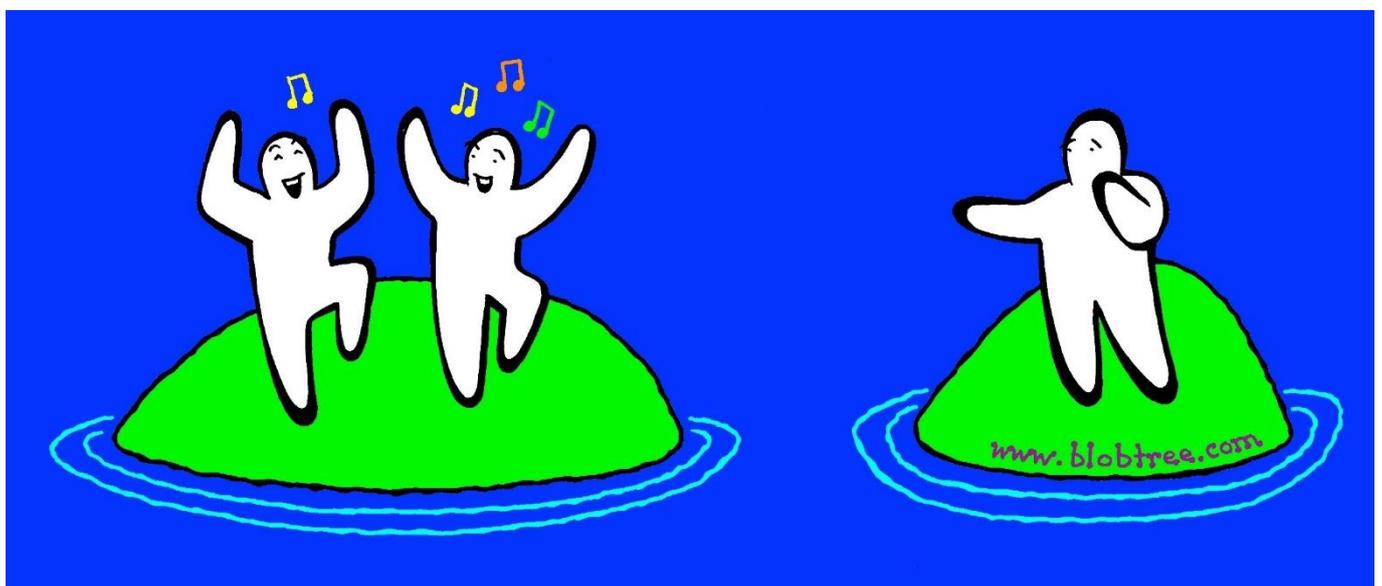




On the Margins:

A Session Plan for Youth and Children's Groups



Introduction:

This session is designed to be used within children's and young people's groups, to explore the topic of 'on the margins'.

This session is put together in such a way that it can be used either online or offline, just choose the appropriate activity. With leaders feeding back the outcome of the conversations to the 'On the Margins' shaper group (insert e-mail)

Self-Care – please be aware that some of these conversations may bring up negative or distressing feelings in children and young people, so tread carefully, and be pastorally aware, might be worth having someone act as 'Chaplain' to keep a watchful eye on all participants and to notice if anyone is struggling.

Produced by the On the Margins Planning Group for 3Generate 2021

Ice Breaker YouTube:

Watch Pixar's Short Film - Bird on a Wire – For the Birds from YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/k2PJ6T7U2eU>

Or

Ice Breaker Game:

Play Shove Ha'penny – to explain being pushed out or shoved out onto the margins.

How to Play - Shove Ha'penny:

- You'll need 5 coins (2p coins are best), a smooth table upon which you have a marked out scoring area (see image)
- Players take it in turns to shove all five coins into the scoring areas.
- You must not touch the board with the hand you aren't using to move the coins, if you do, you score zero for that round.
- At the end of your turn you must let another player remove the coins from the board, and add your score up, if you take them, your score for that round isn't counted.
- If a coin ends up off the board for any reason during your turn, that coin cannot be replayed and doesn't count towards your score.
- Any coin that finishes outside the scoring area in any way is not counted and cannot be replayed.
- Coins on the line (even the tiniest bit) don't count only coins between the two area lines count.



