

## **BIG Experience Workshop report**

This workshop was developed by the BIG DREAM collective to show people that a basic income pilot in the 1970's was successful because it yielded long term benefits to the participants and to the community.

Another valuable aspect of this workshop is that there are activities that educate people about their own values and attitudes. It makes people think about their own life experiences and how we are not always in control of our fate. Participants' final activity is to try to imagine a different kind of economy that would result in a more equitable society.

The centerpiece of this workshop is the 20 minute film "The Manitoba Story: a Basic Income Film.

### **Part 1: 10 minutes**

Welcome and set-up of activity. Participants met someone whom they had not known before and were matched for the entire workshop for the discussion questions.

Pairs share and discuss:

- What is in your wallet and what does it say about you?

### **Part 2: 20 minutes**

Film: The Manitoba Story which can be found at VIMEO but it is hard to get past the trailer. Google "VIMEO" to get started.

Main points of the video were:

- Everyone in the community was eligible for a "top-up" if they needed it.
- There was no stigma to receiving a "top-up".
- Recipients of the "top-up" used their money to complete their educations or build businesses which made their futures much better.
- Societal benefits included reduced need for medical services and reduced domestic violence.

- The gratitude of the recipients extends to the present day and they are engaged citizens.

### Part 3: 30 minutes

- What was most impactful about this film for you? (solo reflection)
- Pop quiz about details in the film
  - 1- In the Mincome Pilot from 1974-1979, every resident of the small town of Dauphin who signed up to receive a basic income cheque as well as a random sample of residents in Winnipeg received basic income cheques for 5 years. True or False?
  - 2- According to the Mincome Pilot analyzed Evelyn Forget, the researcher in the film, the experiment confirmed the worst fears of basic income skeptics and showed that many people stopped working or worked less. True or False?
  - 3- Which of the following were shown as positive impacts of the Mincome Pilot?
    - Reduced hospitalizations
    - Reduced poverty stigma
    - Improved mental health
    - All of the above
  - 4-How many cavities did Eric in the film have filled with the cheques that his that his family received from Mincome?      Answer: 10
- Discussion for partners: Have you or your family ever experienced hardship and how did it affect you? Have you ever received a generous financial gift that made the life that you are living today possible?
- What is your value in Society? How much do you make? If you are uncomfortable sharing this information, explain why.

- What would you change in your life if you had a guaranteed income?
- Partner brainstorm: Is a different economy possible? Could an economy that is more geared to the wellbeing of people rather the generation of profit be desirable and possible?

Call to action:

- Learn more about Basic Income (Basic Income Canada is a place to start).
- Join the movement: Find out who else is involved and join forces.
- Become an activist. Talk to family, friends, parishioners and workmates to educate them about the value of a guaranteed basic income.

**We thank the Big Dream Collective for the use of their materials**