

Facilitator's Guide for THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

A film by Pamela Calvert/Plain Speech

At the fenceline of Canada's "Chemical Valley," girls are being born at twice the rate of boys. How do you stay in the home you love when the price you pay may be your children's future?

PLANNING A SCREENING

Topics and Issues Relevant to THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

As you plan your screening, you might consider speakers, panelists, or discussion leaders who have expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- ***Children's Health***
- ***Community Organizing***
- ***Corporate Social Responsibility***
- ***Endocrine Disruptors***
- ***Environmental Justice***
- ***Globalization***
- ***Green Chemistry***
- ***Human Rights***
- ***Native Culture, History & Land Rights***
- ***Precautionary Principle***
- ***Reproductive Health***
- ***Toxic Exposure & Health Impacts***
- ***Workplace Health and Safety***



As You Plan Your Event

A screening of THE BELOVED COMMUNITY can be used to spark interest in any of the topics listed above, as well as to inspire individual and community action. Using the checklist below will help ensure a high quality and high impact event.

Set realistic goals.

Will you host a single screening or use the film to spur ongoing efforts? Will you steer a panel or discussion toward a specific topic or let the participants pursue whatever issues they choose? Be sure to include your event partners in the decision making process. Being clear about your goals will make it much easier to structure the event, target publicity, and evaluate results.

Structure your event to match your goals.

Do you need an outside facilitator? If your goal is to share information beyond what is included in the film, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How many participants do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchange. Small groups allow for more intensive dialogue and action plans.)

Arrange to involve all stakeholders.

It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. We encourage you to seek out 'unlikely alliances' and push your own comfort zone, going out of your way to invite representatives of all the constituencies with a potential stake in building a healthy and sustainable community. Once the group is assembled, make sure that all participants have a chance to be heard and are treated with respect.

Choose an accessible venue.

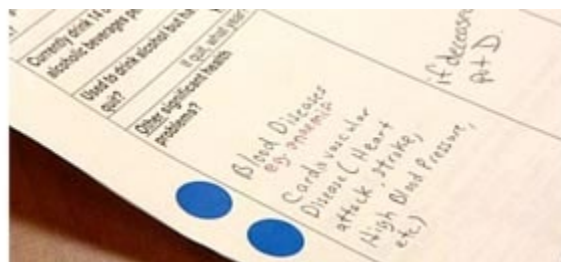
If you are bringing together different constituencies, is your venue 'neutral territory'? Is it in a part of town that is reachable by various kinds of transportation? Does the physical configuration of the room allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have? Can everyone easily see the screen and hear the film? Is the room comfortable?

Leave time for feelings.

When the lights come up, people may have a strong emotional response to the film. This is where people make the empathetic connections that make all the following work possible, so it's important to encourage that personal response before moving on to questions of strategy. The conversation will naturally flow into "What do we do now?"

Leave time to plan for action.

If you want your screening to have lasting impact, it is important to leave time to plan action. People will be looking for something that is immediate, concrete, and local. Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even when the discussion has been difficult. It's also important to be prepared to facilitate networking. Provide a sign-in sheet at the door so people can share contact information like email addresses. Let participants know exactly how that information will (and won't) be shared. Let participants know whether or not press will be present.



Facilitating a Discussion of THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

People who feel safe, encouraged, respected and challenged are likely to share openly and thoughtfully. As a facilitator you can encourage that kind of participation. Here's how:

Be prepared.

View the film before your event. This will both give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion, as well as letting you check the DVD and equipment to make sure there are no technical glitches. You may want to refer to the [Discussion Guide](#) to get you started.

Be knowledgeable.

You don't need to be an expert on globalization or environmental justice to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. Prior to your event, take time to check the Background Information and Suggested Resources in the film guide handout.

Be clear about your role.

Being a facilitator is not the same as being a teacher. A teacher's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping move the discussion along without imposing her or his views on the dialogue.

Know who might be present.

It isn't always possible to know exactly who might attend a screening, but if you know what kinds of groups are present in your community, you might be able to predict who might be represented. You can also keep in mind that issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Factors like geography, age, race, religion and class can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point of view.

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