And Marginalised because of...

- Class
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Sexuality (LGBTQ)
- Poverty / Economy
- BAME
- Additional needs
- Homeless
- Health conditions
- Mental health
- Geography
- Age (young or old)
- What else??

THESE MIGHT HELP WITH THE MINDMAPPING...

Margins: Places, communities, and people groups geographically, economically, and culturally which often feel remote in terms of the centres of power, resources, kudos and decision-making. Places where people are under-resourced, unsupported, and often described as lacking/deficient. To re-imagine these places as sources of life and potential will require a significant shift.

- Margin is the edge of something, like a piece of paper
- Margin can be the difference between 2 things e.g. a profit margin
- A margin of error, when you measure something
- We won the game by a 4 goal margin, a difference between two things
- If something is marginal, it is of minor importance, meaning there are core issues that are more important
- If something is marginal it could be on the borderline between two things
- To marginalise means to push to the edge, to exclude from society, to push to the very edges of society, meaning they are not mainstream or part of 'normal' life
- A group that is discriminated against is marginalised

Margins can also be places of growth. On the edge of a field wildflowers, pollinators often emerge in the hedgerows. People must never be defined or limited by the processes that marginalise them. All people have gifts and skills to share e.g. creativity, friendship, kindness, care, wisdom.

Say:

People can be marginalised in many ways because of who they are, including gender, ethnicity, sexuality, mental ill health and being differently able. When we ask why people are marginalised, we must ask questions about our society. Why does this form of marginalisation happen? e.g. Why are women treated differently? We must face the uncomfortable truth that systems exist (the presence of patriarchy, sexism, misogyny) within our society which sustain discrimination. The most significant impact, on any form of marginalisation, is poverty. Poverty damages people, it damages families, and whole communities.

Discuss:

- Have YOU ever felt like you were on the margin? When and How?
- When you look at the list of who is marginalised can you think about why this happens?
- Who was left out/marginalised during the pandemic? – Why did this happen?
- Can you identify these marginalised groups on the Blob image?
- What are the Blob characters 'telling' you?
- What can the 3 blobs in the middle 'DO' to bring the others into that circle?
- Who is at the centre of activity/everything? Whose missing/not present?

Don't let anyone think little of you because you are _____ (insert any marginalised group), Be their ideal; let them follow the way you teach and live; be a pattern for them in your love, your faith, and your thoughts.

1 Timothy 4:12

How Privileged are You?:

Play White Privilege YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/4K5fbQ1-zps>

And/or

Activity: Questionnaire – How Privileged are You?

Either get the young people to do online and answer the How Privileged are you? Questionnaire from BuzzFeed - <https://www.buzzfeed.com/regajha/how-privileged-are-you> or using the questionnaire in the appendix get the young people to check off all the statements that apply to them.

Please note you might need to go through the questionnaire together as a whole group with younger groups.

Then Discuss:

- How Privileged do you think you are? The more you have checked the more privileged you are.
- How did this activity make you feel?

'But if someone who is supposed to be a Christian has money enough to live well, and sees a brother in need, and won't help him—how can God's love be within him? Little children, let us stop just saying we love people; let us really love them, and show it by our actions.'

1 John 3 v 17-18

The Good Samaritan – Bible Study:

Either get a young person to read the Defining Neighbour parable below, or alternatively if you are meeting face 2 face and social distancing allows you could get the young people to act out the story as someone reads...

Defining “Neighbour” (Luke 10 v 25-37)

25 Just then a religion scholar stood up with a question to test Jesus. “Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?”

26 He answered, “What’s written in God’s Law? How do you interpret it?”

27 He said, “That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbour as well as you do yourself.”

28 “Good answer!” said Jesus. “Do it and you’ll live.”

29 Looking for a loophole, he asked, “And just how would you define ‘neighbour’?”

30-32 Jesus answered by telling a story. “There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man.

33-35 “A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man’s condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I’ll pay you on my way back.’

36 “What do you think? Which of the three became a neighbour to the man attacked by robbers?”

37 “The one who treated him kindly,” the religion scholar responded.

Jesus said, “Go and do the same.”

Discuss:

- Who is your neighbour?
- Do your neighbours change depending on the situation you’re in? (for example, at home, church, school, youth group)
- What stops people treating others as ‘neighbour’?
- Who in your community would be the ‘man’ in this parable?
- How can you, your church, your school, your youth group be the good Samaritan?

