



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith

In a real sense, all life is interrelated. All people are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Strength to Love, Fortress Press, 1963



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Table of Contents

Introduction.....page 3

Session 1: Enough of the Basics in Life.....page 5

All people have basic human needs that need to be met in order for us to reach our potential. Ending poverty means ensuring that all have the opportunity and ability to meet those needs for themselves and their families. This session will explore the nature of these needs, what our role might be in ensuring these basics and determining needs versus wants.

Session 2: Enough and Creation and Environment.....page 21

The Creation narratives remind us that in the beginning our world was created in perfect balance and with enough resources to sustain us. Our task has always been to be good stewards of this gift. This session explores the wonder of creation and our natural environment and calls us to ponder how stewardship can lead to enough for all.

Session 3: Enough and the Economy.....page 38

Success in economic life is often measured in terms of increased wealth and possessions and a sense of independence and separation from others. This session challenges these notions and offers instead a spirituality of community, compassion and shared responsibility.

Session 4: Enough Equality and Community.....page 55

This session explores the notion of true equality and what it can mean for us to both have enough and work for enough for all. We are reminded of God’s call to care for each other and of our shared responsibility to build a sense of community.

Session 5: Enough Time.....page 90

The notion that there is never enough time is pervasive in our culture. Our belief that we have no time to spare means that we can easily excuse ourselves from concrete involvement in the lives of others. This session focuses on God’s time and our own priorities.

Session 6: Enough for All.....page 101

When we begin to believe that there is indeed enough for all we can begin to imagine a new way forward and so bring to life a Minnesota (and a world) without poverty. This session sets the stage for that vision and prompts action that will lead to its realization.



ENOUGH FOR ALL
A Discussion Guide for People of Faith

Introduction

What does “Enough for All” mean?
Is there really “Enough for All”?
What do our faith traditions say about “Enough for All”?

We invite you into a conversation about the meaning and reality of that phrase. To facilitate this conversation, we are offering a six-session interfaith discussion guide, focusing on six critical aspects surrounding the theme of Enough, and how our various faith traditions engage each topic:

- Enough of the Basics in Life
- Enough Creation and Environment
- Enough Economy
- Enough Equality and Community
- Enough Time
- Enough for All

Each session includes sacred texts, contemporary readings, questions to prompt discussion, creative experiences and opportunities for action.

The discussion guide may be led by a trained facilitator or shared by leadership in a small group process.

The amount of time required for each session may be customized to fit a particular setting, but we planned for a time period of ninety minutes. Activities may be selected or extended to fit shorter or longer time periods.

Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011). Questions about the contents of this discussion guide may be directed to info@mnwithoutpoverty.org

Please study, discuss, and enjoy the resource. Give us your feedback; we invite your ideas and suggestions for improvement. We will continue to revise and update the material.

Each session includes:

- Theme for session (a brief descriptive paragraph on the goal of the session)
- Breaking the Ice (an opening activity)
- Our Traditions Speak (sacred texts from various faith traditions used in small groups with large group sharing)
- Wisdom in Our World (contemporary readings from a variety of perspectives used in small groups with large group sharing)
- Reflecting On Our Traditions (discussion questions used to break open the texts provided)
- Creative Experiences (intended to move deeper into the session theme; materials list and process provided)
- Be the Change (suggestions for advocacy opportunities)
- Extending the Theme (various opportunities for additional emphasis on the themes in using games, activities, movies, music and pop culture)

Sincerely,

The Creative Team

Gale Allen
Clarity Unspoken

Suzanne Belongia
Education Workgroup Chair

Bryan Goltzman
Director, Justice Squared

Nancy Maeker
Executive Director, A Minnesota Without Poverty



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith Session 1: Enough of the Basics in Life

THEME:

All people have basic human needs that need to be met in order for us to reach our potential. Ending poverty means ensuring that all have the opportunity and ability to meet those needs for themselves and their families. This session will explore the nature of these needs, what our role might be in ensuring these basics and determining needs versus wants.

We believe it is the Creator's intent that all people are provided those things that protect human dignity and make for a healthy life: adequate food and shelter, meaningful work, safe communities, healthcare, and education.

Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Overcoming Poverty (1st principle), 2004



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Breaking the Ice:

Boundary Breaker Activity

Goal: The goal of this activity is to create an atmosphere of active listening and honest sharing.

Materials: None

Directions: Ask participants to arrange their chairs in a tight circle, ensuring that no one is seated outside the circle. Begin the process by asking each member to share their name, ensuring that first names of participants are written largely enough on name tags for all to see.

The group leader will ask a question and members will respond in turn, moving clockwise around the circle. Advise members to answer briefly and move around the circle relatively quickly; there is no need to explain their responses. Advise the group to refrain from interrupting or offering comments or questions to others' responses. This is not a time for debate or discussion but for listening.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR: Group leaders should manage the time carefully to ensure that the second set of questions (the Synthesis Set) is not omitted. Note that there may be more questions listed than can be used. In this case, those listed in italics can be used first. If your group is large, you may want to consider breaking into two separate groups and asking for a volunteer to serve as an additional group leader.

PART ONE – Structured Conversation

1. What is the best movie you've ever seen?
2. Who is someone who has had great impact on your life?
3. What is the most beautiful quality about people?
4. What is the most sacred thing in your life?
5. Why did you choose to talk about enough?
6. What do you have enough of?
7. What is the most important thing to have enough of?
8. If you could travel to any place in the world, where would you go first?
9. What do you do when you see someone in need?
10. What do you think is your greatest strength?
11. What would you like to put on your gravestone?
12. What color is love?
13. If you could choose to be any other animal aside from human, what animal would you choose to be?

14. What do you want to be doing ten years from now?
15. What is your favorite TV show of all time?

PART TWO- Synthesis

In light of the answers given by group members in Part One, ask members to respond to the following:

1. Which person did you learn most about?
2. Which persons do you want to learn more about?
3. Which answer prompted you to want to ask further questions?
4. Which answers surprised you the most?
5. Which person seemed to answer in ways similar to you?
6. Which persons seem to enjoy their life?

Our Traditions Speak:

Exodus 16:1-21—Manna in the Wilderness

The whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim; and Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.'

Then the LORD said to Moses, 'I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.' So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, 'In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?' And Moses said, 'When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.'

Then Moses said to Aaron, 'Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, "Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining." 'And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked towards the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. The LORD spoke to Moses and said, 'I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, "At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God." '

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: "Gather as much of it as each of you needs, an omer to a person according to the number of persons, all providing for those in their own tents." ' The Israelites did so, some gathering more, some less. But when they measured it with an omer, those who gathered much had nothing over, and those who gathered little had no shortage; they gathered as much as each of them needed. And Moses said to them, 'Let no one leave any of it over until morning.' But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul. And Moses was angry with them. Morning by morning they gathered it, as much as each needed; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

Matthew 6:25-33—Consider the lilies; do not keep worrying

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

The Qur’an 2:57-61 – GOD’s blessings upon the Children of Israel—not enough!

“And WE shaded you with clouds and sent down to you manna and quails. ‘Eat of the good things that WE provided for you’...”

“And when Moses prayed for water for his people, WE said, ‘Strike the rock with your staff!’ And from it gushed forth twelve springs, and every tribe knew its watering place. ‘Eat and drink from what GOD provided, and do not cause mischief and corruption in the land.’”

“Then you said, ‘O Moses, we cannot endure just one kind of food. So call upon your LORD to bring forth earth’s produce for us: its green herbs, its cucumbers, its garlic, its lentils, and its onions.’ He said, ‘Would you exchange that which is better for that which is inferior? Go down to Egypt, and you shall have what you asked for!’...”

Luke 9:10-17—Feeding of the 5000

On their return the apostles told Jesus all they had done. He took them with him and withdrew privately to a city called Bethsaida. When the crowds found out about it, they followed him; and he welcomed them, and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed to be cured.

The day was drawing to a close, and the twelve came to him and said, ‘Send the crowd away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside, to lodge and get provisions; for we are here in a deserted place.’ But he said to them, ‘You give them something to eat.’ They said, ‘We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.’ For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, ‘Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each.’ They did so and

made them all sit down. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. And all ate and were filled. What was left over was gathered up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Hadeeth – GOD provides sufficiently for our basic needs as long as...

“If you relied on GOD with rightfully due reliance, HE would provide sustenance for you, just as HE provides sustenance for the birds; they leave in the morning hungry, and they return in the evening full and satiated.”

Wisdom in our World:

Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Overcoming Poverty (1st principle), 2004.

We believe it is the Creator's intent that all people are provided those things that protect human dignity and make for a healthy life: adequate food and shelter, meaningful work, safe communities, healthcare, and education.

Jim Jordal, "Enough for All," 11/17/10 (posted Nov 17, 2010 on www.mnwithoutpoverty.org)

The phrase "Enough for All" is the theme of the coming Statewide Gathering to End Poverty by 2020, taking place on December 9, 2010 at five different sites in Minnesota. Sponsored by A Minnesota Without Poverty, the event features several prominent speakers as well as something new—an art exhibition and artistic performances to portray the concept of *enough* in new and exciting ways. The final event of the gathering will be table conversations entitled "Let's Talk About Enough."

In common usage the term *enough* denotes adequacy or sufficiency to fulfill a need or desire. The difficulty arises when we attempt to separate *need* from *desire*. Need relates to survival and human decency while desire arises more from narcissistic attempts to gratify the human ego.

Played out upon the world stage this conflict between need and desire becomes a heroic struggle between the billions of "have-nots" dwelling on the edges of existence and the small number of "haves" isolating themselves from suffering in their gated enclaves and jet-set sorties away from misery. But the two—whether they know it or not—are inextricably connected.

With the discussion period in mind I think it might be appropriate to mention some of the issues, conflicts, values, needed behaviors and potential outcomes of our conversations. I'll state them in the form of questions that might be fruitful to discuss during the evening:

1. What is your definition of the term *enough*?
2. What is the difference between need and desire?
3. How has our society made desires into needs?
4. How can we undo this damage?
5. How much would I be willing to give up to provide enough for all?
6. Is it a zero sum game, with someone losing what others gain? Why, or why not?
7. How will moving toward the goal of enough possibly affect the world's richest nations?

8. What new political and economic structures and values might be required to provide enough for all?
9. What religious or philosophical basis can you give for believing that all people should have enough?
10. How can we learn to gain status in ways other than amassing power and possessions?
11. What possible ecological outcomes can you see arising from seeking enough for all?
12. How are the rich and the poor inextricably connected? With what results?
13. Is providing enough for all politically and economically sustainable? Why or why not?

Ruby Payne—*A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, aha! Process, 1996

A working definition of poverty is “the extent to which an individual does without resources.” These resources are the following:

- **Financial**—having the money to purchase goods and services
- **Emotional**—being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices.
- **Mental**—having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life.
- **Spiritual**—believing in divine purpose and guidance
- **Physical**—having physical health and mobility
- **Support Systems**—having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.
- **Relationships/Role Models**—having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, who are nurturing to the **child (or adult), and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior**
- **Knowledge of Hidden Rules**—knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group

Lynne Twist, *The Soul of Money: Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Life*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2003, p. 48-53

The Toxic Myths of Scarcity

...Scarcity is a lie, but it has been passed down as truth and with a powerful mythology that insists on itself, demands compliance, and discourages doubt or questions...When we unpack the mind-set of scarcity, we find three central myths...

Toxic Myth #1: There's Not Enough

The first prevailing myth of scarcity is *there's not enough*. There's not enough to go around. Everyone can't make it. Somebody's going to be left out. There are way too many people.

There's not enough food. There's not enough water. There's not enough air. There's not enough time. There's not enough money...

In our own communities, we respond to the fear that *there's not enough* by creating systems that favor us or exclude others from access to basic resources such as clean water, good schools, adequate health care, or safe housing. In our own families, *there's not enough* drives us to buy more than we need or even want of some things, to value, favor, or curry favor with people on the basis of their value to us in relation to money, rather than qualities of character.

Toxic Myth #2: More Is Better

...More of anything is better than what we have. It's the logical response if you fear there's not enough, but *more is better* drives a competitive culture of accumulation, acquisition, and greed that only heightens fears and quickens the pace of the race. And none of it makes life more valuable...When we buy into the promise that more is better, we can never arrive...

Toxic Myth #3: That's Just the Way It Is

...There's not enough to go around, more is definitely better, and the people who have more are always people who are other than us. It's not fair, but we'd better play the game because *that's just the way it is* and it's a hopeless, helpless, unequal, unfair world where you can never get out of this trap...

Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020, January 2009, p. 32-36
--

Recommendation #1: Restore work as a means out of poverty.

The value of work is embedded in Minnesota culture and work is the primary means Minnesotans embrace as a way out of poverty. A larger proportion of working-age Minnesotans are in the workforce than in most other states, and Minnesota women have one of the highest workforce participation rates in the country. If we truly value work, we should ensure that there are adequate incentives to promote work and ongoing training opportunities available so workers remain productive and marketable.

... there is a strong need in Minnesota for a more stable employment environment offering better compensation to workers.

Ensure that work pays:

- Raise the minimum wage. The federal government should pass legislation to increase the minimum wage. In the absence of federal action, Minnesota should increase the state minimum wage.
- Expand and increase state income tax credits to reach more households and better supplement low wages.

Make work available for all Minnesotans:

- Guarantee child care for all low-income families...
- Allow individuals receiving disability benefits to work without penalty...
- Open doors to employment and full participation in community life to Minnesotans who have served their time and met their court-imposed obligations after committing a crime...
- Pass “ban the box” legislation that would prohibit asking about criminal history on the initial employment application...
- Create paid “stepping stone jobs”--...

Help business make employment opportunities available:

- Assist businesses who are trying to upgrade the skill level of their employees...
- Examine how taxes can be structured to incent businesses to hire more people...

Reflecting on Our Traditions:

1. How do I define what is a basic human need? Where does this criteria come from?
2. Do I have a role in helping to ensure that all people can meet their basic human needs? Why or why not? If so, what might that role be?
3. How do I think about my needs versus my wants -- what's the difference? How do I feel about satisfying my wants when there are many who cannot meet their needs?
4. As a group identify (and agree on) a list of 8 basics that everyone needs enough of in life.

