



FORCHARLOTTE

THE CHURCH UNITED FOR THE CITY

Bridges Out of Poverty Presentation

Bridges Out Of Poverty - Background

1. Dr. Ruby Payne married a man who grew up in poverty and quickly realized they viewed the world very differently. This inspired her extensive research on:
 - a. The differences between the mental models & motivations of people from generational poverty, middle class, and wealth.
 - b. The causes of poverty & appropriate strategies to fight it.
 - c. The impact of language development on people from generational poverty.
2. The results are not based on race or gender.
3. Poverty can be defined as a lack of resources: financial, mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and relational.
4. Generational poverty (when a family has been below the poverty line for at least 2 generations) is different from situational poverty (when something happens - e.g. major financial loss, death, illness, divorce - to knock a family from middle class into poverty). 22% of US kids live below the poverty line.
5. Teaching this material to people in all classes:
 - a. Improves communication, collaboration, and overall health of the community.
 - b. Employment and income levels of people coming from generational poverty.



Poverty vs. Middle Class Wealth

1. People in generational poverty are almost always in the mode of “the tyranny of the moment” to survive. People in the middle class and wealth generally have the luxury of planning ahead.
 - a. Children who grow up in poverty are generally not taught the process of planning ahead which can also lead to a disconnect between choices and their consequences.
 - b. This also causes people in poverty to generally think and talk in concrete rather than abstract terms.
 - c. Because of “the tyranny of the moment,” an abundance of single parent households, lack of healthy role models, etc., children in poverty do not develop the “formal language register” and story structure that will help them succeed in middle class.
2. Schools, police, social services, and church are generally run from a middle class mindset. There is often a disconnect for people in poverty.



“Hidden Rules”

	Poverty	Middle Class	Wealth
POSSESSIONS	People.	Things.	One-of -a-kind objects, legacies, pedigrees.
MONEY ***	<i>To be used, spent.</i>	<i>To be managed.</i>	<i>To be conserved, invested.</i>
PERSONALITY	Is for entertainment. Sense of humor is highly valued.	Is for acquisition and stability. Achievement is highly valued.	Is for connections. Financial, political, social connections are highly valued.
SOCIAL EMPHASIS	<i>Social inclusion of people he/she likes.</i>	<i>Emphasis is on self-governance and self-sufficiency.</i>	<i>Emphasis is on social exclusion.</i>
FOOD	Key question: Did you have enough? Quantity important.	Key question: Did you like it? Quality Important.	Key question: Was it presented well? Presentation important.
CLOTHING	<i>Clothing valued for individual style and expression of personality.</i>	<i>Clothing valued for its quality and acceptance into norm of middle class. Label important.</i>	<i>Clothing valued for its artistic sense and expression. Designer important.</i>
TIME ***	Present most important. Decisions made for moment based on feelings or survival.	Future most important. Decisions made against future ramifications.	Traditions and history, most important. Decisions made partially on basis of tradition and decorum.
EDUCATION	<i>Valued and revered as abstract but not as reality.</i>	<i>Crucial for climbing success ladder and making money.</i>	<i>Necessary tradition for making and maintaining connections.</i>
DESTINY ***	Believes in fate. Cannot do much to mitigate chance.	Believes in choice. Can change future with good choices now.	Noblesse oblige.
LANGUAGE	<i>Casual register. Language is about survival.</i>	<i>Formal register. Language is about negotiation.</i>	<i>Formal register. Language is about networking.</i>
FAMILY STRUCTURE	Tends to be matriarchal.	Tends to be patriarchal.	Depends on who has money.
WORLD VIEW	<i>Sees world in terms of local setting</i>	<i>Sees world in terms of notional setting.</i>	<i>Sees world in terms of international view.</i>
LOVE	Love and acceptance conditional based upon whether individual is liked.	Love and acceptance conditional and based largely upon achievement.	Love and acceptance conditional and related to social standing and connections.
DRIVING FORCES ***	<i>Survival, relationships, entertainment.</i>	<i>Work, achievement.</i>	<i>Financial, political, social connections.</i>
HUMOR	About people and sex.	About situations.	About social faux pas.



Causes of Poverty and Appropriate Strategies

1. There are four main categories of causes that contribute to poverty:
 - A. Behaviors of the individual
 - B. Absence of human and social capital
 - C. Human exploitation
 - D. Political & economic structures
2. Research has been done around dozens of topics in those four categories that has led to recommended strategies for each. A comprehensive continuum of strategies covering all four areas is needed.



Possible Next Steps

1. Teach these principles to your congregation, volunteers, and/or ministry partners in the form of:
 - a. Workshops based on the mental models, hidden rules, etc.
 - b. A “What Every Church Member Should Know About Poverty” Bible Study.
 - c. A “Bridges Out of Poverty” book study.
 - d. A “Bridges Out of Poverty” seminar (requires certification).
2. If you don’t already have programs or partnerships in place to help people break out of the cycle of poverty, assess your community and your own assets. Unite can help you do that.
 - Consider the following ideas:
 - a. Facilitating a “Getting Ahead” class. You are now qualified to do that.
 - b. Providing allies for existing “Getting Ahead” classes or other empowerment programs.
 - c. Offering life skills classes such as financial management (e.g. New Focus), marriage & parenting classes, communication classes.
 - d. Coming alongside another church in an impoverished community to offer some of the above programs and more.
 - e. Getting involved in efforts to increase affordable housing, provide living wages.
3. If you do already have programs partnerships, evaluate them in light of these learnings.
4. Coordinate your efforts with other churches serving in the same area (i.e. with For Charlotte). This is too big of a job for one church to handle alone. God created each church with a unique SHAPE just like He created each Christian. When we all do our part and coordinate our efforts, we’re functioning as a much more healthy body of Christ.