Action Planning - So, what are you going to do about it:

As a group come up with an action plan, which answers the following questions:

- Are there a particular marginalised group(s) close to the young people that they want to focus on?
- How can you help your church better engage with those on the margins?
- How could you learn more about people who experience marginalisation?
- Could you join an activity/group with people who are very different to you?



Additional Questions: For Older Groups

- Where and how can you listen to 'people on the margins' better?
- If you recognise that God is at work in marginalised places today, what do you think are the implications of this for mission, ministry, and discipleship?
- How may 'change from the margins' be enacted in your church and relationships?
- What steps could you take to ensure that voices and experiences of marginalised communities inform and enhance policymaking and practice in the church?
- Are there conversations you could have and, if so, with who, that might lead to 'redrawing the margins' and considering how to take the issues forward in your context and at a wider level?
- Can you identify some potential partnerships with local organisations, communities or churches that might develop contextually specific responses to poverty and exclusion?
- How might you seek and support those individuals, organisations and churches who serve or work alongside people in marginalised places? How might you strengthen the voices of such communities in your church or organisations wider advocacy work and community-based ministry?
- How could you challenge your church to prioritise the poorest communities in its mission and use of resources?
- How can we redesign our economy, to create a society that really is just and compassionate?

Questions from the Report - In the Thick of it Report URC/JPIT (2020) Full copies of the report available from Church & Society Team at URC House, London.

Closing Devotional:

Watch 'Don't Put People in Boxes' YouTube Video:

<https://youtu.be/zRwt25M5nGw>

Pray to Close



Appendix

Questionnaire – How Privileged are You?

Using this questionnaire check off all the statements that apply to you.

- I am white.
- I have never been discriminated against because of my skin colour.
- I have never been the only person of my race in a room.
- I have never been mocked for my accent.
- I have never been told I am attractive "for my race."
- I have never been a victim of violence because of my race.
- I have never been called a racial slur.
- I have never been told I "sound white."
- A stranger has never asked to touch my hair, or asked if it is real.
- I am heterosexual.
- I have never lied about my sexuality.
- I never had to "come out."
- I never doubted my parents' acceptance of my sexuality.
- I have never been called "fag", "dyke" or "fairy," or any other derogatory slur for homosexuals.
- I have never tried to hide my sexuality.
- I am always comfortable with P.D.A. with my partner in public.
- I have never pretended to be "just friends" with my significant other.
- I have never been ostracized/Judged by my religion for my sexual orientation.
- I have never been told I would "burn in hell" for my sexual orientation.
- I have never been told that my sexuality is "just a phase."
- I have never been violently threatened because of my sexuality.
- I am a man.
- I feel comfortable in the gender I was born as.
- I still identify as the gender I was born in.
- I have never tried to change my gender.
- I have never been denied an opportunity because of my gender.
- I make more money than my professional counterparts of a different gender.
- I have never felt unsafe because of my gender.
- I have never been catcalled or wolf whistled at.
- I have never been sexually harassed or assaulted.
- I work in a salaried job.
- My family and I have never lived below the poverty line.
- I do not have any student loans.
- I have never gone to bed hungry.
- I have never been homeless.
- My parents pay some or all of my bills.

- I don't rely on public transportation.
- I buy new clothes at least once a month.
- I have never felt poor.
- I have never had to worry about making the rent or paying bills.
- I went to private school.
- I graduated secondary school.
- I went or plan on going to an elite college.
- I graduated college.
- My parents paid (at least some of) my tuition.
- I have a car.
- I've never had a roommate.
- I've always had satellite television.
- I have travelled internationally.
- I travel internationally at least once a year.
- I have studied abroad.
- I've never skipped a meal to save money.
- I spent summer holidays abroad.
- My parents have frequent flier miles.
- My parents are heterosexual.
- My parents are both alive.
- My parents are still married.
- I do not have any physical disabilities.
- I do not have any social disabilities.
- I do not have any learning disabilities.
- I have never had an eating disorder.
- I have never been depressed.
- I have never considered suicide.
- I have never attempted suicide.
- I have never taken medication for my mental health.
- I have never been told I'm overweight or "too skinny."
- I have never felt overweight or underweight or "too skinny."
- I have never been shamed for my body type.
- I consider myself to be physically attractive.
- I can afford counselling.
- I've used prescription drugs recreationally.
- I have never had an addiction.
- I have never been shamed for my religious beliefs.
- I have never been violently threatened or attacked for my religious beliefs.
- There is a place of worship for my religion in my town.
- I have never lied about my ethnicity.

