



# SHARING OUR STORIES

If you identified a speaker to come to this session in Meeting three you could start this session with their talk. You could ask them to speak for 15 or 20 minutes about their service, leaving some time for a question and answer session at the end.

## 1 ICEBREAKER

15 mins

This should take about 15 minutes. For more details about how to run this activity, see Meeting one.

## 2 NEVER HAVE I EVER..

30 - 60  
mins

**AIM:** This is a gentle 'entry' into talking about experiences of poverty. It can move towards more difficult and complex issues depending on how the group feels.

**It helps people to see similarities and differences in their experiences of poverty and to consider the impact of these experiences on themselves and others.**



### RESOURCES

A list of statements that begin 'Never have I ever...', ranging from light-hearted and non-intrusive to more serious. For example:-

#### Starter Statements:

##### Never have I ever...

- Forgotten my purse or wallet when I went out
- Forgotten that I'd already spent money I thought I had
- Wanted something which I couldn't afford

#### Mid-level statements:

##### Never have I ever...

- Been caught short of money when paying for something
- Had to ask a friend or family member to lend me money for something I didn't have
- Missed out on a trip or activity because I couldn't afford it

#### High-level statements:

##### Never have I ever...

- Felt embarrassed because I couldn't afford something other people I know had
- Been teased or made to feel ashamed because I didn't have money or something that other people have
- Lied to my friends or family that I didn't want something, because I didn't want to admit I couldn't afford it

### TASK:

*If meeting in person ask the group to either raise their hands or stand on one side of the room. If meeting online ask them to raise their hand.*

Read out a starter statement, and ask group members to indicate if this statement is not true for them. The default stance is that the statement is true for them (this helps to reduce the stigma of actively having to identify as having had the experience described). For example, if you have been 'teased or made to feel ashamed because you didn't have money or something that other people have' you stay still or keep your hands down. If you have never felt like this you step forwards or lift your hand up

Ask for any comments on the statements as you go along. How do group members think each statement relates to poverty? How did it feel to experience something described in one of the statements? How might it feel to see someone else experience it?

*Gradually start using the mid and then high-level statements, judging the mood of the group. Invite group members to add their own 'never have I ever' statements, and to explain why they have chosen them.*

*Allow plenty of time to discuss the responses to the statements and how it feels to acknowledge these experiences. Consider how the statements relate to poverty and the experiences that people living in poverty might have.*

*The purpose of this exercise is to help people reflect on what life in poverty has been like for group members, and/or what it might be like to experience poverty and these kinds of issues on a regular basis. The previous sections should have helped to build a safe and comfortable environment, but it is very important that facilitators use their judgement around doing this exercise to make sure the atmosphere remains safe and supportive.*

## 3 LIFE MAPS

30 - 60  
mins

**Aim:** To give group members the opportunity to tell their own stories in relation to experiences of poverty, to help identify points at which poverty created problems, as well as personal strengths and achievements.

This can help to build a greater understanding of poverty, as it is understood and experienced by different group members.



### IN PERSON:

- Pens and pencils in a range of colours
- Large paper or flip chart paper
- Other creative materials

### ONLINE:



- Pens and paper
- Or access to Word or other creative platforms

### TASK:

Working individually, each group member creates their own life map which shows how they have got to this point in their life and highlights points at which poverty, or access to resources, has had an impact on their life.

*This can be done with people who have not experienced poverty, as well as with experts by experience, by asking group members to identify when having access to resources has helped them, and when they have encountered poverty in their lives.*

*Maps can take any form participants choose – for example a timeline, a road, a series of incidents set out chronologically, or anything else – be as creative as you like!*

*Remind group members at the start, and throughout, that they don't have to share anything they do not want to. They should only include things in their life map that they are comfortable to share with the group.*

Share the maps in pairs and then invite group members to present their life map to the whole group. Once again, remind them that they do not have to share anything they do not want to. Encourage questions and discussion, with clear boundaries and reminders of the group agreement if necessary.

When everyone who wants to has presented their map, reflect on what this exercise has helped group members understand about the experience of poverty. What do different people's experiences have in common? What differences interest them?

## 4 REFLECTING ON TALKING ABOUT POVERTY

20 mins

**AIM:** This exercise is an opportunity to reflect on the process and decide on future actions.



### IN PERSON:

- Post-it notes
- Pens and pencils
- Three sheets of large or flip chart paper. Each sheet has one of the headings below:

### ONLINE:



- Paper
- Pens and pencils
- A creative tool such as Jamboard which everyone can access, displaying the headings below:

One thing I've shared during the 'talking about poverty' group

One thing I've learnt from the 'talking about poverty' group

One thing I want to change in the world to prevent poverty

### TASK:

Individually, ask group members write down responses to the three prompts above and stick their responses up under the relevant headings. They can write more than one post-it note for each heading if they wish.

*Answers can be as detailed and ambitious as the group member likes, and answers which may not seem really ambitious but are important for individuals are very welcome. It is better to identify feasible actions than to come up with big plans which are not realistic. For example, something to do differently might simply be trying to remember that being in poverty is not a personal failing – this can still make a huge difference to the individual and to people they interact with*

*Take time to look over everyone else's answers, and to share reflections and thoughts.*

*Give the group the opportunity to make plans about what they would like to do next, and if they would like to continue their conversations about poverty.*

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## DEBRIEF

15 mins

This should take about 15 minutes. For more details about how to run this activity, see Meeting one.



You can get in touch with the coalition by emailing the Coordinator Rachel Walters at [rachel@endchildpoverty.org.uk](mailto:rachel@endchildpoverty.org.uk)

Toolkit design by [www.noble.studio](http://www.noble.studio)



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