Creative Experiences:

Resource Wheel Activity

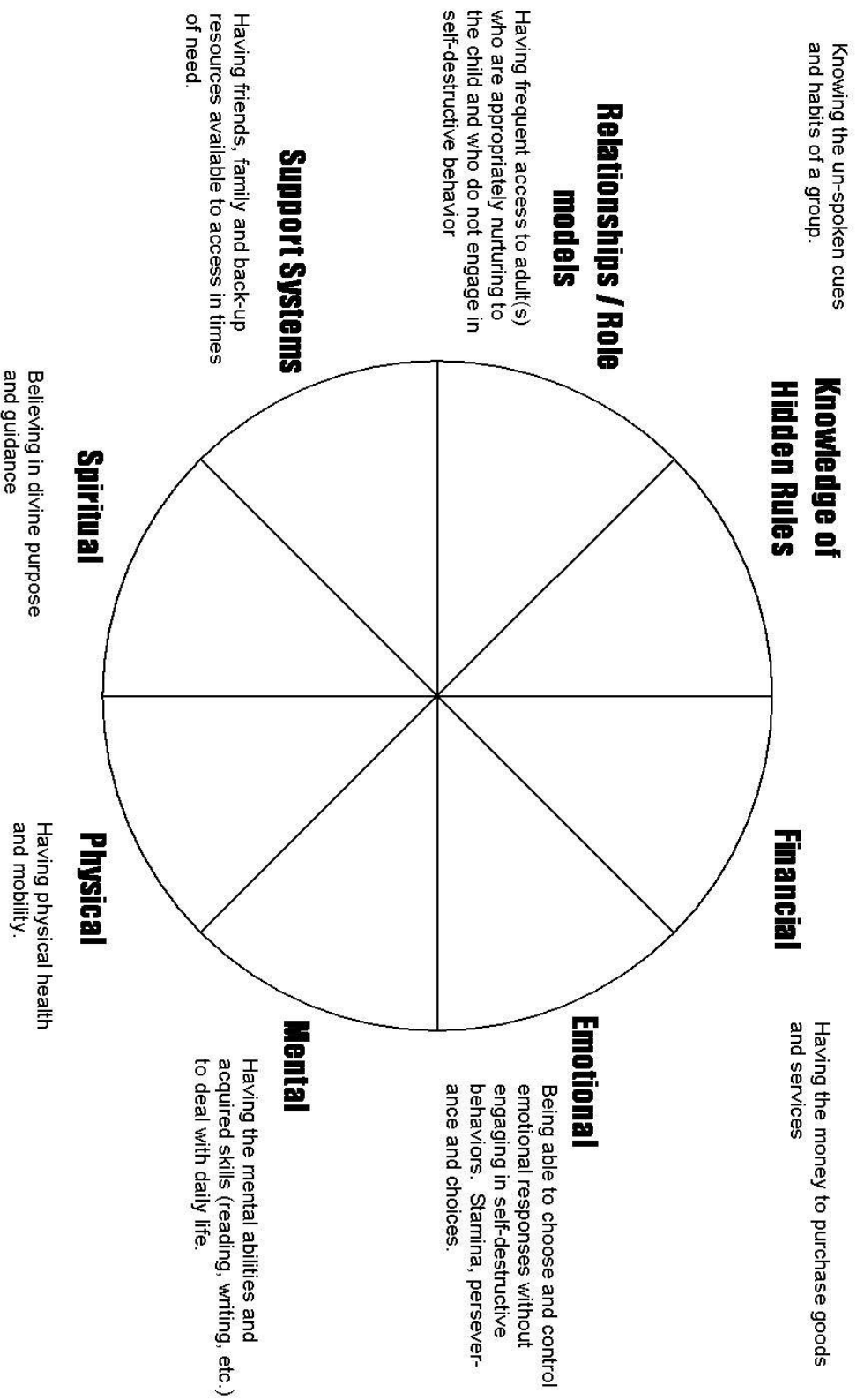
Materials Needed: Handouts of the three Resource Wheels (one set of three for each participant, see Appendix A), Markers

Goal: The purpose of this activity is to allow each participant to look at their past and present resources and note any changes. Each person can reflect on why they may have made those changes and prioritized certain types of resources over others. Finally, the third wheel will allow each person to commit to future changes if there are any after completing this activity.

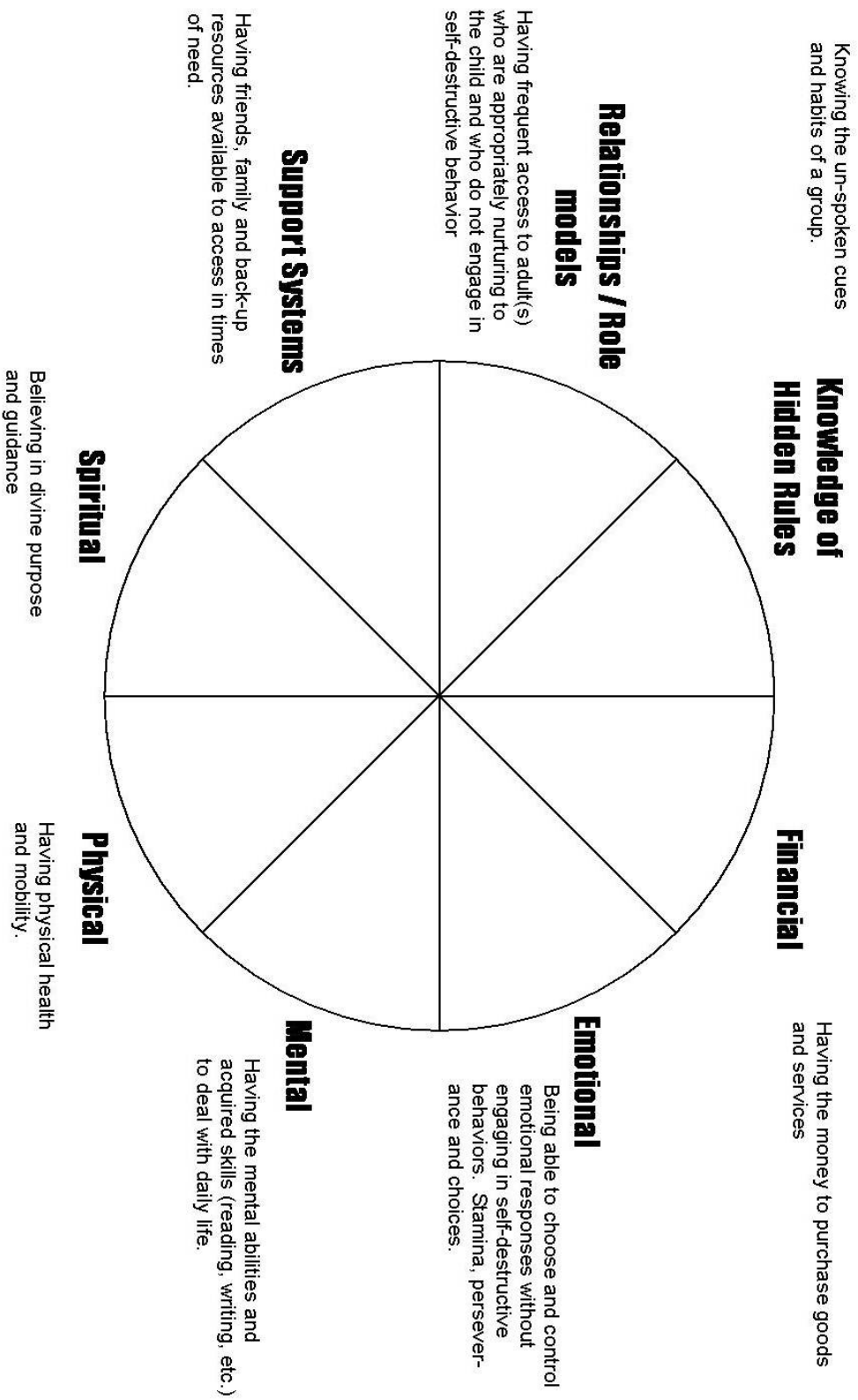
Directions: Starting with the “Resources you had growing up” wheel, participants should color in each slice of the pie to the extent they feel they had that resource as a child. For instance, if they had good health during childhood, they may fill in all or most of the “Physical” slice. Conversely, if they or their family did not have a strong support network, they may color in only the tip of the “Support systems” slice.

Participants should repeat this activity to reflect the resources they or their family currently have, and finally the resources they or their family would like to have.

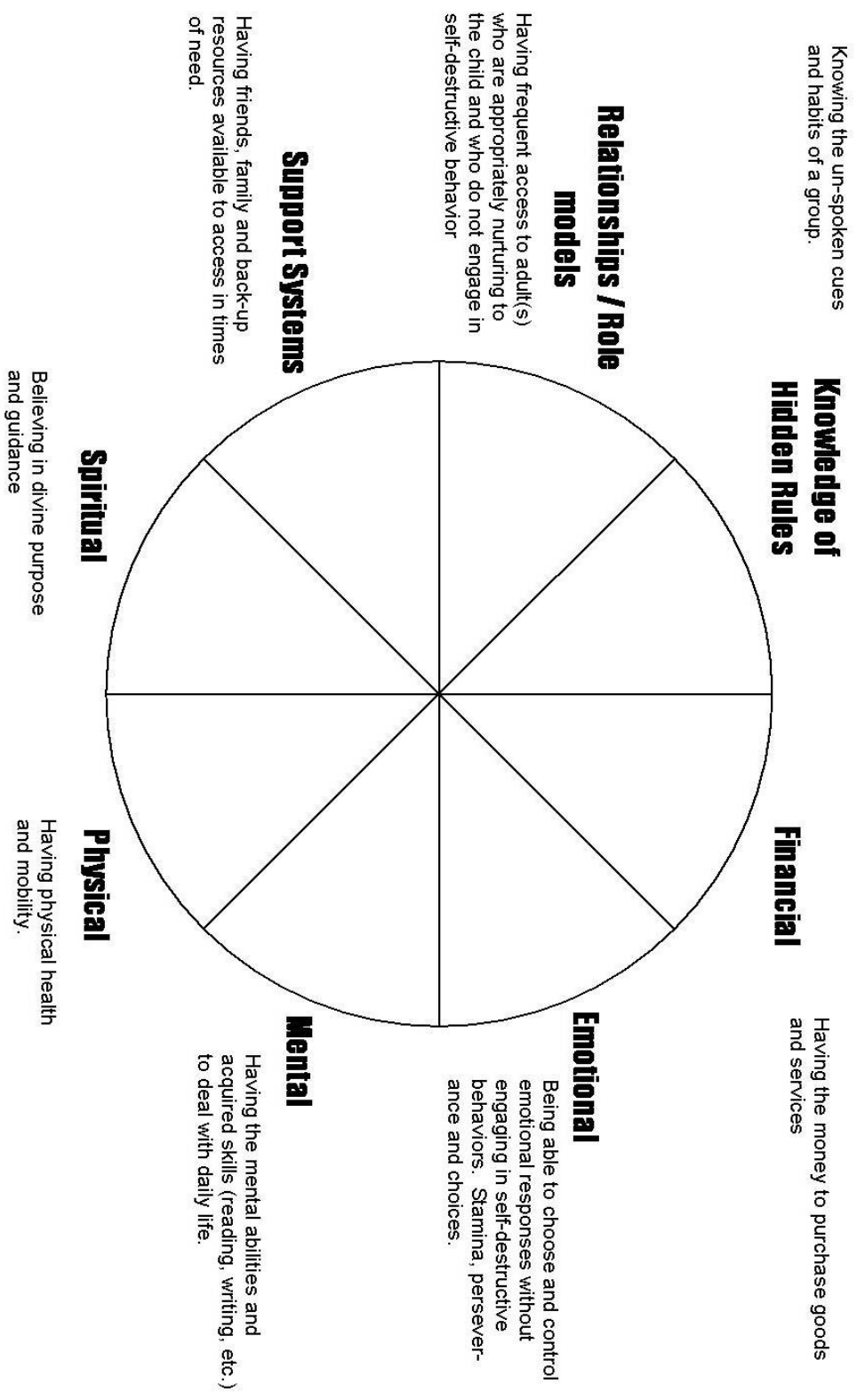
Resources You Had Growing Up



Resources You Have Now



What Changes Would You Like to Make



Be the Change:

How will your reflections on “Enough of the Basics of Life” lead you to act? Has the wisdom of other group members during this session adjusted your own thinking? For more information on current legislative action regarding this theme, go to www.mnwithoutpoverty.org or for federal anti-poverty issues www.halfintention.org. There you will also find links to our partner organizations, many of whom are working on initiatives that need your involvement. Be the change!

Extending the Theme:

Film: Brewster’s Millions

Goal: To broaden and deepen the discussion begun in Session 1 about defining needs versus wants.

Directions: Locate a copy of the movie Brewster’s Millions (1985, 97 minutes, rated PG). After watching the movie use the discussion questions provided to encourage group reflection on the concept of enough.

Plot Synopsis:

Monty Brewster is a second-rate minor league baseball pitcher with the (fictional) Hackensack Bulls. He and his best friend Spike Nolan (John Candy), the catcher for the Bulls, are arrested after a bar fight, but cannot afford bail. A stranger (posing as a photographer) offers bail, and asks them to come to New York with him. At a Manhattan law office, Brewster is told that his recently deceased great-uncle Rupert Horn (Hume Cronyn) - whom he's never met - has left him his entire fortune, but with several conditions. Brewster is challenged to either take \$1 million upfront, or spend \$30 million within 30 days to inherit \$300 million. If he chooses the former, the law firm becomes the executor of the estate and divides the money among charities (after taking a sizable fee). In the latter case, after 30 days, he may not own any assets that are not already his, and he must get value for the services of anyone he hires. He may donate only 5% to charity and lose 5% by gambling. Neither may he buy expensive goods and destroy or give them away. And he's not allowed to tell anyone, even Spike. Monty decides to take the \$30 million challenge.

Questions for after the film:

1. What did you think of the movie?
2. How did the movie relate to enough?

3. How do you think you would have reacted if you were one of Monte Brewster's friends?
4. What lesson did Monte's uncle try to teach him? Do you think it would work in real life?
5. When is enough too much?
6. What is the difference between wants and needs? How do we understand what are basic needs? Are basic needs different for different people?
7. How does society influence us to turn our desires into needs? What can we do to change this? Should we change this?
8. What can we learn from this movie about enough? About our needs and wants? About society? About our relationships with others?

Other Ways to Extend the Theme:

YouTube video: Beverly Crawford—"He's Done Enough"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcskUYE1HrQ>



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith Session 2: Enough Creation and Environment

THEME:

The Creation narratives remind us that in the beginning our world was created in perfect balance and with enough resources to sustain us. Our task has always been to be good stewards of this gift. This session explores the wonder of creation and our natural environment and calls us to ponder how stewardship can lead to enough for all.

*“But now,” says the Once-ler,
“Now that you’re here,
The word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear,
UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better.
It’s not.*

The Lorax by Dr. Seuss, New York: Random House, 1971



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Breaking the Ice:

Draw Your Carbon Footprint

Goals: To introduce the group to each other and also introduce the topics of *environment, conservation and creation*.