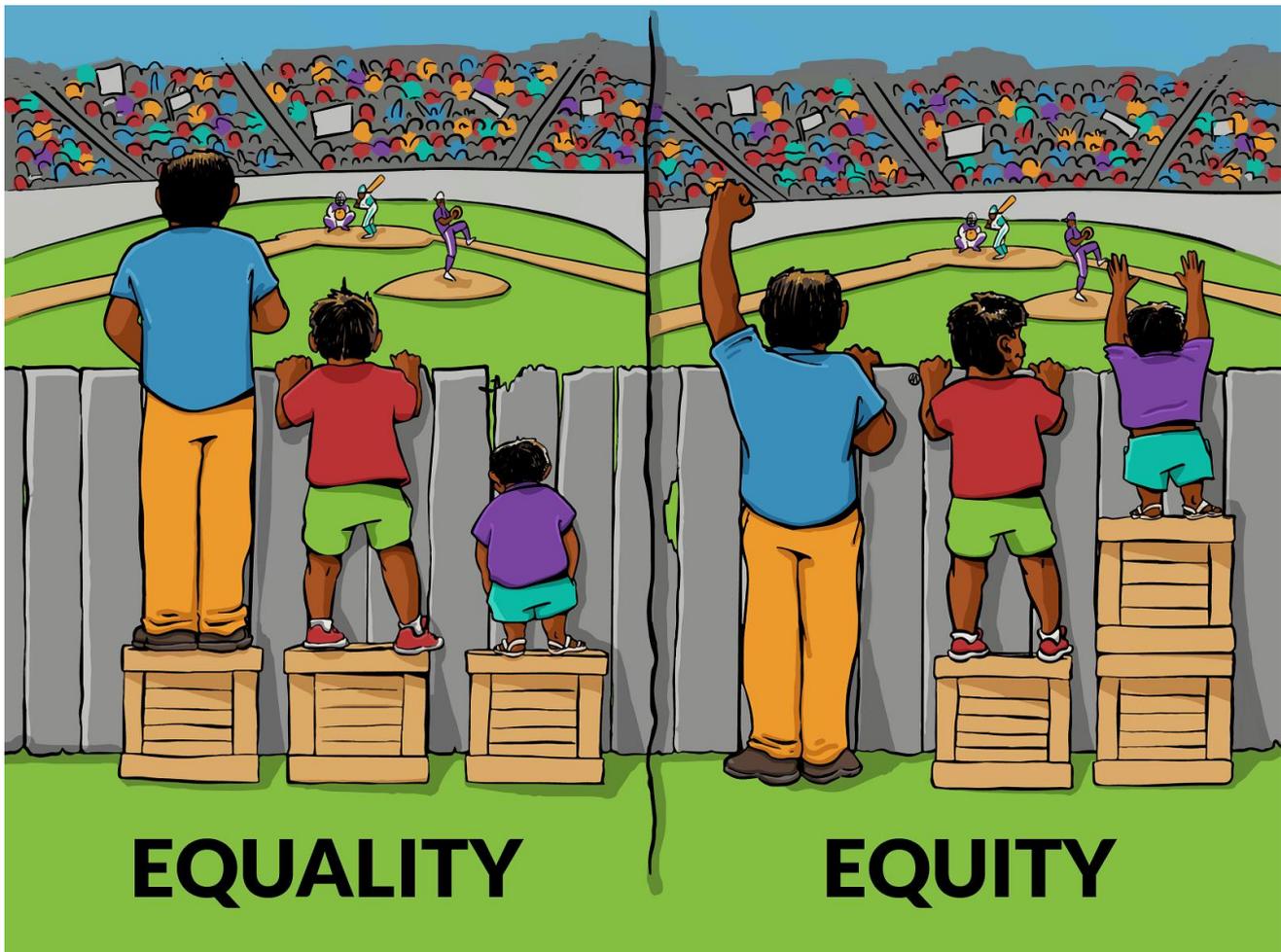
- I have never lied about my religion.
- All my jobs have been accommodating of my religious practices.
- I am not nervous in airport security lines.
- I have never heard this statement: "You have been randomly selected for secondary passport control."
- I have never been called a terrorist.
- Nobody has ever tried to "save" me for my religious beliefs.
- I have never been cyber-bullied for any of my identities.
- I have not been bullied for any of my identities.
- I have never tried to distance myself from any of my identities.
- I have never been self-conscious about any of my identities.
- I have never questioned any of my identities.
- I feel privileged because of the identities I was born with.

