#### Quiet Connections

## Your Meet Up Welcome Pack



If you consider yourself introverted, sensitive or shy, then we're your people

QuietConnections.co.uk

## Belonging

doesn't require you to change who you are; it requires you to be who you are

Brene Brown



#### We're so pleased that you're here.

Whatever you may have felt or experienced in the past, we want you to know that your introversion and sensitivity are not flaws. You're enough just as you are. In fact, here, your quietness is not only accepted... it's celebrated.

At Quiet Connections we believe that there should be more inclusion, fairness and equal opportunities in society for quiet people like us. We're doing all that we can to advocate for this change and by becoming a member of the Quieteers Club, you're an important part of that - so thank you. You can join us in creating wider change by showing up for yourself and for other quieteers in our community.

Our community is one of understanding, togetherness and belonging. Unity not only helps us to feel more confident, but it helps each of us to accept and appreciate ourselves and live more fulfilling lives. We hope that you'll be able to make meaningful connections with likeminded people at our weekly Meet Ups, in particular.

Our Meet Ups across Cornwall gently connect quieteers like us in a safe, relaxing space where it's okay to talk and it's okay to be quiet too. You can find lots of helpful information about what to expect from the Meet Ups in this Welcome Pack, as well as info on the resources and training that you've now got access to, tips from our certified coaches, stories from other quieteers and more. We hope that you're looking forward to getting started, and if there's anything at all that you want to ask please reach out using the contact details below (or ask your Meet Up leader).

However you decide to get involved with Quiet Connections, today marks the start of your new journey to finding more purpose and flourishing as your true, quiet, wonderful self. And we're with you all the way.

See you soon, Your Quiet Connections team

hello@quietconnections.co.uk | @quietconnections



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## About the Meet Ups

## Sensitivity

to others' feelings is a gift that introverts possess in abundance

Adam Grant

#### About our Meet Ups

Our Meet Ups across Cornwall gently connect quieteers like us in a kind, relaxing space where it's okay to talk and it's okay to be quiet too.



This Meet Up is designed to help you make meaningful connections with likeminded people in a calm and gentle way that feels authentic to your true quiet self.



Whether you're chatting and sharing stories with your fellow quieteers, enjoying a craft or wellbeing activity, or simply relaxing with a good book in the company of others, this is a safe space where your quiet voice matters – and where you can feel part of a community that truly gets



"Thank you for today, it was an incredibly validating experience, having some company without any pressure to talk or be a certain way. I was surprised how comfortable I felt so quickly."

#### What We Expect...

Issues within our Meet Ups are very rare, but we want to ensure that everyone feels safe & supported. To help our community thrive & maintain a welcoming space for all Quieteers, please read the following expectations

#### Respect Different Viewpoints

We embrace diversity of thought and encourage open-minded discussions. It's okay to have different opinions and engage in healthy debate, but please avoid being confrontational and be mindful of how you are interacting with others.



#### Treat Everyone Equally

Prejudice and discrimination of any kind has no place in our community. We pride ourselves on fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, or any other differences.



#### Seek Consent Before Private Contact

Please do not message or reach out to other members individually (via text, WhatsApp, or other platforms) unless you have obtained their permission in person. If they agree to connect outside the group, that's completely fine!



#### Build Trust First

Respect that trust takes time to develop. Please be mindful not to ask for someone's contact information or social media on the first day. Focus on getting to know them first.



#### Refrain from Asking for Gifts or Money

We strive to encourage healthy boundaries and ensure that no one feels pressured to give money or gifts, as we don't know everyone's circumstances. This is a sign of mutual respect.



#### Respect Privacy and Confidentiality, but Speak Up When Needed

What is shared within the group should remain within the group. Please respect everyone's privacy and personal experiences. However, if you have ANY concerns about something shared in a Meet Up or the behaviour of another individual, we encourage you to reach out to us. You can contact us directly at meetups@quietconnections.co.uk, and we will handle this sensitively and take appropriate steps to resolve the issue.