Materials: Blank paper and markers or crayons

Directions: Read through the explanation of a carbon footprint, found in the Wisdom in Our World section of this session. Then give each person a piece of paper for them to trace their own foot. Instruct the group to think about what they have purchased and consumed over the past month. They should draw that in the footprint. After they have finished their drawing (3 minutes) they should discuss it with another person in the group.

Discussion Questions (if needed):

1. What did you learn by creating your footprint?
2. What could you do to make your footprint smaller?
3. Why does this matter? What difference can we make?

For an example please see Appendix A.

Our Traditions Speak:

The Qur'an 2:29-30; 14:32-34; 16:14; 31:20 – We are vicegerents on Earth and we have been given the tools and the means...

“And your LORD said to the angels: ‘I shall place a vicegerent on Earth.’...”

“HE is the One who created for you all that is on Earth...”

“It is GOD who created the Heavens and the Earth and brought down rain from the sky, thereby producing fruit as provision for you, and HE made ships to be subservient to you, sailing the seas by HIS command, and HE made rivers to be subservient to you.

“It is HE who made the sea subservient to you so that you may eat tender meat from it and extract ornaments to wear from it...”

“Do you not see that GOD has made subservient to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth and amply bestowed upon you his favors, apparent and unapparent?...”

“...and if you tried to count the blessings of GOD, you would not be able to tally them...”

Genesis 1:26-31—God created humankind; have dominion over creation

Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ God said, ‘See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Psalm 104—God's Creation

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

O LORD my God, you are very great.

You are clothed with honour and majesty,
wrapped in light as with a garment.

You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
you set the beams of your chambers on the waters,
you make the clouds your chariot,
you ride on the wings of the wind,
you make the winds your messengers,
fire and flame your ministers.

You set the earth on its foundations,
so that it shall never be shaken.

You cover it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.

At your rebuke they flee;
at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.

They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys
to the place that you appointed for them.

You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow between the hills,
giving drink to every wild animal;
the wild asses quench their thirst.

By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation;
they sing among the branches.

From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to use,
to bring forth food from the earth,
and wine to gladden the human heart,
oil to make the face shine,
and bread to strengthen the human heart.

The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

In them the birds build their nests;
the stork has its home in the fir trees.

The high mountains are for the wild goats;

the rocks are a refuge for the coneys.
You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows its time for setting.
You make darkness, and it is night,
when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.
The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.
When the sun rises, they withdraw
and lie down in their dens.
People go out to their work
and to their labour until the evening.
O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.
There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.
These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.
May the glory of the LORD endure for ever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the LORD.
Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

The Qur'an 2:168-172; 7:31; 17:26-27; Enjoy and use GOD's bounties, but do not abuse or misuse them

"People! Consume the lawful and good things of the earth, and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan; he is your manifest enemy!"

"Believers! Eat of the good things that WE have provided for you, and be thankful to GOD if you indeed worship HIM alone!"

"...Eat and drink, but do not be excessive; indeed HE does not like the excessive."

"Give relatives their due rights, as well as the needy and the wayfarers, but do not squander wastefully. Squanderers are akin to devils, and Satan was ungrateful to his LORD."

Prophet Muhammad [Peace and Blessings upon him—pbuh] was admonishing one of his companions who was making his ablution while using too much water. The companion—astonished—asks, "Is there 'excess' when making ablution?" And the Prophet [pbuh] answers: "Yes, even if making ablution from a flowing river!"

Wisdom in Our World:

Dr. Seuss—*The Lorax*, New York: Random House, 1971

...And all that the Lorax left here in this mess
was a small pile of rocks, with the one word..."UNLESS."
Whatever *that* meant, well, I just couldn't guess.
That was long, long ago.
But each day since that day
I've sat here and worried and worried away.
Through the years, while my buildings have fallen apart,
I've worried about it with all of my heart.
"But *now*," says the Once-ler,
"Now that *you're* here,
The word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear,
UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better.
It's not.
"SO...
Catch!" calls the Once-ler.
He lets something fall.
"It's a Truffula Seed.
It's the last one of all!
You're in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds.
And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs.
Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.
Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.
Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.
Then the Lorax
And all of his friends
May come back."

Todd Parr, *The Earth Book*, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2010

I take care of the earth because
I know I can do little things every day to make a BIG difference.
I use both sides of the paper and bring my own bags to the market because...
I love the trees and I want the owls to have a place to live.
I turn off the faucet while I brush my teeth and use less water for my baths because...
I love the fish and I want the oceans to stay blue.
I take the school bus and ride my bike because...

I love the stars and I want the air to be clear so I can see them sparkle.
I try to eat every bite on my plate and save my leftovers because...
I love watching things grow and I want there to be enough food for everyone.
I remember to turn off the lights and shut the refrigerator to save energy because...
I love the polar bears and I want the snowmen to stay cool.
I throw garbage in the trash can and recycle glass, aluminum, paper, and plastic because...
I love to walk barefoot in the grass and I don't want to move to Mars!
Most of all, I help take care of the earth because...
I want us ALL to be happy and healthy!
Every one of us can help protect the earth and make it feel good.
Remember: if we take care of it, it will take care of us.
Love, Todd

Richard Louv—*Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006, p. 97.

Nature—the sublime, the harsh, and the beautiful—offers something that the street or gated community or computer game cannot. Nature presents the young with something so much greater than they are; it offers an environment where they can easily contemplate infinity and eternity. A child can, on a rare clear night, see the stars and perceive the infinite from a rooftop in Brooklyn. Immersion in the natural environment cuts to the chase, exposes the young directly and immediately to the very elements from which humans evolved: earth, water, air, and other living kin, large and small. Without that experience, as Chawla says, “we forget our place; we forget that larger fabric on which our lives depend.”

Jon Symes—*Your Planet Needs You: A Handbook for Creating the World That We Want*, Chester, Cheshire, UK, 2006, p. 50.

We each leave our own personal impact on Planet Earth. This is a direct measure of all of the resources we use and the waste we create in our way of life. Our “footprint” reflects what we eat, buy and wear, how and where we travel, where and how we live, in short, every aspect of our standard of living. Behind that, and unseen to us, it measures the energy and waste involved at every stage of growing, converting and transporting everything that we consume...

Mankind’s collective footprint more than doubled in the last 40 years and together we now consume the resources of more than one earth-sized planet.

But if we all lived as the Americans live we would need an astonishing 6 planets for our needs. And even if the entire population of the world lived more modestly to a UK standard of living we would need 3 planets.

Zero footprint is the target where we consume only within Earth’s natural capacity for replenishment and leave no lasting damage or depletion on the earth.

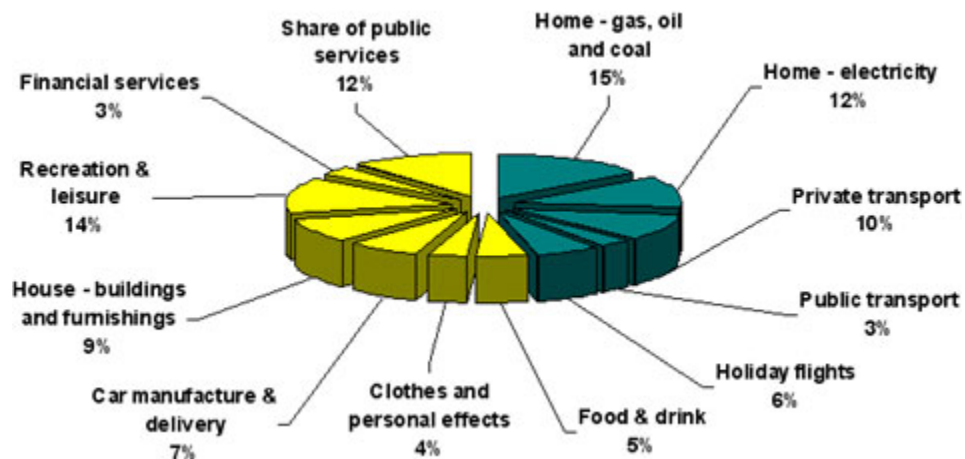
Carbon Footprint website:

<http://www.carbonfootprint.com/carbonfootprint.html>

What Is A Carbon Footprint?

A **carbon footprint** is a measure of the impact our activities have on the environment, and in particular climate change. It relates to the amount of greenhouse gases produced in our day-to-day lives through burning fossil fuels for electricity, heating and transportation etc.

The carbon footprint is a measurement of all greenhouse gases we individually produce and has units of tonnes (or kg) of carbon dioxide equivalent.



The pie chart above shows the main elements which make up the total of a typical person's carbon footprint in the developed world.

A carbon footprint is made up of the sum of two parts, the primary footprint (shown by the green slices of the pie chart) and the secondary footprint (shown as the yellow slices).

1. The **primary footprint** is a measure of our direct emissions of CO₂ from the burning of fossil fuels including domestic energy consumption and transportation (e.g. car and plane). We have direct control of these.
2. The **secondary footprint** is a measure of the indirect CO₂ emissions from the whole lifecycle of products we use - those associated with their manufacture and eventual breakdown. To put it very simply – the more we buy the more emissions will be caused on our behalf.

Sierra Club's website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/goals/>

For more than a century, we have depended on fossil fuels to run our factories, power our cars and trucks, and heat and cool our homes. Now we are facing the consequences. Six of the last eight years were the hottest on record. Polar ice and glaciers are disappearing, sea levels are rising, coral reefs are suffering, plant and animal species are disappearing. And the wilderness areas and wildlife that the Sierra Club has worked so effectively to protect for more than a century are being threatened and lost.

But we have the means to reverse global warming and create a clean, renewable energy future. Working with some of the world's top climate scientists, engineers, and energy experts, the Sierra Club has developed a Climate Recovery Agenda -- a set of initiatives that will help cut carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, create a clean-energy economy, and protect our natural heritage, communities, and country from the consequences of global warming.

Reflecting on Our Traditions:

1. Many faith traditions speak of the Creator's gift of creation to humans. What is your definition of our responsibility for stewardship of the gift?
2. Richard Louv (see above text) asserts that there is a direct link between our exposure to the natural world and our caretaking of it. Do you agree? Why or why not? In what ways could you help your (or others') children immerse themselves in nature?

Creative Experiences:

Reduce Your Footprint

Materials: One laptop computer with internet access, Handouts—“Reduce Your Footprint”, Handouts—“My Commitment for Creation and Environment”

Directions: This exercise has two parts. The first part consists of taking an online quiz to discover an individual’s or family’s ecological footprint. The second part is a discussion regarding how to reduce that footprint.

Part 1: How many earths are needed to support your lifestyle?

You will need one computer with internet access for the following exercise. Connect to <http://myfootprint.org/en/>

Ask for a volunteer to provide their family’s information for the quiz. Or, take the quiz as a group, using data from several households. If some information is not known, enter an estimate for the answer. The point is to experience the quiz and discover the results of the “Ecological Footprint Quiz.” It can be a family’s results or a composite of the whole group.

Discuss the results of the quiz. How many earths would be needed to support this lifestyle, if everyone on the planet lived this way?

Part 2: Reducing your footprint.

Hand out the two-sided page entitled “Reduce your footprint,” found at http://myfootprint.org/en/take_action/reduce_your_footprint//

Divide into small groups and discuss the ideas for reducing carbon footprint, food footprint, housing footprint, and goods and services footprint. Invite each person to fill out the following form (see Commitment for Creation and Environment Form):

My Commitment for Creation and Environment:

I plan to reduce my ecological footprint in the following ways—so there will be “Enough Creation and Environment for All”:

1. I will reduce my carbon footprint in the following way(s):

2. I will reduce my food footprint in the following way(s):

3. I will reduce my housing footprint in the following way(s):

4. I will reduce my goods and services footprint in the following way(s):

If the group is comfortable doing so, ask each participant to share their commitments

Be the Change:

1. How have your discussions about our individual and collective use of Earth's resources called you to reflect on your own behavior? On the behavior of our country and the world?
2. Consider taking the Ecological Quiz (<http://myfootprint.org/en/>) to discover your individual or family footprint. What will you do in response?
3. Go to www.mnwithoutpoverty.org for information about current legislative activity and for links to our partner organizations or go to www.halfintention.org for federal anti-poverty information and actions.

Extending the Theme:

***The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss, New York: Random House, 1971.**

Goal: To have a creative discussion on the environment and our place in it.

Quote: "The Earth is God's, and all its fullness; nature, and all that inhabit it." (Psalm 24:1)

Directions: Read aloud *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. Make sure that everyone in the group can see the book and hear the person reading. After reading the book divide the group in half for the discussion.

Discussion Questions:

1. Who "speaks for the trees" in our world?
2. Are we obligated to protect the earth? Why?
3. What are the choices and the changes we can make to influence our environment?
4. The Lorax left one word: UNLESS. If you had to complete the sentence, how would you?
5. Is nature sacred?
6. How can humanity peacefully coexist with nature?

Text Study: The first piece of text to be looked at is Psalm 29. See Appendix A. Pass out the text and have a volunteer read it to the group.

1. Are there ways in which nature manifests itself as sacred in this psalm? If so, what are they?
2. This psalm describes God as being a significant part of nature and of the environment. Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Do you see nature as sacred in your own life? How?
4. Does this psalm set out a different reason for why we should protect the earth than *The Lorax* does? What are the differences?
5. Should taking care of the earth be seen as a religious obligation, or just a human thing to do?

The second text is part of the second paragraph in the Jewish prayer the *Shema*. See Appendix B. Pass out the text and have a volunteer read it to the group.

1. In this passage, who has responsibility for the condition of the earth and the environment? Is it fair to say that taking care of the earth is a partnership, or is one individual (or group) solely responsible?
2. What is God's role in taking care of the earth?
3. How can we work in partnership with God to make the world a better place?
4. This passage is aimed at people living in an agrarian society. If this sort of passage were to be written today, what might be the differences? What would be the similarities?
5. What are our responsibilities towards taking care of our planet?

Appendix A—Psalms 29

1.

מְזִמּוֹר לַדָּוָד, הִבּוּ לַיְיָ בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים, הִבּוּ לַיְיָ כְּבוֹד וְעֹז. הִבּוּ לַיְיָ כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ,
הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיְיָ בְּהַדְרַת קִדְשׁ. קוֹל יְיָ עַל הַמַּיִם, אֵל הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים, יְיָ עַל
מַיִם רַבִּים. קוֹל יְיָ בַּפֶּתַח, קוֹל יְיָ בְּהַדְרָה. קוֹל יְיָ שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים, וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְיָ אֶת
אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן. וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ עֵגֶל, לְכַנּוֹן וּשְׂרִיזוֹן כְּמוֹ בֶן רְאֵמִים. קוֹל יְיָ
חָצַב לְהַבֹּת אֵשׁ. קוֹל יְיָ יַחֲלֵל מִדְבָּר, יַחֲלֵל יְיָ מִדְבַּר קִדְשׁ. קוֹל יְיָ יַחֲלֵל
אֵילוֹת, וַיִּחַשְׁף יַעֲרוֹת, וּבִהִיכְלוֹ, כָּלוּ אִמֵּר כְּבוֹד. יְיָ לַמַּבּוּל יָשָׁב, וַיִּשָׁב יְיָ
מִלְּךָ לְעוֹלָם. יְיָ עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְיָ יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

A Psalm of David.