Think/Discuss:

- How Privileged do you think you are? The more you have checked the more privileged you are.
- How did this activity make you feel?

Additional Resources and Background Reading:

Equality Vs Equity:



Explain the difference between equality and equity – “Equality” and “equity” have the same root, but there’s a significant difference in meanings. Equality involves everyone receiving exactly the same treatment, whereas equity requires fair treatment according to each person’s needs and situation. equality is treating everybody the same, equity is putting things are in place to ensure everyone is given the same opportunity.

Can you think of any examples?

“Nothing about us without us” is a slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members the group (s) affected by that policy.

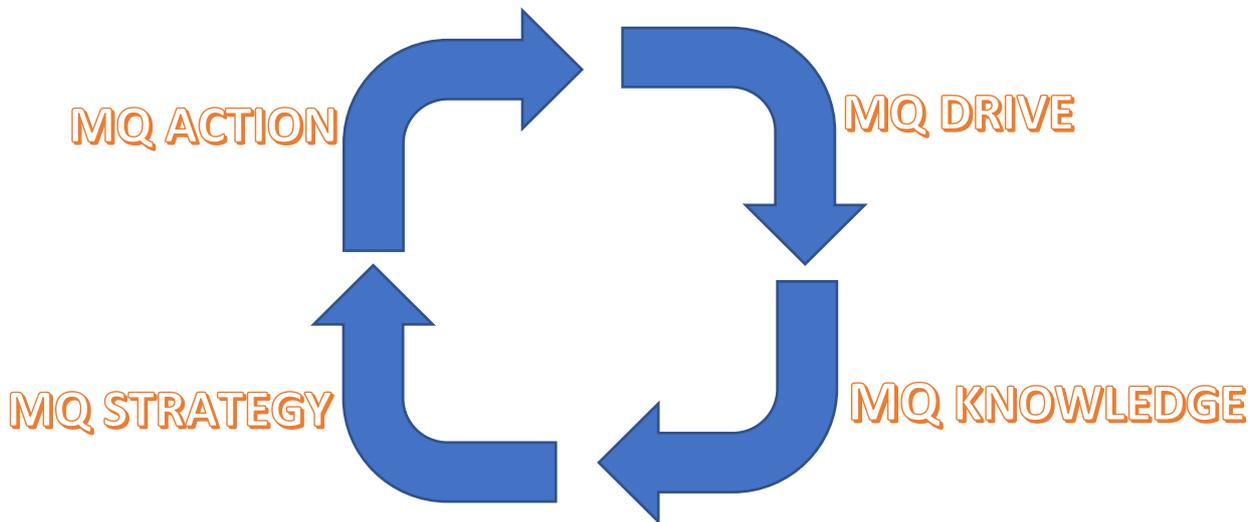
Discuss:

- What do you think about this slogan?
- what does it mean for the Church?

MQ Wheel:

Cultural Intelligence or the CQ Wheel is a model explaining the ability individuals and churches have to serve or relate effectively regardless of the cultural context.

We are repurposing it to support churches and individuals engage with those 'On the Margins' so it becomes the MQ or On the Margins Intelligence.



There are 4 key competences you need to be 'On the Margins' intelligent:

MQ Drive: MQ Drive is the degree to which you are motivated to relate to people who find themselves 'On the Margins'.

Question: What are some of the barriers stopping you or the church from engaging with people on the Margins?

A person/church with a high MQ Drive will intentionally step out of their comfort zone and think about how their identity, faith and relationships are being challenged by engaging with those on the margins.

MQ Knowledge: MQ Knowledge is your understanding of how on the margins groups are similar or different.