<sup>\*</sup>If these guidelines are disregarded, it will be raised with the individual responsible. However, if the issue is significant or persistant, it may result in removal from the group.

#### What You Can Expect...

## It's okay to talk and it's okay to be quiet too

Our intention is to help you connect with others, but there's absolutely no pressure to participate or set any big goals. You're invited to do what feels right for you.

## You can go at your own pace

We understand that you may prefer to ease into conversation gradually, or that some days you might like to sit quietly with a good book whilst simply in the company of others. We welcome both quietude and chatter.



## Optional activities

Every week we bring along materials for casual, optional activities for you to participate in if you wish, from creative journaling to painting to crochet. You're also welcome to bring your own creative project or a book to read.

#### Small huddles of 2-3

We encourage connecting in smaller groups so that deeper, more meaningful conversations can take place and that each person has the opportunity to speak and participate. "The first time I joined a Meet Up, left me with so many positive feelings. I was nervous before attending since it's quite hard for me to meet new people, but the anxiety faded when I was in that lovely space with other quieteers, and knowing there's no pressure to talk or do anything at all. I could enjoy everything at my own pace so I felt completely comfortable. I was just sitting there and watching everyone talking at first. I found the colouring very helpful so I had something to do with my hands while listening to others' sharing. I'm really looking forward to other Meet Ups!"

Emily, Truro

### Conversation starters on the tables

th new Because you can't have a meet u

We know that having conversations with new people can be challenging, so we've done the tricky part for you and provided some interesting, positive questions that you can ask your fellow quieteers to get to know them.

Because you can't have a meet up without them, right?

Tea, coffee, hot chocolate

and biscuits...



"I am able to be part of a group socially, in comfort and feeling safe, for the first time in a long time with them. I have a sense of belonging and being cared about. It's just lovely."

Rose, Redruth

#### Pop-Up Rules

We're intentionally creating a more inclusive space for those of us who are quieter, introverted, sensitive, or shy, which nurtures, protects and cares for the group as a whole.

Embracing these pop-up rules help us all to create a safe and connecting space for ourselves and for others





#### Help a Fellow Quieteer Feel Connected

Remember that, as a community of quiet people, the person next to you may be introverted, shy or feel socially anxious – and almost all of us feel awkward at some gatherings (even if they appear confident to you). As a quieteer, your role is to do all you can to help someone feel calm, welcome and included (smiling, saying hello or using the conversation starters dotted around work well).



#### Embrace a Curious Mindset

We're open to exploring and discovering. We take an interest in the worlds and experiences of other people, as well as new perspectives, ideas, and activities. We ask questions and gently challenge assumptions considering 'what else could be true?'



#### Lead with Compassion

We're sensitive to other people's feelings. If we explore a divisive topic, we do so openly with curiosity and kindness to invite in other people's perspectives and ideas too. Conversations that happen here should feel curious, compassionate and connecting.







#### Seek Sameness and Celebrate Uniqueness

You have permission to pass on small talk. Get to know your fellow quieteers and discover what lights them up.



#### Assume Each Person is Doing Their Best

We encourage one another to go at their own pace, and understand that we each have our own unique strengths and challenges that we bring. We make the most generous assumptions about one another.



#### Permission to...

...talk ...be quiet ...observe ...leave early

...make a drink ...eat the biscuits

...ask questions ...be curious about other people

...tell us if you'd rather not talk right now

...pass on a question you've been asked

#### It's Okay to Bring...

...a book ...a friend ...your own refreshments

...your knitting, crochet, drawing

...or another creative project you're working on

#### It's Okay to Move...

...sit in a space that feels comfortable for you ...step out of the room if you need a quiet moment to yourself ...start a new seating area if one space looks a bit full for your liking

...sit with different people during the session

...visit one of our other groups across Cornwall



# About Quiet Connections

#### Why We Exist

Our mission is to change the world with and for quiet people



We all deserve to feel seen and heard...but that doesn't mean that we should have to raise our voices to match the louder people in the room. Whilst we wholeheartedly advocate for personal growth to strengthen our confidence, wellbeing and authenticity, we do not believe that we should have to stretch ourselves as far as society sometimes pushes us to.