Acclaim the Lord, all the mighty. Praise Him for His power and glory.
Acclaim the Lord, for great is His renown; worship the Lord in sacred
splendor. The voice of the Lord peals above the waters, the God of glory
thunders over oceans. The voice of the Lord echoes with majesty and
might. The voice of the Lord shatters the cedars, the Lord shatters the
cedars of Lebanon, making the hills skip like rams, the mountains leap like
lambs. The Lord commands rock-splitting lightning. His voice stirs the
desert sands, it shakes the Kadesh wilderness. The voice of the Lord strips
the forest bare, while in His sanctuary all chant: Glory. The Lord sat
enthroned at the Flood; the Lord will sit enthroned forever, bestowing
strength upon His people, blessing His people with peace.

Appendix B—Shema

וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַעַתְּ מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם, לְאַהֲבָה אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכֹל-לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכֹל נַפְשְׁכֶם. וּנְתַתִּי מִטֶּר-אֶרְצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ, יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ, וְאִסַּפְתִּי דִגְנֶךָ וְתִירְשְׁךָ וַיְצַהֲרֶךָ. וּנְתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשֹׂדֶךָ לְבִהֵמֶתְךָ, וְאָכְלָתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ. הִשְׁמָרוּ לָכֶם פֶּן-יִפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶם, וְסָרְתֶם וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם. וְחָרָה אַף-יְיָ בְּכֶם, וְעָצַר אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה מִטֶּר, וְהִאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת-יְבוּלָהּ וְאֲבַדְתֶּם מְהֵרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְיָ נָתַן לָכֶם: וְשָׁמַתֶּם אֶת דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהֵי-לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל-נַפְשְׁכֶם וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדְכֶם, וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: וְלִמְדַתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם, לְדַבֵּר בָּם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְלֶקְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ, וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְכִתְבֹתֶם עַל-מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ: לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם וַיְמִי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְיָ לְאַבְתִּיכֶם לָתֵת לָהֶם, פְּרִי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

If you earnestly heed the mitzvot I give you this day, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, then I will favor your land with rain at the proper season--rain in autumn and rain in spring--and you will have an ample harvest of grain and wine and oil. I will assure abundance in the fields for your cattle. You will eat to contentment. Take care lest you be tempted to forsake God and turn to false gods in worship. For then the wrath of God will be directed against you. He will close the heavens and hold back the rain; the earth will not yield its produce. You will soon disappear from the good land which the Lord is giving you.

Therefore, impress these words of Mine upon your heart. Bind them as a sign upon your hand, and let them be a reminder above your eyes. Teach them to your children. Repeat them at home and away, morning and night. Inscribe them upon the doorposts of your homes and upon your gates. Then the days and the days of your children on the land which the Lord swore to give your ancestors will endure as the days of the heavens over the earth.



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith Session 3: Enough and the Economy

THEME:

Success in economic life is often measured in terms of increased wealth and possessions and a sense of independence and separation from others. This session challenges these notions and offers instead a spirituality of community, compassion and shared responsibility.

*Money it's a crime
Share it fairly but don't take a slice of my pie
Money so they say
Is the root of all evil today
But if you ask for a raise it's no surprise that they're
giving none away*

Pink Floyd, Dark Side of the Moon, Abbey Road Studios 1973



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Breaking the Ice:

Money Icebreaker

Goal: Start a quick conversation about money and theories of money (you can never have enough, the more you have the happier you are, etc.).

Materials: Fake money for the participants. See Appendix A. A bag of M&M's.

Directions: Give everyone an equal amount of fake money (5-10 bills for each). The participants will then meet each other and play "Paper, Rock, Scissors" against each other. The winner of each game will receive 1 bill from their opponent. After a few minutes let each person decide what they would like to do with the money that they have.

Choices for how to "spend" the money:

1. They can save the money for the creative experience exercise later in the lesson.
2. They can give it to other participants who need more money.
3. They can purchase M&M's with their money (the facilitator can decide what the rate of M&M per dollar is).
4. They can give money back to the bank.

Our Traditions Speak:

Exodus 23:10-13—Let the land rest; so the poor may eat

For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

For six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief, and your home-born slave and the resident alien may be refreshed. Be attentive to all that I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.

The Qur'an 51:19 – Recognizing the “rightful due” of the poor

“And in their wealth was a due right for the needy petitioner and for the deprived.”

2 Corinthians 8:8-15—Fair balance between your abundance and their need

I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something—now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, ‘The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.’

Hadeeth – If we took care of our neighbors

“...The poor will never suffer from starvation or lack of clothes unless the rich neglect their due.”

“He is not a true believer: one who goes to sleep having eaten his full, while his neighbor is hungry—and he knows it!”

Deuteronomy 15:1-11—There will be no one in need among you

Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbour, not exacting

it from a neighbour who is a member of the community, because the LORD's remission has been proclaimed. From a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the LORD is sure to bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, if only you will obey the LORD your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. When the LORD your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted towards your needy neighbour. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, 'The seventh year, the year of remission, is near', and therefore view your needy neighbour with hostility and give nothing; your neighbour might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt. Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbour in your land.'

I John 3:17—Seeing a brother or sister in need

How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

The Qur'an 12:47-49 – Joseph [pbuh] plans and conserves

"You will plant for seven years consecutively, and whatever you harvest leave in its spikes, except for a little from which you will eat. After that will come seven difficult years that will consume all that you saved for times ahead, except for a little of what you have stored. Then, after that, will come a year during which people will be given plenty of rain...."

Luke 12:13-21—Rich Man and his barns

Someone in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.' But he said to him, 'Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?' And he said to them, 'Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.' Then he told them a parable: 'The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have

prepared, whose will they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’

2 Corinthians 9:1-15—Give as you have made up your mind; God loves a cheerful giver

Now it is not necessary for me to write to you about the ministry to the saints, for I know your eagerness, which is the subject of my boasting about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year; and your zeal has stirred up most of them. But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be; otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—in this undertaking. So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion.

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written, ‘He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

The Qur’an 2:264; 76:8-9 – The manner of giving

“Believers! Do not invalidate your charitable donations by reminders [seeking gratitude] or by harm [like abuse or insult or reproach]...”

“And they give food—in spite of love for it—to the needy, the orphan, and the captive. ‘We feed you only for GOD’S Sake; we do not ask you for reward or gratitude.’”

Wisdom in our World:

Lynne Twist—*The Soul of Money: Reclaiming the Wealth of Our Inner Resources*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, p. 102-103.

...Money flows through all our lives, sometimes like a rushing river, and sometimes like a trickle. When it is flowing, it can purify, cleanse, create growth, and nourish. But when it is blocked or held too long, it can grow stagnant and toxic to those withholding or hoarding it. Like water, money is a carrier. It can carry blessed energy, possibility, and intention, or it can carry control, domination, and guilt. It can be a current or currency of love—a conduit for commitment—or a carrier of hurt or harm...

...When we perceive the world as one in which there is enough and we are enough to make the world work for everyone everywhere, with no one left out, our money carries that energy and generates relationships and partnerships in which everyone feels able and valued, regardless of their economic circumstances.

Juliet Schor—*Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth*, New York: The Penguin Press, 2010, p. 4-7.

From the perspective of the individual, there are four principles of plenitude. The first is a new allocation of time...Concretely, what this means is a moderation in hours of work. For time-stressed households with adequate incomes, it likely means making trade-offs of income for time. Reclaiming time frees up resources to invest in ecological restorative activities and creates the opportunity to replenish the human connections that were depleted in the boom years...

This brings us to the second principle of plenitude, which is to..."self-provision," or make, grow, or do things for oneself...The less one has to buy, the less one is required to earn... The third principle of plenitude is "true materialism," an environmentally aware approach to consumption...the plenitude consumer is likely passionate about consuming, and deliberate in the creation of a rich, materially bountiful life...

The final principle is the need to restore investments in one another and our communities...Interpersonal flows of money, goods, and labor are a parallel system of exchange and savings...

Chris Farrell—*The New Frugality: How to Consume Less, Save More, and Live Better*, New York: Bloomsbury Press, p. 4, 8.

...(P)ersonal finance is really about deciding how to live your life, figuring out what you really cherish and value, then putting your money behind those goals and beliefs...

...We don't make financial choices in a vacuum. Savings isn't just money. It's a tool that's critical for creating the kind of life we want to lead...The frugal are conscious consumers that try to be mindful of the ecological and social effect of their purchases and activities. Frugality isn't about cheapness....The frugal approach seeks out quality, not quantity.

Robert B. Reich—*After-Shock: The Next Economy and America's Future*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010, p. 3-4.

(In referring to the Great Recession of 2008-2010, Reich writes the following):

The problem was not that Americans spent beyond their means but that their means had not kept up with what the larger economy could and should have been able to provide them. The American economy had been growing briskly, and America's middle class naturally expected to share in that growth. But it didn't. A larger and larger portion of the economy's winnings had gone to people at the top.

This is the heart of America's ongoing economic predicament. We cannot have a sustained recovery until we address it. It is also our social and political predicament. We risk upheaval and reactionary politics unless we solve it. The central challenge is not to rebalance the global economy so that Americans save more and borrow less from the rest of the world. It is to rebalance the American economy so that its benefits are shared more widely in America, as they were decades ago...Roughly speaking, the first stage of modern American capitalism (1870-1929) was one of increasing concentration of income and wealth; the second stage (1947-1975), of more broadly shared prosperity; the third stage (1980-2010), of increasing concentration. It is vital for our future that we commence a fourth stage, in which broad-based prosperity is again the norm.

Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty by 2020, January 2009, p. 16:

The elements of economic well-being

The factors below work together and reinforce one another, and can create either poverty or economic wellbeing. An inadequate income makes it hard to accumulate wealth. Lack of wealth limits where you can live. And where you live can affect your self-esteem and how you view your prospects.

Income. Income is what you earn through salary and wages after taxes. It can also include non-cash items such as food stamps and housing assistance. We use our income to get by on a day-to-day basis.

Wealth. Wealth represents assets such as homes, bank accounts, credit lines, and educational credentials. It also includes social assets such as professional associations and personal networks. We use our wealth to get ahead.

Place. Place is where you live and how that affects your prospects. Place is of interest to sociologists and other experts because it can predict and explain factors of poverty that go beyond income and wealth.

Beliefs, attitudes and values. These are the psychological, social, and cultural factors that can affect whether or not you live in poverty. These can be positive or negative and can come from within or be present in the larger society.

Minnesota's distressed neighborhoods, those characterized by limited economic opportunity, failing schools, and higher-than-average crime levels, are an example of these dynamics at play. And as we'll see later in this report, despite gains that have been made, racial and ethnic minorities and women continue to fall behind economically due to a number of complex factors.

Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty by 2020, January 2009, p. 40-41:

Recommendation #3: Help Minnesotans build and maintain financial assets.

Income is how we get by. Assets are how we get ahead. To end poverty means to build wealth—household, community and state wealth. Current public assistance policies encourage households to divest of even modest assets, and unscrupulous market practices endanger individuals and the wider economy. The lack of targeted financial products leaves most low-income households without the financial vehicles to invest in their futures. We must expand opportunities for low-income families to create and build wealth. In addition to helping families build assets, government must also be vigilant in protecting families from predatory practices and in educating residents on how to protect themselves. The recent housing foreclosure crisis teaches us the value of government oversight.

- Ensure that assistance designed to help does not increase the depth of a crisis:
- Ensure that consumers can rely on a fair and transparent financial marketplace:
- Restrict use of personal consumer credit information in applications for housing or employment:
- Equip Minnesotans to manage their finances effectively:
- Create opportunities for families to build assets:

Reflecting on Our Traditions:

1. Twist writes in *The Soul of Money* (see excerpt above) about money as both a positive life force and as a negative force. What examples can you name from your own life when money has been either one or the other?
2. Review the numerous examples from Our Traditions Speak (above) as they speak about the call to generosity and distribution of resources. How do you see our society living out that generosity? What do you believe stops us from ensuring that all have enough?

Creative Experiences:

Living our Mental Models

This creative experience connects to the Opening Activity from the beginning of this session and continues that process. You will need the same “money” from that exercise. This time the decisions will be made by the whole group, after some introductory conversation.

Directions: Step 1 - Define “mental model.” Read the definition below:

Peter Senge defines a mental model in the following way:

Mental models can be simple generalizations such as “people are untrustworthy,” or they can be complex theories, such as my assumptions about why members of my family interact as they do. But what is most important to grasp is that mental models are *active*—they shape how we act...

(Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, New York: Doubleday Currency, 1990, p. 175, 176.)

For instance, if the mental model (or basic assumption) that someone lived by is “Money buys happiness,” what might be the actions that would flow from that mental model? If someone had the mental model that “Money is meant to be saved,” how might that mental model be lived out?

Step 2 - After defining mental models, identify mental models that determine how we use/spend money.

Some typical mental models which determine the use of financial resources might be the following:

- Money is power
- The more money I make the happier I will be
- My money belongs to me and my family
- Money is meant to be saved (spent)
- Money is evil
- I can never have enough

Name some other common mental models regarding money or financial resources. How does each mental model get acted out in real life decisions? Discuss.

What were some of the mental models guiding your decisions in “spending” your money in the Opening Activity? Name them.

Step 3 - One new mental model

Suppose we agree on only one mental model to determine our use of financial resources. That one mental model might be “There is enough for all.”

How would that mental model determine our use/spending of financial resources? How would that mental model get acted out in real life decisions? Discuss.

Using this one mental model, discuss and determine as a group how you will “spend” the money again and discuss how decisions were made.

- Were decisions easier or more difficult?
- Were the decisions different or the same as in the Opening Activity?
- Is this a realistic mental model or simply a utopian and unrealistic idea?

Be the Change:

Go to www.mnwithoutpoverty.org or www.halfinten.org for information on current legislative initiatives relating to the economy and also for more about our partner organizations' work on this issue. Choose one current legislative issue that you can speak to your senator or representative about and challenge yourself to do so. If you do not know how to contact your legislator, go to www.jrlc.org/advocacy to learn more.