Part of MQ Knowledge is how well we know our own identity, particularly our 'Christian' identity?

Question: How can our Christian identity/culture impact on, or conversely, be impacted by the groups we are trying to engage with?

MQ Strategy: MQ Strategy is about how much you step back to understand what's going on and then plan accordingly for the differences you expect to encounter.

MQ Action: MQ Action is about how much you (the church) can adapt or not adapt your behaviour based on the group you are trying to engage with.

Further Background Reading:

Poverty today in the UK: Paul Morrison (JPIT)

Is poverty a big problem?

Some people think poverty isn't a problem in the UK. That's because it often goes hidden and unnoticed – especially in rural areas.

In reality it is a huge problem. Before the pandemic there were 14.4 million people experiencing poverty. That is more than **1 in every 5 people in the UK**. Tragically poverty is focussed on the young affecting 4.5 million or **1 in every 3 children**.

We do not yet know the full economic impact of the pandemic, but we do know that poverty is expected to rise and that families who were already struggling have been forced to take **on debts of over £10Bn** in total simply to make ends meet. The church is campaigning to have this unrepayable debt cancelled

Does poverty matter?

Poverty in the UK is sometimes dismissed as not being important – that our benefits system means that it is an inconvenience that is easily overcome. Nothing can be further from the truth, poverty has huge impacts on lives, and especially effects children – leaving it mark in terms of **poorer health, education and prospects well into adulthood**, even if the person is able to escape poverty.

Poverty is about not being able to access the basics of life for example this year over 2 million people will need help from foodbanks simply to eat. What is often underestimated is the strain that the uncertainty and insecurity of poverty puts on families especially parents.

Is poverty only about not having enough food or other essentials?

Most of us are lucky enough to be sure that we will have a warm home, and decent meals tomorrow. For those in poverty that is not certain and it is a constant worry and struggle to ensure that these basics happen. For parents not knowing they can feed their child tomorrow or next week is heart-breaking. The damage caused by poverty is not only not being able to access food – it is also the strain caused by the unrelenting and sometimes unsuccessful struggle to provide these basics.

On top of this **poverty comes with stigma** – people feel they are less valuable and less valued and are often treated that way. As Christians we know that is not true, but sometimes we can fall into the trap of doing things “to the poor” in an attempt to rescue, rather than listening to and working with those who experience poverty as equal partners.

Is poverty caused by lack of work?

Surprising as it may sound the story over the past 30 years has been the shift from poverty mainly touching the lives of those without work to hitting families in work.

The majority of people held back by poverty are in working families. Around 3.5 million of them are in families where both adults work full time and yet don't have access to the basics. Over two thirds of children affected by poverty are in working families.

Unemployment – where a person is able to work and looking for work – has become less common and spell are typically quite short. The people who remain without work for long periods are typically those with illness or disability which makes work more difficult or people who need to stay at home to look after children or sick relatives. As most must rely only on the benefits – which are set at very low levels – these families experience very high poverty rates.

Those who say doing more work will solve poverty or worse that the main cause of poverty is that people are lazy won't work are just plain wrong.

Are Foodbanks the answer?

Foodbanks, Debt centres and other charitable help which churches often provide is vital – it keeps families going and at their best provides somewhere where people are treated as the valuable images of God we know everyone to be.

Acts of charity will not however end poverty. A good society is one where no-one needs a foodbank. Where employers, the benefits system and local communities work together to ensure everyone has the ability to access to the basics of life and contribute to the wellbeing of those around them.

How can poverty be tackled?

The experts in poverty are those who live that life. Making ends meet with very little money requires knowledge, skills and ingenuity most do not possess. Any solution to poverty starts with knowledge and expertise only these experts have.

Traditionally experts from government or the fields of politics or economics have imposed their solutions onto impoverished communities. Programs which look great on paper have had disastrous results because they were designed with the expertise of those who truly understand poverty. Universal Credit is a good example – a huge programme to shape behaviour and move people into work has failed to increase employment, while increasing foodbank use as well as financial and food insecurity. Respect for communities battling poverty must be the starting point.

What can churches do?

Many churches provide support perhaps in the form of advice centres or foodbanks. They remain vital to the lives of millions and are essential.