Quietness is not a flaw.
We are good enough exactly as we are.

In fact, we believe that it's society that needs to change. There should be more inclusion, fairness and equal opportunities for quiet people like us – and we're doing all that we can to advocate for this. We're starting conversations around quietness with the aim to educate employers, colleagues, teachers, family members and friends on the need to recognise our quiet voices, be flexible and sensitive in their communication and understand the value that quieter people can bring.

Your quiet voice is important. We're here to help you feel that and take action too

Thun

Let's make positive change happen, together



#### **Our Values**

#### Making Meaningful Connections

We connect quiet people to create a community of understanding, togetherness and belonging. We believe that unity not only builds confidence, but it helps each of us to truly accept and appreciate ourselves and live a more fulfilling life.

#### Advocating for Change

We believe that there should be more inclusion, fairness and equality for quiet people in our society. We do all we can to start conversations, raise awareness and create opportunities for people like us, with the goal of wider societal change.

#### Openness and Inclusivity

We're not a traditional support group, but rather a safe, inclusive space for quiet people to be vulnerable and show their true selves – and meet others who want to do the same. We have faced the same challenges too, and we openly share our stories.

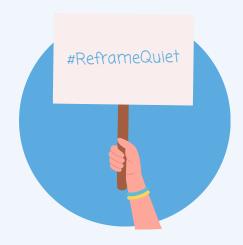
#### Creating Space

We create calm spaces for quiet people to connect and grow at their own pace. And we create space for our quiet voices to be heard and perspectives to be understood, both in our Meet Ups and in society as a whole.

#### Celebrating Quietness

Quietness and sensitivity are not flaws. We are enough just as we are – and we want to help other quiet people to recognise this. We celebrate their strengths and qualities to empower them to flourish as their true quiet selves.







### How else to get involved?

#### Connect ~ Stretch ~ Grow

We hope you make new friends and feel understood and supported as part of our quiet community. You're invited to take small, supported steps to stretch your comfort zone and learn about yourself with us, too, so that you can grow your confidence, love your quiet strengths, and flourish as your true self.

#### Join the Quiet Connections Facebook group

Facebook.com/groups/QuietConnections

Share reflections, start conversations and gently connect with others in our quiet online community.





#### Join a Weekly or Pop Up Meet Up in Cornwall

QuietConnections.co.uk/meetups

Attend a calm and friendly Meet Up -or help create a Pop Up Meet Up near you, like a walk or coffee catch-up.

#### Volunteer with Us

OuietConnections.co.uk/volunteer

Offer a warm welcome at Meet Ups, support behind the scenes, start fundraising, or help spread the word in your own quiet way.



## In a gentle way, you can shake the world

Mahatma Gandhi



## The greatness

of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate acts of its members

Coretta Scott King

#### Why Quietly Connect?

#### It's not just you

We know it's not always easy to be a quiet person in a loud society. Sometimes your quietness is misunderstood. Sometimes you might struggle to be heard and achieve the things that are important to you. And often meeting new people can feel out of reach or overwhelming.

But we're here to say that your introverted, sensitive or shy temperament does not need to hold you back.

We celebrate your qualities and we firmly believe that connecting quiet people and providing opportunities to learn about how we can live our most authentic, fulfilling lives will help to create a more curious, compassionate and connected world overall.



## We know connection works

We've spent decades building the knowledge and tools to help people with quiet natures feel more comfortable and confident in their own skin. And we know from firsthand experience, and from the feedback we've received from our wonderful Quieteers, that forming genuine connections with likeminded people can have a profound impact on our mental health, relationships, career and life satisfaction.

A sense of belonging and feeling part of a community is something that we all need. We're here to help make that happen for you, alongside people who truly understand you and your challenges.