Extending the Theme:

Dueling Songs

Goal: To look at how society thinks about money through the lens of song.

Materials: Money by Pink Floyd, For the Love of Money by the OJays and The Money Song from Avenue Q the Musical (this is best if you can watch it on YouTube.com)

Directions: Listen to the three songs and then have a discussion. See Appendix B, C, and D for lyrics.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you think of these songs?
2. Did you know any of these songs before? Did you ever think about the words?
3. How do you think these songs relate to each other?
4. How do they tell us about our society? Is it bad? Why? Why not?
5. How are *Money* and *For the Love of Money* different than *The Money Song*?
6. *The Money Song* is the most recent. Do you think there has been a change in society? How?
7. Do you think you personally could ever have enough money? Explain.
8. Does more money make you happier? Why? Why not?
9. Do you think about money in one way and use it in another? Explain.
10. Why do you think money is so valued in our society? Is there any way to change the perception?

Other Ways to Extend the Theme:

Yolanda Adams: Open Up My Heart

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aYzc0Z0Z8Q&feature=related>

Appendix A



Appendix B

Money

By Pink Floyd, Dark Side of the Moon

Money, get away

Get a good job with more pay and you're okay

Money, it's a gas

Grab that cash with both hands and make a stash

New car, caviar, four star daydream,

Think I'll buy me a football team

Money get back

I'm alright Jack keep your hands off my stack.

Money it's a hit

Don't give me that do goody good bull****

I'm in the hi-fidelity first class travelling set

And I think I need a Lear jet

Money it's a crime

Share it fairly but don't take a slice of my pie

Money so they say

Is the root of all evil today

But if you ask for a raise it's no surprise that they're
giving none away

Permission Pending

Appendix C

For The Love of Money

The OJays

Money money money money, money (x6)
Some people got to have it
Some people really need it
Listen to me y'all, do things, do things, do bad
things with it
You wanna do things, do things, do things, good
things with it
Talk about cash money, money
Talk about cash money- dollar bills, yall

For the love of money
People will steal from their mother
For the love of money
People will rob their own brother
For the love of money
People can't even walk the street
Because they never know who in the world they're
gonna beat
For that lean, mean, mean green
Almighty dollar, money

For the love of money
People will lie, Lord, they will cheat
For the love of money
People don't care who they hurt or beat
For the love of money

A woman will sell her precious body
For a small piece of paper it carries a lot of weight
Call it lean, mean, mean green
Almighty dollar

I know money is the root of all evil
Do funny things to some people
Give me a nickel, brother can you spare a dime
Money can drive some people out of their minds

Got to have it, I really need it
How many things have I heard you say
Some people really need it
How many things have I heard you say
Got to have it, I really need it
How many things have I heard you say
Lay down, lay down, a woman will lay down
For the love of money
All for the love of money
Don't let, don't let, don't let money rule you
For the love of money
Money can change people sometimes
Don't let, don't let, don't let money fool you
Money can fool people sometimes
People! Don't let money, don't let money change you,
it will keep on changing, changing up your mind

Permission Pending

Appendix D

The Money Song

Avenue Q the Musical (best to watch video)

Nicky: Help the homeless! Help the homeless! Ooh! Hey Princeton!	What's the matter?	Aww, get lost!
Give me a quarter! Here in my hat! Come on, Princeton! It's as easy as that! Helping others brings you Closer to God. So give me a quarter...	Princeton: I feel generous! I feel compassionate!	Princeton: It'll make you feel great!
Princeton: I don't have any change.	Nicky: You do?	Nicky: So would a burger!
Nicky: Hmmm....okay.	Princeton: Yeah! I feel like a new person - a good person! Helping other people out makes you feel fantastic!	Princeton: When her dream comes true, It'll all be partly Thanks to you So give me your money!
Give me a dollar.	Nicky: That's what I've been trying to tell you-	Nicky: I'd like to, but I can't.
Princeton: That's not what I meant.	Princeton: All this time I've been running around thinking about me, me, me - and where has it gotten me! I'm gonna do something for someone else!	Princeton: Give me your money!
Nicky: Give me a five.	Nicky: Me?	Nicky: I'd like to, but I need it!
Princeton: Are you kidding?	Princeton: No - Kate! I'm going to raise the money to build that stupid Monster School she's always talking about!	Princeton: Give me your money!
Nicky: The more you give. The more you get. That's being alive! All I'm asking you Is to do what Jesus Christ would do. He'd give me a quarter, Why don't you?	Nicky: Give me your money!	Nicky: I'd like to, but I'm homeless! I can't! I need it! I'm homeless! I can't! I need it! I'm homeless! I can't! I need it! I'm homeless! Okay, here you go.
Princeton: All right, all right, here you go.	Nicky: What?	Princeton: Thank you!
Nicky: Ahh, thanks!	Princeton: I need it for Kate!	Nicky: Suddenly, I am feeling Closer to God. It's time to stop begging It's time to start giving! What can I give to Rod?
Princeton: Take care. Whoa!	Nicky: I need it to eat!	Something he'll like so much he'll take me back. Ooh, I know! I'll find him a boyfriend!
Nicky:	Princeton: Come on, Nicky!	Princeton: That's the spirit!
Nicky:	Nicky:	

Both:
When you help others,
You can't help helping yourself!
When you help others,
You can't help helping yourself!

Gary Coleman:
Hey boys, what's the hat for?

Nicky:
Ooh, we're collecting money!

Princeton:
It's for Kate! We're raising
money to help build her dream
school!

Give us your money!

Nicky:
You'll be glad that you did!

Gary Coleman:
That's just what my parents told
me
When I was a kid.

Shit.

Nicky:
But giving feels so great...

Gary Coleman:
And I bet it wouldn't hurt
Your chances with Kate.

Princeton:
Well, that too.

Gary Coleman:
I'll give you a dollar.

Princeton:
You're a gentleman
And a scholar.

Christmas Eve:
We so happy! We just exchange
all your wedding gifts for cash!

Brian:
Honey, don't tell THEM that!

Christmas Eve:
We get about 2,000 bucks!

Brian:

Uh, yeah, so - thanks,
everybody!

Christmas Eve:
We rich!

Princeton:
Give us your money!

Nicky:
Give us your money!

Gary Coleman:
Give us your ***damn money!

Princeton:
Give us the dough!

Nicky/Gary Coleman
Give us the dough!

Princeton/Nicky/Gary Coleman
We're raising money
For a Monster School
But we've got a ways to go.

Princeton:
Sounds like you've
Got money to burn

Nicky:
And it's not like money
That you had to earn.

Princeton/Nicky/Gary Coleman:
So give us your money -

Christmas Eve:
A monster school?

Brian:
Sounds like a good cause.

Christmas Eve:
Give me your wallet.

Princeton:
Oh my gosh! I don't know how
to thank you guys.
I mean, Kate will be so grateful!
That kind of money is such a
great start...

Gary Coleman:
Yeah, \$15.

Princeton:
\$15?

Christmas Eve:
Every little bit help.

Nicky:
Looks like we're gonna have to
ask MORE people!

All:
Hey!
Give us your money!
All that you've got!
Just fork it on over...

Gary Coleman:
Or some puppets
Will get shot!

Princeton:
Hey!

All:
It's time to pass the hat

Gary Coleman:
And there's nothing you can do
'bout that

All:
So give us your money!
Give us your money!
Give us your money!
When you help others,
You can't help helping yourself!
When you help others,
You can't help helping yourself!
Every time you
Do good deeds
You're also serving
Your own needs.
When you help others,
You can't help helping yourself!
When you give
To a worthy cause
You'll feel as jolly
As Santa Claus.
When you help others,
You can't
Help
Helping yourself

Permission Pending



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith Session 4: Enough Equality and Community

THEME:

This session explores the notion of true equality and what it can mean for us to both have enough and work for enough for all. We are reminded of God’s call to care for each other and of our shared responsibility to build a sense of community.

Income can change on a dime, but wealth changes over generations. Our lives are shaped by the wealth—or lack of wealth—of parents, our grandparents, and our ancestors. As an estimated 80 percent of assets come from transfers from prior generations, the history of the financial situations of prior generations is a primary cause of the racial wealth gap. Until government policy tackles disparities in wealth—not just income—and until it recognizes and compensates for its own responsibility for the racial wealth gap, the United States will never have racial or economic justice.

Lui, Robles, Leondar-Wright, Brewer, Adamson—*The Color of Wealth: The Story of the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*, New York: The New Press, 2006



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Breaking the Ice:

Water Equality Game

Goals: To think about how equality isn't always simple and sometimes needs creative thinking.

Materials: A 5 gallon jug and a 3 gallon jug, water source (if you cannot find the jugs you can do this exercise by just describing the problem)

Directions: *Note: The facilitator should not guide this activity, but should be aware of the conversation of the participants to enhance the discussion.* The problem is that you have a 5 gallon jug and a 3 gallon jug, but you need to have exactly 4 gallons of water. Let the group try to figure out the answer. After a few minutes you can help them and then go to the quick discussion.

Answer: Fill the 3 gallon jug with water. Empty it into the 5 gallon jug. Then fill the 3 gallon jug again. Use the 3 gallon jug to now finish filling the 5 gallon jug. That will leave you with 1 gallon left in the 3 gallon jug. Empty the 5 gallon jug. Then pour the one gallon (that is in the 3 gallon jug) into the 5 gallon jug. Fill up the 3 gallon jug again and pour it into the 5 gallon jug. You are now left with only 4 gallons exactly.

Discussion Questions:

1. Was this activity difficult? Why?
2. In real life we are not all born equal. Is that bad? Why or why not? What can we do to make a more fair society?
3. How can we take this lesson of the jugs and apply it to our lives?

Our Traditions Speak:

Isaiah 58:6-12—Share bread; let oppressed go free; repairer of the breach, restorer of streets

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rearguard.
Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

Matthew 22:34-40—The greatest commandment: Love God; love neighbor as self

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ He said to him, ‘“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and

with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’

Deuteronomy 6:4-5—Love God

Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

Hadeeth – Regardless of your role or position in society, you are responsible and accountable

“All of you are caretakers and accountable for whatever is under your care: a leader is a caretaker and accountable for those under his care; a man is a caretaker of his family and accountable for those under his care; a woman is a caretaker in her husband’s home and accountable for those under her care; and a servant is a caretaker of his master’s wealth and accountable for taking care of it. Indeed, all of you are caretakers and accountable for whatever is under your care.”

Matthew 25:31-46--...as you did it to the least of these...

‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of

these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

Luke 10:25-37—Who is my neighbor?

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’ And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

The Qur’an 6:152 – Justice and equity in all matters

“Do not approach the orphan’s wealth, except to improve it, until he reaches maturity. Give full measure and weight with equity. ... And when you speak [testify], be just, even if it concerns a near relative, and fulfill GOD’s covenant!...”

Luke 16:19-31—Rich man and Lazarus

‘There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.” But Abraham said, “Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.” He

said, "Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house— for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment." Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them." He said, "No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent." He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."'

Ephesians 2:11-22—Breaking down the dividing walls

So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called 'the uncircumcision' by those who are called 'the circumcision'—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, so that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

Luke 22:24-27—Greatness in service

A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

The Qur'an 10:13-14 – Now we are in charge, responsible and accountable, how are we going to act?

"And WE destroyed generations before you when they perpetrated injustice and messengers came to them with clear signs, and they still would not believe; this is how WE repay criminals. Then WE made you successors on Earth after them in order to see how you would act."

Leviticus 19:18—Love neighbor as yourself

You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

Hadeeth – No injustice or oppression, regardless of your position, status, or power

GOD Says: “My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another. My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance from ME and I shall guide you. My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food from ME and I shall feed you. My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing from ME and I shall clothe you. My servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness from ME and I shall forgive you. My servants, you will not attain my [level of] harming so as to harm Me, and you will not attain [my level] of benefiting so as to benefit Me. My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as pious as the most pious heart of any one man of you, that would not increase My kingdom in anything. My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as wicked as the most wicked heart of any one man of you, that would not decrease My kingdom in anything. My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to rise up all together and ask Me, and were I to give everyone what he asked, that would not decrease what I have, any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it. My servants, it is but your deeds that I tally for you and then recompense you for; so whoever finds good should praise GOD, and whoever finds other than that should blame no one but himself.”

“My servants, I have forbidden Myself from injustice and made it forbidden among you, so do not be unjust towards one another!...”

The Qur’an 22:28,36 – During the Pilgrimage to Mecca

“...So eat of them [the sacrificial animals] and feed the miserable and the poor.”

“...then eat of them [the sacrificial animals] and feed the needy [who does not seek aid] and the beggar. Thus we have made them [the animals] subservient to you so that you may be grateful.”

Wisdom in our World:

A Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Work on Overcoming Poverty (2nd principle)

We believe we are intended to live well together as a whole community, seeking the common good, avoiding wide disparities between those who have too little to live on and those who have a disproportionate share of the world's goods.

Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett—*The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009, p. 18-19; 29-30, 45

It has been known for some years that poor health and violence are more common in more unequal societies. However, in the course of our research we became aware that almost all problems which are more common at the bottom of the social ladder are more common in more unequal societies. It is not just ill-health and violence, but also...a host of other social problems...

The list we ended up with included:

- Level of trust
- Mental illness (including drug and alcohol addiction)
- Life expectancy and infant mortality
- Obesity
- Children's educational performance
- Teenage births
- Homicides
- Imprisonment rates
- Social mobility (not available for US states) (p. 18-19)

If you want to know why one country does better or worse than another, the first thing to look at is the extent of inequality. There is not one policy for reducing inequality in health or the educational performance of school children, and another for raising national standards of performance. Reducing inequality is the best way of doing both. (p. 29-30)

Not only do large inequalities produce all the problems associated with social differences and the divisive class prejudices which go with them, but,...it also weakens community life, reduces trust, and increases violence. (p. 45)

Lui, Robles, Leondar-Wright, Brewer, Adamson—*The Color of Wealth: The Story of the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*, New York: The New Press, 2006, p. 8.

Income can change on a dime, but wealth changes over generations. Our lives are shaped by the wealth—or lack of wealth—of parents, our grandparents, and our ancestors. As an estimated 80 percent of assets come from transfers from prior generations, the history of the financial situations of prior generations is a primary cause of the racial wealth gap. Until government policy tackles disparities in wealth—not just income—and until it recognizes and compensates for its own responsibility for the racial wealth gap, the United States will never have racial or economic justice.

Mark Robert Rank—*One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 65-66, 75.

...We can ascertain why poverty occurs in the first place by looking at the structural failings...we can use another analogy—that of musical chairs...

Let us imagine eight chairs and ten players. The players begin to circle around the chairs until the music stops. Who fails to find a chair? If we focus on the winners and losers of the game, we will find that some combination of luck and skill will be involved...