The churches campaign on issues around poverty. The current campaign is around debt racked up during COVID – www.resetthedebt.uk. The churches' Joint Public Issues Team provides access to information and campaigns around poverty alongside a range of other issues – www.jointpublicissues.org.uk.

Churches are embedded in communities. At their best they offer a safe place where people can tell stories and perhaps share some of their expertise. Perhaps your church or a local church has such a project. Perhaps you could see if there is opportunity to work alongside people who are struggling in your community, perhaps you could think about if your church is the right place for such a project? The key is not “can we fix a problem caused by poverty?”, perhaps the right question is how can we learn together how to make lives easier. You will find that rich and poor alike are enriched in unexpected ways by the experience!

Additional Blob Images:

These additional Blob images can be used as you see fit to aid in the conversation, to decorate the room (online or offline) can be used in a PowerPoint, but please remember to site the source below:

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Before we say something,
stop and think how we'd feel
if someone said that to us

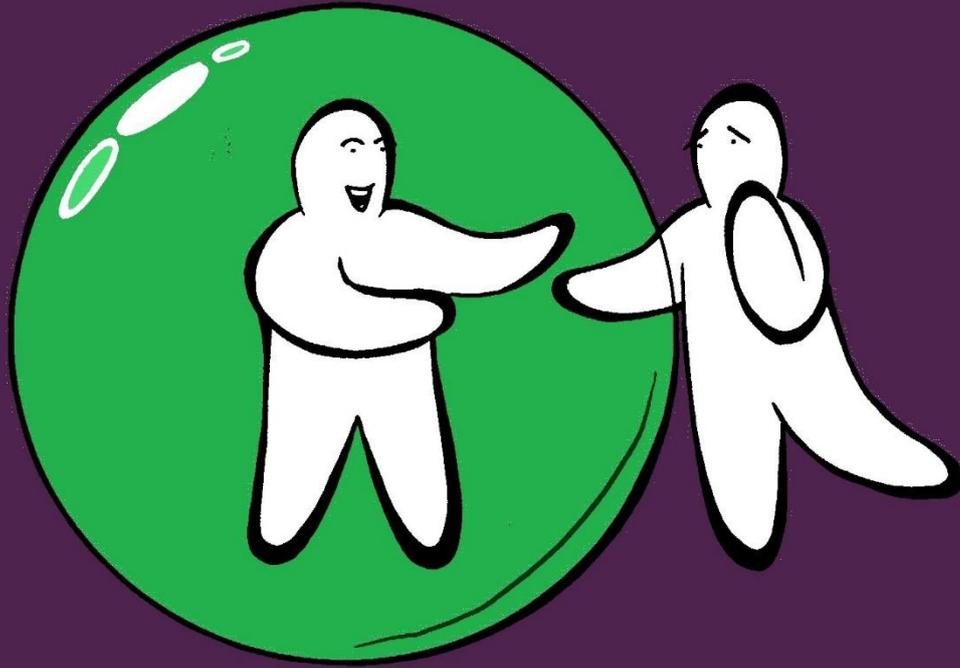
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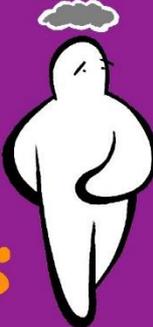
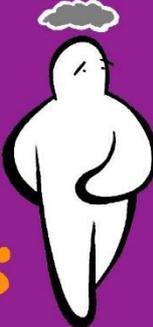
All of us have
areas and
people that
we feel
compelled
to judge

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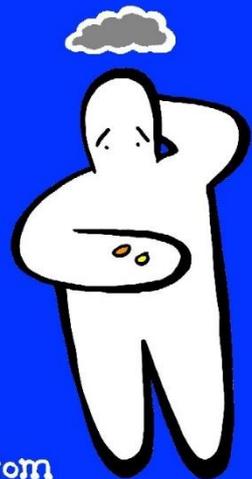


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Until you  make the 
unconscious  conscious, 
 it will direct  your
life and you  will
call it fate *Carl Jung* www.blobtree.com



