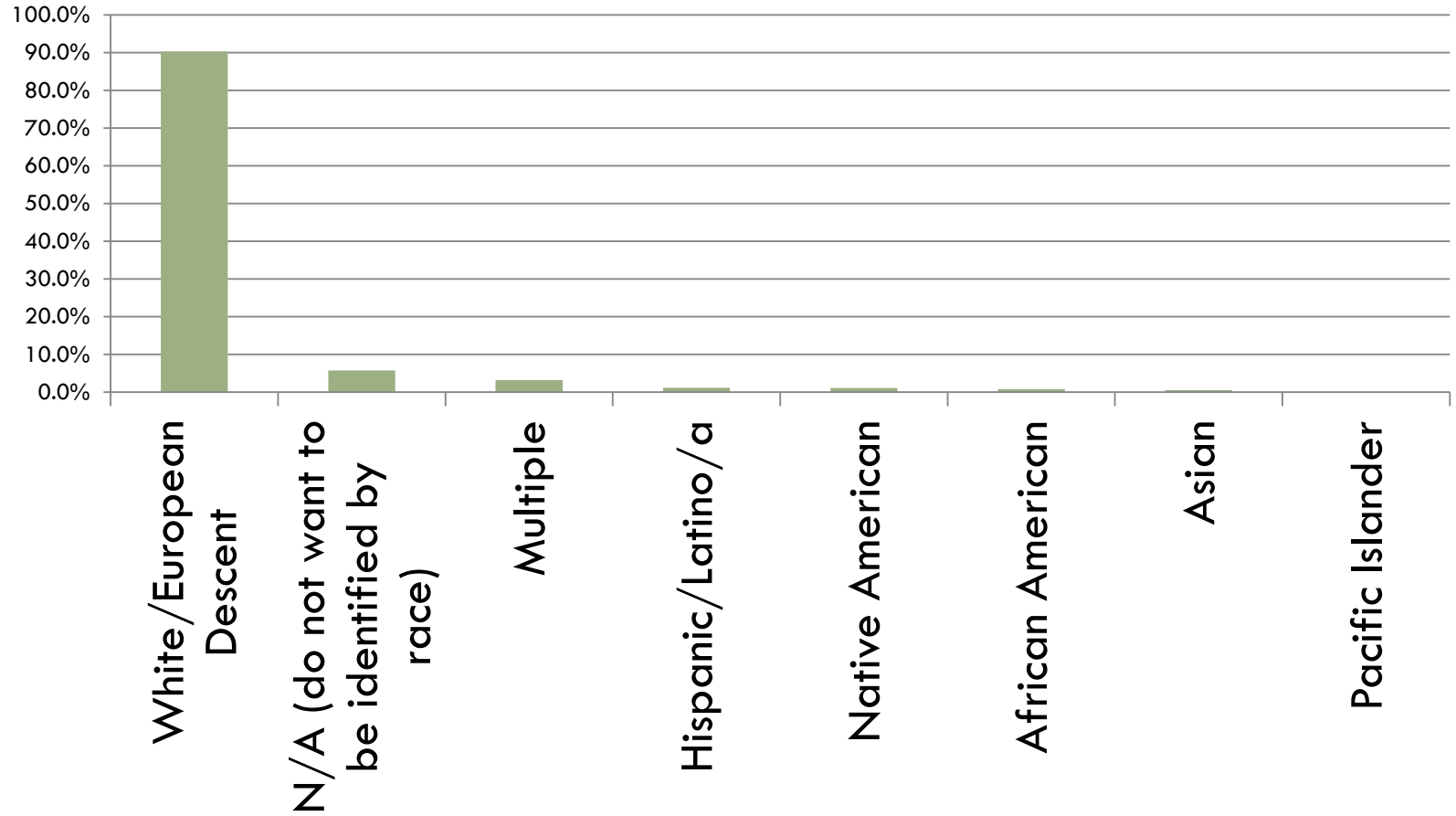
Q16: How involved with RSOF orgs & meetings?