However, if we focus on the game itself, then it is quite clear that, given only eight chairs, two players are bound to lose. Even if every player were suddenly to double his or her speed and agility, there would still be two losers. From this broader context, it really does not matter what the loser's characteristics are, given that two are destined to lose.

I would argue that this musical-chairs analogy can be applied to what has occurred in America economically, socially, and politically. (p. 75)

Mind the Gap: Reducing Disparities to Improve Regional Competitiveness in the Twin Cities, Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, 2005, p. 3-5.

The Twin Cities region is blessed with a number of assets that make it a strong, competitive region. However, underneath these broad regional successes are some disturbing social and economic disparities, demonstrating that progress is not widely shared. There are three sets of “gaps” or disparities in the Twin Cities metro area—among racial and ethnic groups, among different income groups, and between the central cities and the suburbs—that show that the region's prosperity does not benefit all residents or communities.

Race Disparities...

Class Disparities...

Place Disparities...

Reducing these inequalities matters to the economic and fiscal future of the region. Reducing disparities is not just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. “Minding the gap” is crucial to preserving the region’s strong economic position. Further, doing so can generate more revenues (and reduce costs) for the region.

Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020, January 2009, p. 24-26.

Race and Poverty in Minnesota

Race and ethnicity are major determinants in Minnesota of whether one is poor. For instance, although the poverty rate among white Minnesotans is the sixth lowest in the nation, only Mississippi and Louisiana have higher poverty rates among African Americans...

Wealth disparities by race and ethnicity

As stark as incomes figures are, they don’t tell the whole story. As we have discussed, financial self-sufficiency is not just a function of income; it is also related to wealth, the financial assets one has accumulated over time. A lack of wealth impacts access to education, the ability to obtain credit, and prospects for leaving assets for future generations...

The connections between race and poverty are complex. There are myriad issues—disparities in educational outcomes; disparities of wealth; and continuing segregation driven by complicated social and economic forces...

Women and Poverty in Minnesota

That women are among the poorest Minnesotans is vexing to those who study their economic status. That reality remains despite the considerable progress women have made in the state in the last twenty years.

Women’s workforce participation rate is high. We rank second in the nation for women’s health, and we have the fourth highest proportion of women in the legislature in the nation.

Yet while women have advanced economically in Minnesota, the statistics on women and poverty continue to be troubling...

The statistics...are only a sampling of the issues affecting women's economic status in Minnesota. But just from these figures alone, we can make some important observations:

- Almost one-quarter of our female population is struggling economically. That represents a serious amount of pain and lost potential for our state.
- Women continue to earn less than men, which decreases their ability to move out of poverty and become financially self-sufficient.
- In general, women attempting to raise young children alone are at a very high risk for living in poverty, which in turn can jeopardize their children's future.
- Women are at considerable risk for sexual assault and domestic abuse, and the correlation between abuse and poverty and homelessness is very high.
- Because women tend to earn less than men over their careers, they are much more at risk for experiencing poverty when they are older.
- Because of the complex of issues affecting their lives, women belonging to racial and ethnic minorities tend to be at greatest risk of all.

It's not hard to see how the issues above would reinforce and exacerbate one another. For example, an unemployed or low-wage single mother experiencing sexual or domestic abuse would be at high risk for poverty and homelessness, along with her children. And along with the poverty itself, the psychological and emotional effects on both the mother and children in such circumstances would most likely be significant and lasting.

Perfectly Legal: The Covert Campaign to Rig Our Tax System to Benefit the Super Rich—and Cheat Everybody Else, David Cay Johnston, Portfolio, 2003, p. 308-309.

...A tax rate structure that falls too heavily on most Americans and lets the most prosperous save more means that over time the already huge gap in wealth will widen even more...

The income tax is collected only against reported income—and therein lies the real issue about our tax system. The rich have myriad ways to avoid recognizing income for tax purposes, most of them perfectly legal...

The tax system today is not promoting prosperity based on individual enterprise and thriftiness. It is instead working...to enrich and benefit those who have access to the levers of power. In America that is the political donor class.

Our tax system is a good part of the reason that the incomes of the richest 1 percent, and especially the top-earning 13,400 American families, have soared while the bottom 80 percent

of Americans have seen their incomes stagnate for three decades. That most families now need two incomes shows how our tax system is robbing us and our children so that the already deep

Reflecting on our Traditions:

1. Do you agree with the assertion made in the Common Foundation (see above Wisdom in Our World) that vast disparities in wealth are unhealthy for Minnesota? Why or why not?
2. Read again the excerpt from the prophet Isaiah (see above Our Traditions Speak). In what ways do you see Isaiah's vision alive in our communities? In what ways do we fall short?
3. What are your thoughts on the many similarities among Jewish, Christian and Islamic faith traditions cited above regarding economic life in community?

Creative Experiences:

Privilege Musical Chairs

Materials: Eight chairs set up in a circle, Eight signs with a “privilege” posted on each, (Optional Handout of the “Commentary” or posted on back of “privilege”)

Directions: For this exercise you will need 8 chairs placed in a circle. Each chair should have one of the following eight signs on it. Prepare these signs ahead of time with one “Privilege” statement on each sign. You may either write the “Commentary” on the back of the page or simply have it available for your own explanation. The Commentary explains why/how each of the statements acts as a privilege and determines who gets a “chair” in our economic structure.

Privilege #1:

- **My ancestors received a land grant from the government.**

Commentary 1: Land grants and homestead policies transferred ownership of millions of acres of land from American Indian tribes, Mexican citizens, and other groups to new immigrants and settlers. Property ownership became a valuable asset that produced wealth throughout generations.

(For more information, see [The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide](#), p. 239-245.)

Privilege #2:

- **Because of the GI Bill, my grandfather (or father) was able to go to college and buy his first home.**

Commentary 2: From 1944 to 1971 over \$95 billion was spent on the largest public benefits program in U.S. history, the GI Bill. The bill made home-ownership and education possible for many veterans. However African American GIs were largely cut out of these benefits, because many colleges did not accept Blacks, historic black colleges could not handle all of the applications, and Blacks could not get a home mortgage.

(For more information, see [The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide](#), p. 96-98.)

Privilege #3:

- **My father/mother received an inheritance from their parents, and I will receive an inheritance also.**

Commentary 3: “White people are much more likely to inherit money from deceased relatives than people of color...He (Shapiro) found that in white families, money flows from parents to children, while in black families, money flows from adult children to their parents and other relatives.”

([The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide](#), p. 8.)

Privilege #4:

- **My parents received Social Security when they turned 65 and for the rest of their lives.**

Commentary 4: Social Security benefits have provided income for the elderly and allowed them to maintain their standard of living. However, the Social Security Act of 1933 did not include coverage for farmworkers, laborers, housemaids—jobs held primarily by Latinos and

African Americans. The result was that Latinos and African Americans who worked in these occupations did not receive Social Security benefits in their later years.

(For more information, see The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide, p. 136, 169, 254.)

Privilege #5:

- **My parents qualified for an FHA (or VA) loan and bought a house in the suburbs.**

Commentary 5: “The Federal Housing Administration was not explicitly a white program, but realtors and hostile neighbors kept families of color out of white neighborhoods, so in practice it was almost impossible for a family of color to get an FHA loan anywhere...Its manuals for appraisers encouraged channeling loans toward white home buyers. It institutionalized the practice of redlining, marking certain neighborhoods as off-limits for loans...almost all Veterans Administration mortgages went to white families...”

(The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide, p. 254.)

Privilege #6:

- **I am white and I am male.**

Commentary 6: The poverty rate among white Minnesotans is sixth lowest in the U.S., while the poverty rate among African Americans is third highest in the U.S.

Approximately 1 in 4 women over the age of 16 in Minnesota is living below the federal poverty guidelines.

Women who work full-time earn 79.3% of what men earn, and for women of color the percentage is even lower—67.1%.

(See *Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty by 2020*, January 2009, p. 24, 26)

Privilege #7:

- **I went to college and received a bachelor’s degree.**

Commentary 7: “A high school diploma, once enough to obtain a good job, is increasingly inadequate for anything but low-paying service jobs, and will no longer be adequate in the future for better-paying jobs.”

(*Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty by 2020*, January 2009, p. 23.)

Privilege #8:

- **I am in the top 1% income bracket and pay 9.3% tax rate.**

Commentary 8:

In 2009 Minnesotans who earned \$12,000 or less paid 19.3% tax rate.

Those who earned \$58,500-\$73,400 paid 12.3 % tax rate.

Those who earned over \$460,000 paid 9.3% tax rate.

(Joint Religious Legislative Coalition)

Privilege #1:

**My ancestors received
a land grant from the
government.**

Commentary #1:

Land grants and homestead policies transferred ownership of millions of acres of land from American Indian tribes, Mexican citizens, and other groups to new immigrants and settlers. Property ownership became a valuable asset that produced wealth throughout generations.

(For more information, see [The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide](#), p. 239-245.)

Privilege #2:

**Because of the GI Bill,
my grandfather (or
father) was able to go
to college and buy his
first home.**

Commentary #2

From 1944 to 1971 over \$95 billion was spent on the largest public benefits program in U.S. history, the GI Bill. The bill made home-ownership and education possible for many veterans. However African American GIs were largely cut out of these benefits, because many colleges did not accept Blacks, historic black colleges could not handle all of the applications, and Blacks could not get a home mortgage.

(For more information, see The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide, p. 96-98.)

Privilege #3:

**My father/mother
received an
inheritance from their
parents, and I will
receive an inheritance
also.**

Commentary #3:

“White people are much more likely to inherit money from deceased relatives than people of color...He (Shapiro) found that in white families, money flows from parents to children, while in black families, money flows from adult children to their parents and other relatives.”

(The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide, p. 8.)

Privilege #4:

**My parents received
Social Security when
they turned 65 and
for the rest of their
lives.**

Commentary #4:

Social Security benefits have provided income for the elderly and allowed them to maintain their standard of living. However, the Social Security Act of 1933 did not include coverage for farmworkers, laborers, housemaids—jobs held primarily by Latinos and African Americans. The result was that Latinos and African Americans who worked in these occupations did not receive Social Security benefits in their later years.

(For more information, see The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide, p. 136, 169, 254.)

Privilege #5:

**My parents qualified
for an FHA (or VA)
loan and bought a
house in the suburbs.**

Commentary #5:

“The Federal Housing Administration was not explicitly a white program, but realtors and hostile neighbors kept families of color out of white neighborhoods, so in practice it was almost impossible for a family of color to get an FHA loan anywhere...Its manuals for appraisers encouraged channeling loans toward white home buyers. It institutionalized the practice of redlining, marking certain neighborhoods as off-limits for loans...almost all Veterans Administration mortgages went to white families...

(The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide, p. 254.)

Privilege #6:

**I am white and I am
male.**

Commentary #6:

The poverty rate among white Minnesotans is sixth lowest in the U.S., while the poverty rate among African Americans is third highest in the U.S. Approximately 1 in 4 women over the age of 16 in Minnesota is living below the federal poverty guidelines. Women who work full-time earn 79.3% of what men earn, and for women of color the percentage is even lower—67.1%.

(See Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty by 2020, January 2009, p. 24, 26)

Privilege #7:

**I went to college and
received a bachelor's
degree.**

Commentary #7:

“A high school diploma, once enough to obtain a good job, is increasingly inadequate for anything but low-paying service jobs, and will no longer be adequate in the future for better-paying jobs.”

(Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty by 2020, January 2009, p. 23.)

Privilege #8:

**I am in the top 1%
income bracket and
pay 9.3% tax rate.**

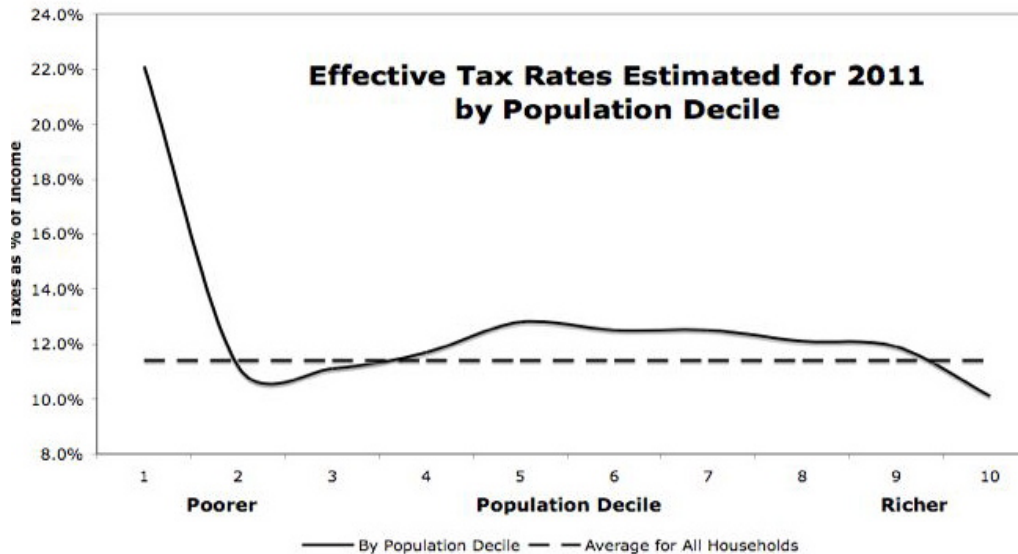
Commentary #8:

In 2009 Minnesotans who earned \$12,000 or less paid 19.3% tax rate.

Those who earned \$58,500-\$73,400 paid 12.3 % tax rate.

Those who earned over \$460,000 paid 9.3% tax rate.

(Joint Religious Legislative Coalition)



(Joint Religious Legislative Coalition: www.jrlc.org/jrlc-blog/321-tax-fairness-and-justice.html)

Play the game of Musical Chairs:

Invite 10 participants to walk around the chairs until the music stops. When the music stops they should all try to sit in a chair.

Play music of some sort while the 10 participants walk around the 8 chairs. When music is stopped, everyone tries to get a chair, but two will have no chair. Ask each person in a chair to read the sign on their chair. Each sign describes a public policy or situation representing privilege.

Add the Commentary to explain how the statements represent privilege in our economic structure.

Read the excerpt by Mark Robert Rank, [One Nation, Underprivileged](#). Discuss accuracy of his analogy. What do you think?

Mark Robert Rank—*One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 65-66, 75.

...We can ascertain why poverty occurs in the first place by looking at the structural failings...we can use another analogy—that of musical chairs...

Let us imagine eight chairs and ten players. The players begin to circle around the chairs until the music stops. Who fails to find a chair? If we focus on the winners and losers of the game, we will find that some combination of luck and skill will be involved...