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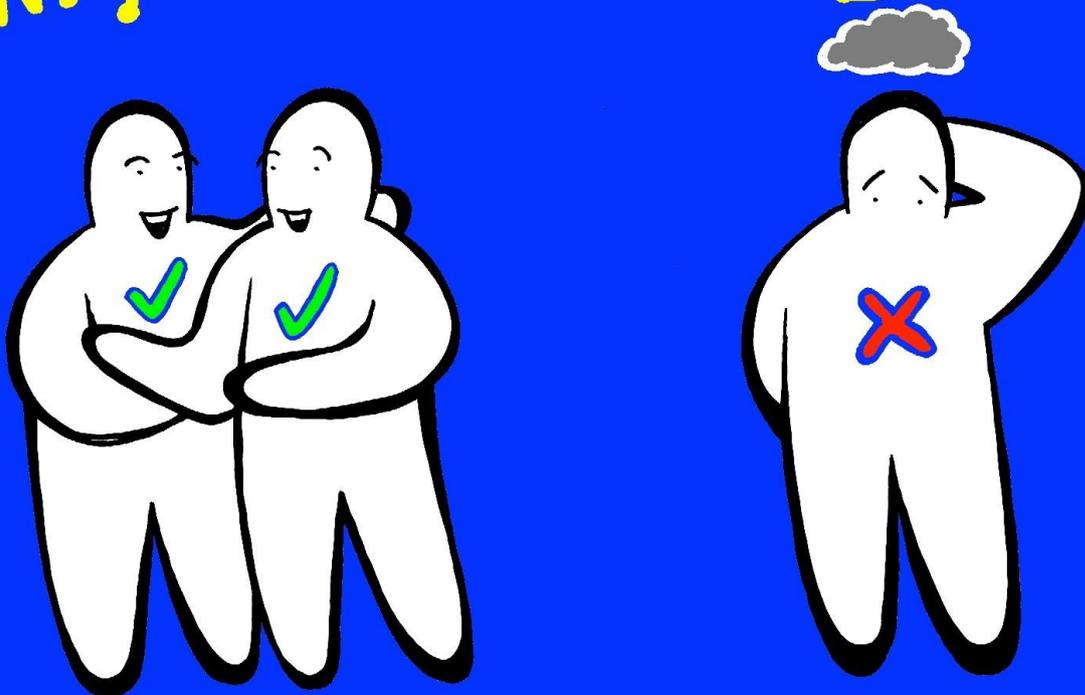
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How can we include everyone?

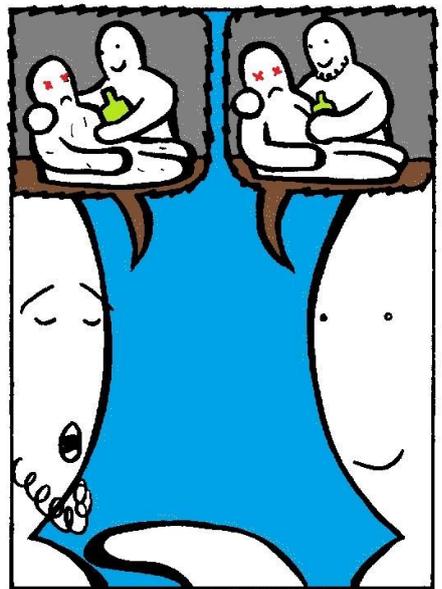
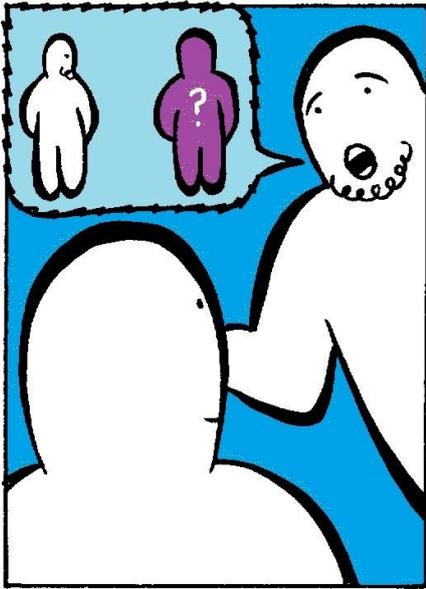


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Why do I feel wrong?



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The highest form of ignorance
is when you reject something you don't
know anything about



Wayne Dyer

“No them, only us”



Have we ever been part of the 'in group'?