There's plenty of research to back up our philosophies around connection too. Find out more at QuietConnections.co.uk.

#### 3 things we need to feel that we matter



Seeing us and acknowledging our existence



Importance

Showing care, concern, investing time & energy for our benefit



Appreciating what we have to offer & turning to us for support

#### Read more at QuietConnections.co.uk/blog/mattering



Our hope for you, quieteer, is that Quiet Connections is a place where you do feel like you matter –and so does everyone else in our quiet community.

#### It's up to all of us

to play our part in cultivating a culture where each of us feels seen and interesting, cared about and valued.

We need to make sure that we really see each other. We look up, make eye contact (if we feel able to), smile, or welcome our fellow quieteers as they join us.

We invest in each other; showing an interest and caring about each other. We're listening to each other, asking questions, being curious about each other and finding their stories. If someone doesn't seem to be involved and appears uncomfortable, then we might gently invite them into the conversation, move to sit with them, or take a break together. We offer to make others a cuppa when we're together, and perhaps invite someone for a postmeet up coffee or a walk.

And to borrow a principle from our friends at <u>Camerados</u>, let's ask others for help and advice, noticing and appreciating each others' strengths and resources, and giving each other the opportunity to contribute and feel valued.

#### **Conversation Starters**

You'll find conversation starters dotted around the room.

If you met an alien, what would be on your list to show or tell them?

Would you rather have hands instead of feet or feet instead of hands? Why?

What does support look like for you in hard times?

If you were in charge of the world, what 3 changes would you like to make?

When you were growing up, what was your dream job? Is any part of that still true?

What made you smile recently?

What's your earliest memory?

What's your favourite thing about the place you live?

What's the most interesting thing you've learnt this year?

Who or what inspires or motivates you?

What small joys bring light to your days?

If you could time travel, where would you like to go?

Would you rather go scuba diving or skydiving and why? What TV shows, podcasts or books have you been loving lately?

In what way were you delightfully quirky as a child?

Would you rather have a pause or a record button in your life? Why?

## Quieteers' tips for connecting

#### Listen to Understand, Not Reply

Focus on understanding the other person's story without thinking up your response while they're talking. It's okay to embrace a moment of quiet to pause and reflect between speakers.

#### Show Kindness

Small acts of kindness between quieteers –like offering help, a cuppa, or a smile– creates warmth and trust in our community and helps each other to feel welcome and comfortable here. It's up to each of us to create a community where quieter people feel like they belong.

#### Assume the Best of Each Other

Generously interpret each others' intentions and actions. When we approach situations with empathy and understanding, recognising that everyone has their own struggles and perspectives, we can remain kind, curious, and open, building a more resilient community and stronger connections.

#### Share Small Vulnerabilities

Opening up a little can encourage others to do the same and help to deepen your connection. Just be mindful that this isn't a mental health support group. Whilst we welcome the dark as well as the light, remember that this isn't a place to dwell in the darkness –a greater focus on positive emotions is good for everyone's wellbeing.

#### Use Positive Language and Open Questions

Focus on solution-oriented, encouraging words to create an uplifting atmosphere. Go beyond small talk by asking open-ended questions that invite deeper conversations. Conversation starters are a great start!

#### Celebrate and Appreciate Each Other

Focus on what's going well and what you appreciate about your fellow quieteers. Sharing gratitude and highlighting strengths fosters positivity and mutual respect, creating stronger connections and boosting wellbeing.

#### Manage Anxious Feelings

Imagine positive social experiences to reduce anxiety and boost confidence before connecting. Turn anxious thoughts into positive ones, like "I'm learning to connect in my own way." Practise calming breathing, extending your exhale. And remember that just being open about feeling anxious can help – we all get it here!



## Thank you, quieteer, for being a part of this community.

Together, we can create something truly beautiful here – a place where we recognise and celebrate each others' quiet strengths and contributions, and where we all feel like we matter. United, we can create a ripple effect of change, doing our bit in making the world a more curious, compassionate and connected place to be.