However, if we focus on the game itself, then it is quite clear that, given only eight chairs, two players are bound to lose. Even if every player were suddenly to double his or her speed and agility, there would still be two losers. From this broader context, it really does not matter what the loser's characteristics are, given that two are destined to lose.

I would argue that this musical-chairs analogy can be applied to what has occurred in America economically, socially, and politically. (p. 75)

(Optional: Read the case study below, told in the first person to show the far-reaching effects of public policies and governmental actions. If time is limited, you may skip this section):

My ancestors came from Germany and Switzerland and settled in the 1850s in a small German community in Texas. However before they arrived some significant events had taken place in that part of the country.

In the late 1700s trappers and traders from the East began to settle in the Southwest, the first time Latinos and whites lived together as neighbors.

In 1821 Mexico won its independence from Spain, and in 1829 abolished slavery.

In 1830 Mexico banned further Anglo-American immigration to Texas as well as the importation of slaves.

In 1837 the "Texians" fought and won independence and became the Lone Star Republic of Texas. Citizenship was granted to all men living in Texas on the day of independence, EXCEPT for Africans, the descendants of Africans, and Indians.

In 1845 the new Lone Star Republic became part of the United States as the term "manifest destiny" became the rallying cry for an expansionist sentiment that was sweeping the country.

The U.S.—Mexico War of 1845-48 and the Gadsden Purchase in 1854 resulted in the United States gaining a third of its present landmass—all of the southwestern part of the United States. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848-50) ended the U.S.-Mexico War and resulted in a massive transfer of land from Mexican Americans to Anglo Americans.

Into this context came the German immigrants. They had not been part of that history. They were not slave-owners. They did not want to enlist in any war between the states (in fact many of them had emigrated to avoid the draft in Germany). But these new German immigrants, some of whom were my ancestors, arrived just in time to benefit from the government laws and treaties. Some of them were given land grants to settle. This was part of the very land that had in essence been twice-stolen, first from American Indian tribes and then from Mexican landowners.

My family became farmers, ranchers, grocers, teachers, postmasters in the community—and they were all landowners. They were poor; they struggled. My grandmother raised 8 children after my grandfather died at an early age. But—they

were landowners, and that one fact has made all the difference in our economic situation today. You see—in the 1950s oil was discovered on some of our family’s land. As landowners my parents owned the mineral rights and soon began to receive moderate payments for that oil and gas. Now, these payments were not stunning (nothing like the stereotype many people have when they hear the word “oil”), but they lifted a teacher/farmer’s income into middle class. And assisted by German frugality, my parents found they could afford that new Ford more easily and send their two daughters to college without taking out loans.

And later when my husband and I wanted to buy a house, the only way we could do so was with a loan from my parents—not the bank. So, in reality, because of the continuing effect of those governmental actions of 150 years ago, our family became homeowners, which until just recently, opened the door to other financial opportunity.

If you use the case study, follow up with a discussion of these questions:

1. What is your personal reaction to this case study?
2. Is your family’s history similar or different from this case study?
3. What does it reveal about the long-lasting effect of public policy on the lives of individuals and families?

Continue with the following questions:

1. Recount your own family’s history. Did your ancestors get a “chair” with public policies, land grants, tax structure, etc. or were they left out?
2. Did public policies help or hurt your family’s ability to thrive economically?
3. Do present public policies give you an advantage or a disadvantage?
4. What actions might your faith prompt you to take to live out the theme of “Enough for All”?

Be the Change:

Commit to learning more about how disparities in race and gender lead to increased poverty among people of color and women in Minnesota. Go to www.mnwithoutpoverty.org. See also www.jrlc.org. For information on federal disparities in race and gender in increased poverty go to www.halfintention.org. Watch these sites and others for updates on specific legislative initiatives that can help all Minnesotans have 'enough.' Be the change!

Extending the Theme:

Game of Life

Goal: Understand the challenges in life and how they affect equality in society.

Materials: Game of Life Board Game

Directions and Augmented Rules: Play the Game of Life with the rules of the game and these slightly different rules.

Once careers have been chosen in the game, the player earning the lowest salary pays out 10% of that salary to the bank every fourth turn. The player with the highest salary receives a bonus every 3 turns increasing by \$1000 (\$1000 after the 3rd turn, \$2000 after the 6th, \$3000 after the 9th, etc.). This person may do anything with their bonuses including helping out the other players.

After the game has finished, start the game over, now as your kids (i.e., if you have 1 boy and 1 girl then you will start the next game with two cars and two turns and two bonuses or payouts). Continue playing with the money you have earned from the first round. Regardless of your salaries this round make sure that the wealthy player still receives their increasing bonuses and the lowest salaried player still pays out 10% (on all of the kids' turns).

When both rounds are completed, see the disparity between the two families. If time allows, you may want to continue another round to see how big the differences can become after three generations. Then precede to the discussion questions.

Discussion Questions:

1. What happened in the game?
2. Do you think this was a real representation of what happens in society? Why? Why not?
3. If the wealthy player gave money to other players, did it help? Did that money change the prospects of the other family?
4. Did this create an equal society? What can we learn from this game?

5. What could we have done to make the game fairer? What can we do to make a change in our real society to become fairer?

Other Ways to Extend the Theme:

YouTube video: Marvin Sapp—"He Saw the Best in Me"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mV6LsR2jCjs>



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith Session 5: Enough Time

THEME:

The notion that there is never enough time is pervasive in our culture. Our belief that we have no time to spare means that we can easily excuse ourselves from concrete involvement in the lives of others. This session focuses on God’s time and our own priorities.

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;*

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Breaking the Ice:

Clock Game

Goal: To meet everyone in the group and draw attention to issues of time.

Materials: Masking tape or paper for numbers

Directions: Before any participants enter the room, make a giant clock on the floor in masking tape. Once the participants get into the room divide them into two equal groups: “the clock” and “the minute hands.” Have “the clock” group stand as individuals at specific times on the clock on the floor. This group will remain stationary for the game. Have “the minute hands” group go into the circle and line up facing “the clock group.” The participant that lines up opposite the person standing at 12 (the top of the clock) will be the main minute hand. Where they line up for the rest of the game is the time indicated by the facilitator.

The facilitator will now “tell the time” and the main minute hand has to rotate to get to that time. All others rotate accordingly. When all are in place they should introduce themselves to the person across from them and discuss the following questions (one question for each “time”). Facilitators can extend or shorten this process as needed.

1. Did you have enough time to get everything done today?
2. What does it mean when we say that time is relative? Give examples.
3. Is there ever enough time? Why? Why not?
4. If you had all the time in the world what would you do?
5. How can we get the most out of our time?
6. Name a time when you knew it was “time” for something to change.

Our Traditions Speak:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8—For everything there is a time

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

Luke 12:22-34—Do not worry about your life; where your treasure is, there is your heart

He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

'Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Hadeeth – A different view of time

“Seize five things before five other things come to you: Your life before your death, your health before your sickness, your free time before your preoccupation, your youthfulness before your old age, and your time of wealth before your time of poverty.”

Luke 12:54-56—Interpret the present time

He also said to the crowds, ‘When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, “It is going to rain”; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, “There will be scorching heat”; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?’

Galatians 4:1-7—When the time had fully come (fullness of time)

My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The Qur’an 23:99-100 – Enough time

“Until, when death comes to one of them, he says, ‘My LORD, send me back that I may do righteousness in whatever I left behind!’ No!...”

Genesis 2:1-3—God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

Wisdom in Our World:

Philip Zimbardo, Ph.D., and John Boyd, Ph.D.—*The Time Paradox: The New Psychology of Time That Can Change your Life*, New York: Free Press, 2008, p. 8-11, 316-317)

Time is our most valuable possession...

Most things that can be possessed—diamonds, gold, hundred-dollar bills—can be replenished. New diamond and gold deposits are discovered, and new bills are printed. Such is not the case with time. Nothing that any of us does in this life will allow us to accrue a moment's more time, and nothing will allow us to regain time misspent. Once time has passed, it is gone forever...

In view of the many valuations we assign time, and in view of the fact that time is our most valuable commodity, it is striking to note how little thought we give to how we spend it... Perhaps we spend time so easily because we never learned to think about time...

In reevaluating how we think about time—since time is more valuable than money—we're led to ask: Are we really putting the right valuations on time? Are people with the biggest bank accounts truly the wealthiest people in our world? How wealthy is someone who spends all of his time making money but doesn't take the time to enjoy life? (p. 8-11)

Our time is brief, and it will pass no matter what we do. So let us have purpose in spending it. Let us spend it so that our time matters to each of us, and matters to all those whose lives we touch. The question then becomes how you can make time matter. If you know why the time allotted you matters, consider yourself lucky and be prepared to find new purpose tomorrow. If you do not have purpose right now, wait a moment, for it may change...

Finding purpose is a personal quest. Only you will know when you have arrived. We cannot accompany you, but we can suggest a simple starting point, which we call the Golden Rule of Time. It reads, "Use your time as you would like others to use theirs." Would you like others to work hard so they can use the talents that they possess and you and they can benefit from them? Would you like them to be able to reflect warmly on the success their talents have brought them? Would you like them to immerse themselves in the pleasure of the moment? If your answers to these questions were yes, you should do the same yourself. (p. 316-317)

The Long Now Foundation was established in 01996 (based on a framework of 10,000 years) to creatively foster long-term thinking and responsibility.

About Long Now

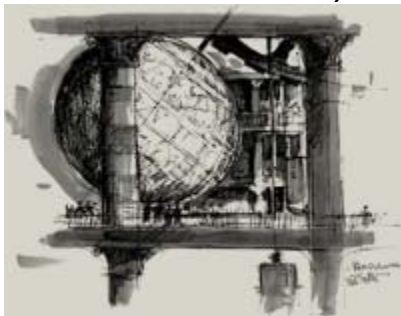
The Long Now Foundation was established in 01996 to develop the Clock and Library projects , as well as to become the seed of a very long-term cultural institution. The Long Now Foundation hopes to provide counterpoint to today's "faster/cheaper" mind set and promote "slower/better" thinking. We hope to creatively foster responsibility in the framework of the next 10,000 years.

The Clock and Library Projects

Below is an essay by a founding board member Stewart Brand on the need for, and the mechanism by which The Long Now Foundation is attempting to encourage long-term thinking.

Civilization is revving itself into a pathologically short attention span. The trend might be coming from the acceleration of technology, the short-horizon perspective of market-driven economics, the next-election perspective of democracies, or the distractions of personal multi-tasking. All are on the increase. Some sort of balancing corrective to the short-sightedness is needed-some mechanism or myth which encourages the long view and the taking of long-term responsibility, where 'long-term' is measured at least in centuries. Long Now proposes both a mechanism and a myth. It began with an observation and idea by computer scientist Daniel Hillis :

"When I was a child, people used to talk about what would happen by the year 02000. For the next thirty years they kept talking about what would happen by the year 02000, and now no one mentions a future date at all. The future has been shrinking by one year per year for my entire life. I think it is time for us to start a long-term project that gets people thinking past the mental barrier of an ever-shortening future. I would like to propose a large (think Stonehenge) mechanical clock, powered by seasonal temperature changes. It ticks once a year, bongs once a century, and the cuckoo comes out every millennium."



Such a clock, if sufficiently impressive and well-engineered, would embody deep time for people. It should be charismatic to visit, interesting to think about, and famous enough to become iconic in the public discourse. Ideally, it would do for thinking about time what the photographs of Earth from space have done for thinking about the environment. Such icons reframe the way people think.

Hillis, who developed the "massive parallel" architecture of the current generation of supercomputers, devised the mechanical design of the Clock and is now building the second prototype (the first prototype is currently on display at the London Science Museum). The Clock's works consist of a binary digital-mechanical system which is so accurate and revolutionary that we have patented several of its elements. With 32 bits of accuracy it has precision equal to one day in 20,000 years, and it self-corrects by "phase-locking" to the noon Sun. For the way the eventual Clock is experienced (its size, structure, etc.), we expect to keep proliferating design ideas for a while. In 1999, Long Now purchased part of a mountain in eastern Nevada whose high white limestone cliffs may make an ideal site for the ultimate 10,000-year Clock.

The point is to explore whatever may be helpful for thinking, understanding, and acting responsibly over long periods of time.

- Stewart Brand

Dick's Story: "That Will be Enough"

I saw a friend the other day. I hadn't seen him in a long time because he had been very ill and had been through a long series of chemotherapy. When I saw him, I went over and hugged him and asked how he was doing. He said he was now doing fairly well, but that the chemo had been awful. Then he told me, "I went to my doctor the other day, and he told me that after the chemo I probably had a good six more years. So, now I'm thinking that I am presently 75 years old. In six years I will be 81, and that will be enough."

I was moved by his story, and then he told me a footnote. He said that he had mentioned that same thought to a woman at church the previous day. However, when he finished telling her that he thought 81 would be enough, she revealed to him that she had just celebrated her 81st birthday. For her, 81 was not necessarily so easily *enough*.

Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty, January 2009, p. 56.

Benchmarks for Reaching the Commission's Goals

As part of our deliberation process, we set up a working group to develop some specific benchmarks for meeting our goals. This group developed two sets of benchmarks—overarching benchmarks and

benchmarks tied to the six recommendations articulated in this report.

Overarching benchmarks

To reach the overall goal of ending poverty by 2020, rapid poverty reduction must occur where Minnesota's

poverty rates are disproportionately high—among racial minority groups and among children.

Overarching

benchmarks identified by the Commission's Benchmark working group include:

- Reduce poverty rates among racial minority groups to the national average by 2012.
- Reduce poverty rates by half among all children by 2014.
- Eliminate poverty by 2020.

Reflecting on Our Traditions:

1. In what ways have you been a good steward of the time you have been given? In what ways do you think you might want to adjust your use of time?
2. The reading from Luke (see *Our Traditions Speak*, above) speaks of human's worry over our needs. Think about how a perceived lack of both time and money might intersect. What do you worry about in that respect? How does that worry change your behavior?

Creative Experiences:

Poverty 2020 Scenarios

Materials: Two large posters (newsprint), Markers

Directions: Place two large posters (newsprint) in different parts of the room. On one poster write the following heading and question:

Scenario 1 for Year 2020

By 2020 the poverty rate in Minnesota has risen to 14% and inequality has increased.

What were the decisions, public policies, and actions that led to this result (from the present to 2020)? List them.

On the other poster write this heading and question:

Scenario 2 for Year 2020

By 2020 the poverty rate has decreased to almost 0%, and there is greater economic equality.

What were the decisions, public policies, and actions that led to this result (from the present to 2020)? List them.