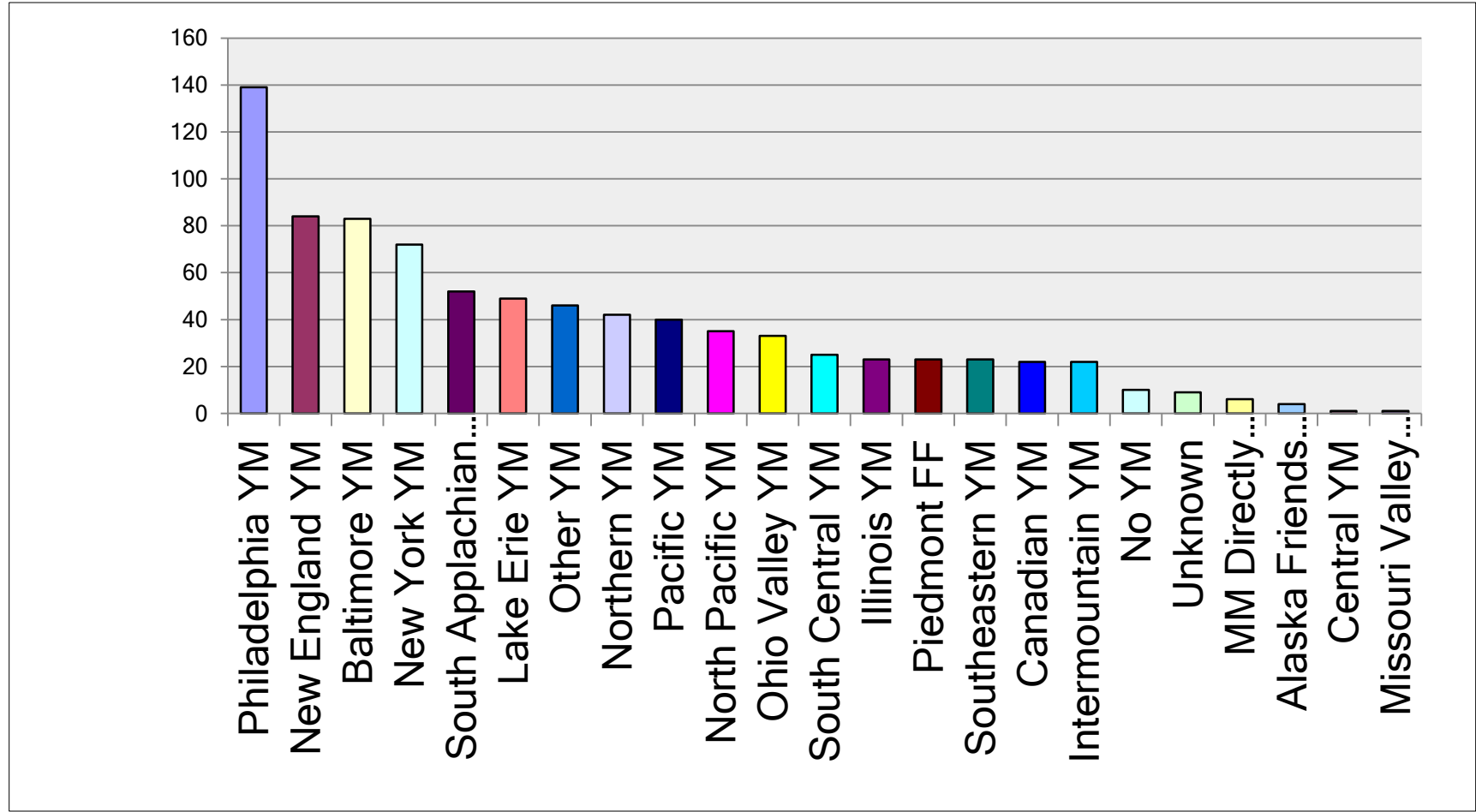
Q17: Life Stage(s)



Q18: Racial/Ethnic Background



Q19: Yearly Meeting



Top 10 Responding YMs

Q: Is this reflective of the membership of FGC?

Q: Is this reflective of the membership of CC?

A: Not at all...

- Philadelphia YM 16.7%
- New England YM 10.0%
- Baltimore YM 9.6%
- New York YM 8.5%
- South Appalachian YM 6.4%
- Lake Erie YM 6.0%
- Other YM 5.3%
- Northern YM 5.2%
- Pacific YM 4.7%
- North Pacific YM 4.3%

Q20: Negative FGC Experiences

- 304 Responses
- Heartfelt, sincere
- Most experiences had to do with interactions with Quakers not being loving— at Gathering, at FGC workshops, etc
- 11 heartfelt bad Central Committee experiences
- Some other themes:
 - Important tasks not done due to skill level & lack of follow-through by CC members & FGC staff
 - Insider Culture with poor attitude towards newcomers
 - Ungrounded business meetings w/ lack of boundaries re: accepted Quaker faith & practice & lifestyle
 - Quaker Quest/Faith & Play too proprietary & controlled

Q21: Positive FGC Experiences

- 484 Responses
- Vast majority of positive experiences were at Gathering
- 23 comments re: Central Committee Service
- “I’ve been particularly pleased with the bookstore selection and services.”
- “Traveling Ministries, Bookstore, Gathering”
- “Display of the AFSC Eyes Wide Open boots exhibit”
- “Being asked, and nurtured through the process of being Gathering co-clerk.”
- “Couple Enrichment Program”
- “Hearing people at gathering like Shawn Claiborne, Ben Pink Dandelion, Phil Gulley, and others who are somewhat removed from our unprogrammed, non-pastoral community.”