

Creating a Just World

Examining Charity and Social Justice

In this interactive workshop, youth will discover the difference between a charitable and a social justice approach to development, exploring these ideas through analyzing and re-designing an action project recently promoted in a local community paper.

Materials: Recycle Bin; 1 piece of crumpled paper per participant; candy; handouts

Age: 13+

Set up: Chairs in rows, 3 across, with the recycle bin at the front of the classroom. / tables for group work

Time: 75 min + extension



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Interactive Activity

Place chairs in a row, 3 across and as deep as needed to accommodate all participants. Place a recycle bin at the feet of those in the first row. If more space is needed, create rows of 4, or create a new section with a second recycle bin.

The activity will take place in three rounds. In each round, the goal is to get the paper in the recycle bin. Those that get the paper in the bin will earn a candy. Each round, however, will have slightly different rules.

Round 1

When the facilitator says 'go', all participants are to throw their paper into the bin; however, participants are not allowed to stand up, get out of their chairs, move, or pass their paper. Give a candy to each person who got their paper in the bin.

Discuss

- What are the problems of this activity?
- What 'position' you are in and how did you get there? Is it fair?
- How does this situation reflect the world we live in? Where do you see yourself in this world? What parallels can be drawn to international, and Canadian, society?

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Interactive Activity

Round 2: Charitable Approach

Announce that to improve the activity this time around, participants are allowed to help each other, but are still not allowed to get out of their chairs, stand up or move. Briefly brainstorm ways the group can work together to help those at the back get their paper in. When the facilitator says 'go', all participants are to throw their paper into the bin. Give a candy to each person who got their paper in the bin.

Discuss

- **For those at the front:** How did it make you feel to help someone out? **For those at the back:** How did it make you feel to have those at the front help you? (ex: grateful, disempowered, dependent)
- In what ways does this method help, or hinder, the ability of those in the back to achieve their long term goals? What would happen if those in the front decided not to help the next time around?
- How does this method represent a charitable approach to development? What are the advantages and disadvantages to this approach?

Quotes to Consider

“Take every penny you have set aside in aid for Tanzania and spend it explaining to people the facts and causes of poverty.” –Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania, 1961-1985

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Interactive Activity

Round 3: Social Justice Approach

Announce that to improve the activity this time around, participants are allowed to help each other, AND are allowed to stand up and move their chairs, do what is necessary to make sure everyone has an equal chance at success. Briefly brainstorm ways the group can work together to make the activity fair and just. (**Prompt:** If needed, prompt participants to consider that the structure, the way the chairs are set up in the first place, may be at the root of the problem.) When the facilitator says ‘go’, all participants are to throw their paper into the bin. Give a candy to each person who got their paper in the bin.

Note: Participants may need further prompts to make sure their new design is, in fact, more equal. Often, participants end up in a circle, with the bin in the middle. Some have chosen to pass the bin around. If the participants decide not to move the chairs, challenge them to reconsider.

Discuss

- Why did you choose to arrange yourselves in this manner? What were you hoping to achieve (justice, fairness, equality)?
- What happened when some still did not get the paper in the bin?
- Did addressing one form of injustice reveal another? (example: even though the situation is more equal, some may still have a better chance. Is there any way to address this?)

Quotes to Consider

“It is a natural response for communities to want to offer ‘help’ to their partners in the form of money and some partners may expect it. However, successful partnerships depend on equality and mutuality, and such charity can actually hinder development. The importance of reciprocity or ‘mutual exchange’ must be recognized.” –Toolkit for Learning, UKOWLA 2006

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SHARE

Analyzing your Actions

1. Request that participants sit in groups at tables
2. Provide participants with the handouts including the definitions of charity and justice, as well as the comparison chart. Discuss the definitions, and spend time analyzing the compare/contrast chart, and discussing the *Issues with a Charitable Approach to Development*.
Note: It may be necessary to underscore the importance of not pitting charity versus justice, but rather, to state that each has advantages and disadvantages. Brainstorm examples of the different approaches and when they are needed (ie: Shelter and affordable housing).
3. Handout the *Back to School Service Project* and the *Justice Approach Checklist*. Using the checklist, participants will evaluate the service project, and suggest ways to make improvements. Share examples with the large group.
4. **Extension:** In groups, re-write the newsletter article with the suggested improvements! Make sure to use the checklist as a guide!