Divide into two groups, with each group working on one of the scenarios for 10 minutes. Record answers to the question on the poster. After 10 minutes, switch the groups and ask each group to continue the work on the other scenario. They should simply add their answers to those written by the first group. After this 10 minutes, come together to discuss the answers given to each scenario.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which scenario was easier to work on?
2. What is your response to each?
3. Which actions, decisions, public policies had the greatest impact in each scenario?

Now consider the time you have to spend between today and the year 2020 and for the rest of your lifetime.

1. Which scenario would you like to see happen by 2020?
2. How will you invest your time in making that scenario a reality?

Be the Change:

A Minnesota without Poverty has as its overarching goal a time-sensitive one – ending poverty in Minnesota by 2020. Go their website www.mnwithoutpoverty.org to learn how you can get involved in helping to reach this goal. Nationally Half in Ten is an organization working to cut U.S. poverty in half by 2020. To learn how to get involved with Half in Ten go to their website www.halfinten.org. We have enough time!

Extending the Theme:

Groundhog Day

Goal: To think about how time affects us.

Directions: Locate a copy of the movie *Groundhog Day* (1993, 101 minutes, rated PG). After watching the movie use the discussion questions provided to encourage group reflection on the concept of enough time.

Plot Synopsis: *Self-centered and sour TV meteorologist Phil Connors (Bill Murray), new producer Rita (Andie MacDowell), and cameraman Larry (Chris Elliott) from fictional Pittsburgh television station WPBH-TV9 travel to Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to cover the annual Groundhog Day festivities with Punxsutawney Phil. Having grown tired of this assignment, Phil grudgingly gives his report and attempts to return to Pittsburgh when a blizzard shuts down the roads. Phil and his team are forced to stay in town an extra day.*

Every day Phil wakes up to find that he is reliving February 2. The day plays out exactly as it did before, with no one else aware of the time loop, and only Phil aware of past events. At first he is confused, but, when the phenomenon continues on subsequent days, he decides to take advantage of the situation with no fear of long-term consequences: he learns secrets from the town's residents, seduces women, steals money, drives recklessly, and gets thrown in jail. However, his attempts to get closer to Rita repeatedly fail.

Eventually, Phil becomes despondent and tries more and more drastically to end the time loop; he gives ridiculous and offensive reports on the festival, abuses residents, and eventually kidnaps Punxsutawney Phil and, after a long police chase, drives into a quarry, appearing to kill both himself and the groundhog. However, Phil wakes up and finds that nothing has changed; further attempts at suicide are just as fruitless as he continues to find himself awaking on the morning of February 2.

When Phil explains the situation to Rita, she suggests that he should take advantage of it to improve himself. Inspired, Phil endeavors to try to learn more about Rita, building upon his knowledge of her and the town each day. He begins to use his by now vast experience of the day

to help as many people around town as possible. He uses the time to learn, among other things, to play piano, ice sculpt and speak French.

Discussion Questions for after the film:

1. What did you think of the movie?
2. How did the movie relate to enough?
3. What lesson did Phil learn? Is there a way to teach this in real life without a time loop?
4. What can we learn from this movie about enough? Our relationship with time? Society? And our relationships with others?
5. How does this movie play with the idea of not having enough time?
6. What do you think the filmmakers are trying to say about time being an excuse for not being involved in the lives of others?
7. What is the most important thing we can learn from this movie?

Other Ways to Extend the Theme:

Films:

Click, 2006 with Adam Sandler

The Time Machine, 2002 with Guy Pierce

Songs:

Turn! Turn! Turn! by The Byrds

Time is on My Side by The Rolling Stones

Good Riddance by Green Day



A Discussion Guide for People of Faith Session 6: Enough for All

THEME:

When we begin to believe that there is indeed enough for all we can begin to imagine a new way forward and so bring to life a Minnesota (and a world) without poverty. This session sets the stage for that vision and prompts action that will lead to its realization.

We believe the desire to overcome poverty is not simply a human idea, but is the desire of our Creator, and that the work to create a more just and whole society will be empowered by the Creator's presence.

A Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Work on Overcoming Poverty (7th principle)



2423 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 * 612-310-9560

*Any or all portions of this discussion guide may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited. A Minnesota Without Poverty. *Enough for All: A Discussion Guide for People of Faith* (2011).

Breaking the Ice:

Enough for All Artistic Expression

Goal: To think about how you as an individual imagine what is “enough”.

Materials: 4x4 squares of cardstock paper, in a variety of colors, enough for each participant, sharpies or felt-tipped markers

Directions: Each participant should choose a colored square and a marker. On one side they should write a word, phrase, or draw a symbol that represents their own experience of “enough”—more than enough, less than enough, just enough, etc.

After they have finished they should pair up with another person and show them their drawing and explain it to the other person.

Time permitting everyone should come back to the group and share the cards.

Our Traditions Speak:

Ephesians 3:20-21—by the power at work within us; accomplish abundantly more

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Zakat, the third “Pillar” of Islam – Charity due

Zakat is different from voluntary charity; for practicing Muslims it is an obligation as important to fulfill as the five daily prayers. In most cases it is calculated annually as 2.5% of any investable wealth or assets above a certain level that has been in a person’s possession for a year. Who is entitled to Zakat? The Qur’an [in 9:60] specifically mentions “the poor,” the needy,” “those in debt,” and the “wayfarer,” among others.

In the distribution of Zakat--the obligatory annual charity that an Islamic State would collect--there are two schools of thought among scholars:

1. Some say that a needy person should be given "enough" for a whole year (so it is not like a band-aid that covers the immediate needs and then the person is in need shortly after that).
2. Others say that a needy person should be given "enough" for a lifetime (by empowering him or her to sustain themselves; for example, giving them enough to buy a sewing machine and initial related supplies and inventory, as well as establish themselves in business).

Isaiah 55:1-13—Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,

a leader and commander for the peoples.
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Revelation 21:1-7—A new heaven and a new earth; he will wipe every tear from their eyes

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice

from the throne saying,
'See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.'

The Qur'an 2:177 – Giving is part of righteousness

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces towards the East or the West; rather, true righteousness is for those who believes in GOD, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets; who give of their wealth—though they cherish it—to relatives, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, those who ask, and to free captives; who establish regular prayer and pay alms; who fulfill their promises whenever they promise; and who patiently endure in poverty and hardship and during battle...”

Isaiah 35—The Return of the Redeemed

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,

with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

A complete Islamic program for dealing with poverty

Work
The Sponsorship of well-to-do relatives
Zakat
The Sponsorship of the State's funding resources
Voluntary Charity

Wisdom in Our World:

A Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Work on Overcoming Poverty (7th principle)

We believe the desire to overcome poverty is not simply a human idea, but is the desire of our Creator, and that the work to create a more just and whole society will be empowered by the Creator's presence.

Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love*, Fortress Press, 1963, p. 70

In a real sense, all life is interrelated. All people are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

Lui, Robles, Leondar-Wright, Brewer, Adamson—*The Color of Wealth: The Story of the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*, New York: The New Press, 2006, p. 276-277, 290-291.

Jobs are needed that provide the cash income to cover day-to-day needs, *with something left over to build savings*, the basis for financial wealth. Today, income disparity lays the groundwork for future wealth disparities...Once basic living expenses are met, each additional dollar of annual income generates \$3.26 in net worth over a person's lifetime. Wealth disparity grows because of differences in income...Income includes not just wages and salaries based on working, but cash supports for those who are unemployed, retired, or parents of small children. (p. 276-77)

The first step in building a movement for greater economic and racial equality is a change in consciousness. The myths of racial superiority and inferiority can be debunked, and the government's hand in creating racial categories and distributing economic resources by race exposed. We see that "the rich get richer and the poor poorer" is not a law of nature, but a man-made choice. We remember what brings us together as Americans is our shared value that work should be rewarded, and our belief that leaders are not born but rise from the ranks when given the opportunity...

At the end of his life, Martin Luther King, Jr., made this prophetic statement: "There is nothing new about poverty. What is new is that now we have the techniques and the resources to get rid of poverty. The real question is whether we have the will." As the twenty-

first century ticks along, we can stiffen our will. We can end poverty, and we can close the racial economic divide. (p. 290-291)

Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett—*The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009, pages 177, 291.

...Greater equality can be gained either by using taxes and benefits to redistribute very unequal incomes or by greater equality in gross incomes before taxes and benefits, which leaves less need for redistribution. So big government may not always be necessary to gain the advantages of a more equal society...The really important implication is that how a society becomes more equal is less important than whether or not it actually does so. (p. 177)

The relationships between inequality and the prevalence of health and social problems shown in earlier chapters suggest that if the United States was to reduce its income inequality to something like the average of the four most equal of the rich countries (Japan, Norway, Sweden and Finland), the proportion of the population feeling they could trust others might rise by 75 per cent—presumably with matching improvements in the quality of community life; rates of mental illness and obesity might similarly each be cut by almost two-thirds, teenage birth rates could be more than halved, prison populations might be reduced by 75 per cent, and people could live longer while working the equivalent of two months less per year. (p. 261)

Robert B. Reich—*After-Shock: The Next Economy and America's Future*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010, page 146.

None of us can thrive in a nation divided between a small number of people receiving an ever larger share of the nation's income and wealth, and everyone else receiving a declining share. The lopsidedness not only diminishes economic growth but also tears at the fabric of our society. America cannot succeed if the basic bargain at the heart of our economy remains broken. The most fortunate among us who have reached the pinnacles of power and success depend on a stable economic and political system. That stability rests on the public's trust that the system operates in the interest of us all. Any loss of such trust threatens the well-being of everyone. We will choose reform, I believe, because we are a sensible nation, and reform is the only sensible option we have.

Lynne Twist, *The Soul of Money: Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Life*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2003, p. 59-60.

... (Buckminster Fuller) said that for centuries, perhaps thousands of years, we have lived in the belief that there's not enough to go around, and that we need to fight and compete to garner those resources for ourselves. Perhaps it had been a valid perception at one time, or perhaps it hadn't been, he said, but at this point in history—in the 1970s—we were able to do so much more with so much less that as a human family we clearly had reached a point where there

actually was enough for everyone everywhere to meet or even surpass their needs to live a reasonable healthy, productive life. This moment represented a dramatic breakthrough in the evolution of civilization and humankind, he said...it could be the most significant turning point in our evolution because it meant we could move from a *you-or-me* world—a world where either you or I make it, and where we need to compete and fight to see who wins—to a *you-and-me* world, where all of us can make it. In that *you-and-me* world, all of us have enough food, enough water, enough land, enough housing, enough of the fundamental things for each one of us to live a fulfilling and productive life.

This new threshold completely changes the game, and it would take fifty years, he predicted, for us to make the necessary adjustments in our world so we could move from a *you-or-me* paradigm to *you-and-me* paradigm, a paradigm that says the world can work for everyone with no one and nothing left out.

Legislative Report: Commission to End Poverty, January 2009, p. 56.

Ending poverty: Throughout the report, we talk about the concept of ending or eliminating poverty, but we want to add two points of clarification. First, in ending poverty, we do not pretend that nobody will ever fall into poverty—a family whose housing burns down with all of their possessions may suddenly be homeless and in poverty, as may a person who has no income because they lost their job suddenly, or someone who had to flee violence in their home. There will always be crises that lead to temporary poverty. The Commission’s goal is to make sure that people in crisis get prompt help in getting their feet back on the ground quickly.

Likewise, in our goal of eliminating poverty, we are not including people who traditionally would qualify as being in poverty, but whose income and assets are a matter of lifestyle choice, such as an individual who wants to live off of the land, or a religious person who has taken an oath of poverty.

Reflecting on Our Traditions:

1. Do you believe that we can create, as Buckminster Fuller mentions in the Twist text above, a *you-and-me* society rather than a *you-or-me* society? What needs to happen in Minnesota to realize this change?
2. Martin Luther King, Jr. is quoted above as believing that we have the means to end poverty if we can find the will. Do you agree? Why or why not? What do you think finding the will means in concrete terms?

Creative Experiences:

Let's Talk About Enough

Materials: This exercise continues the process begun in the Breaking the Ice Activity, using the same squares

Directions: In the Breaking the Ice Activity, participants drew a word, phrase, or symbol to depict their own experience with “Enough.” They shared their story with one another.

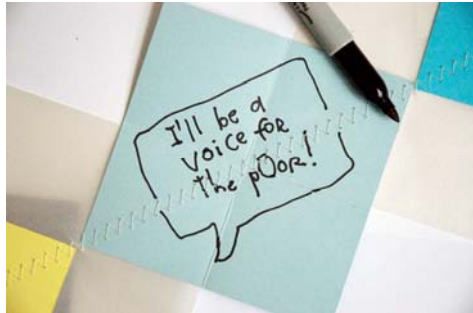
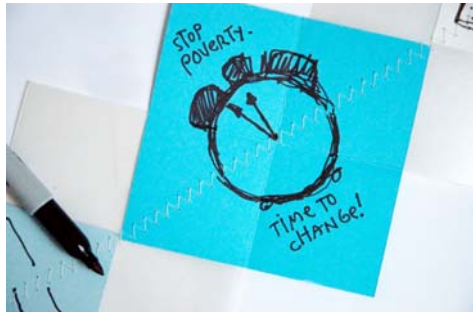
Now, invite each participant to turn their square over. This time draw a word, picture, symbol, or phrase that depicts your commitment and what you will do to ensure there is “Enough for All.”

Discuss your commitment to “enough for all” with others in your group.

Next, take another square—one for the whole group. Discuss together what your group will do to work toward “Enough for All.” After discussion draw a symbol, word, phrase, picture to represent your Group commitment. Label this one: “Group Commitment”.

Gather all of the squares and either display them in your local setting, or send/deliver them to A Minnesota Without Poverty. If you send them to A Minnesota Without Poverty (2423 Park Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55404), they will be sewn together into streamers. Later, the streamers will be brought together and displayed in a variety of places to show our commitment to work toward A Minnesota Without Poverty, where there is enough for all.

Appendix A



Be the Change:

The Legislative Commission to End Poverty created benchmarks to guide us in the task of ending poverty in Minnesota by 2020. Go to www.mnwithoutpoverty.org to view the background materials and learn more about specifics. Commit to joining the work by contacting the organization to offer your time, talent or treasure. Be the change!

Extending the Theme:

A Minnesota Without Poverty Presentation

Goal: Now that you have finished this curriculum, what do you do next? Invite A Minnesota Without Poverty (www.mnwithoutpoverty.org) to come and give a presentation to your group. You will hear about exciting progress being made to end poverty in Minnesota by 2020 and learn about other programs and activities in which your group or individuals from your group can be involved.

Remember, only with your help will we ensure that there is truly “Enough for All.”

Time of presentation: Presentations can be tailored to your schedule and timeframe.