ACT

Incorporating a Social Justice Approach

Does your school have an action project or awareness campaign planned? Use the checklist to guide you in the planning and the evaluation of the project!

Start by Identifying

- What is the ultimate goal of the project? Is there a way to address both short term and long term goals?
- Whose voice needs to be included?

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Definition Examples

Charity: The voluntary giving of help, typically in the form of money, to those in need.

Justice: Just behavior or treatment, a concern for justice, peace, and genuine respect for people

Charity	Justice
Short-term focus	Long-term focus
Motivated by love and compassion	Motivated by fairness and compassion
Provides help	Increases equity
Focus on giving	Focus on righting wrongs
Looks to provide assistance or relief	Looks to correct systematic causes
Addresses symptoms	Addresses causes
Being generous	Acting in solidarity
Sense of pity, sympathy, empathy	Respect for human rights

Issues with a Charitable Approach to Development

<http://globalhive.ca>

Sometimes charitable aims can be detrimental because they:

- Focus on finance at the expense of other activities to which both partners or groups can contribute equally (mutual learning and reciprocity)
- Put financial inequalities center stage and divert attention from other imbalances that ought to be addressed
- Make the partner receiving the aid dependent on this income
- Patronize the partner receiving the aid.

Charitable aims can also undermine educational opportunities by:

- Reinforcing, rather than challenging, stereotypes of rich, powerful, and independent communities in the North and poor, weak, and dependent communities in the South
- Perpetuating narrow views on poverty and development
- Hindering critical thinking about underlying injustices and causes of poverty, and thereby encouraging an acceptance of aid as a long-term solution.



global hive

Justice Approach Checklist

Use this checklist to evaluate your actions!

An action with a justice approach	Yes	No	Suggestion
Focuses on ways both partners can contribute equally.			
Focuses on other imbalances, besides finances, that need to be addressed to get at the root of the problem.			
Does not foster aid dependency.			
Empowers the partner receiving the aid.			
Challenges stereotypes of rich, powerful and independent communities in the North and poor, weak, and dependent communities in the South.			
Fosters a comprehensive view on the complex nature of poverty and development.			
Inspires critical thinking about underlying injustices and causes of poverty, discouraging aid as a long-term solution.			

Back to School Service Project

| By Jill Hunt

Purpose: It's always exciting as a child/teen to go "back to school" shopping. New shoes, pants, shirts, back pack and supplies — starting a new year. However, there are many who are unable to purchase these new items and basic school supplies for themselves. This activity is centered on a family, group or individual service project.

What You'll Need

Crayons
 Notebook paper
 Pencils
 Pens
 Glue sticks
 Scissors

Markers
 Ruler
 Erasers
 Pencil Box with Lid
 Back pack (*optional*)



1. Set an individual and/or family budget for what you want to use to purchase school supplies. You can divide the budget between families members to help each person feel like they are contributing to the service project. You can also assign them to purchase for boys or girls and create a pack accordingly. Decide if you want to put together a kit in a pencil box with supplies or if you want to include backpacks. (*If you have backpacks that are in good shape, you can repurpose them and donate them with the supplies.*)
2. Watch for the "Back to School" sales at your local stores and make the shopping list according to the materials you want to purchase and your allotted budget.
3. GO SHOPPING!
4. Assemble all purchased items into kits. You can also include a hand-crafted note, "Have a Great School Year!" or any simple message and attach it to your kits.
5. After you have assembled the kits, plan on which school(s) you want to donate to. You may want to contact the school district to find the schools with the greatest needs.

After you've completed the service project, you can discuss why it is important to serve others in the community. How does it feel knowing that you have helped children in your schools have the materials they need? This can be an annual family service project that will surely become a valued tradition in your home!