

Everything you know about change . . .
is about to change.



UnCharitable

Discussion Guide

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upstream  pictures

Welcome. This discussion guide is designed for use by audiences who have watched the movie. It will help you guide a discussion that recaps and clarifies what you've learned from the movie, and to help you set goals for moving forward, either to advance the effectiveness of your own giving, the impact you want your organization to have in the world, to advance the ideas in the movie in general, or, hopefully, all three.

Discussion Questions

Contextual Questions

1. What's the purpose of the discussion you are about to have? What do you want to achieve?
2. Do you want to improve the quality and effectiveness of your own giving?
3. Do you work at a nonprofit organization? Do you want your entire board and staff to watch the movie? Have they already? If so, is your goal to apply the ideas in the movie and take the organization to the next level?
4. Did you watch the movie with a group of friends? Do you want to come up with a plan for supporting an organization, or spread the word to your friends?
5. Try and state a group purpose for your discussion before you begin. Then ask yourself if that purpose has been achieved when you are done?



Feeling

1. How did the movie make you feel?
2. Were there multiple emotions? What were they?
3. What made you most hopeful? Why?
4. What made you angry? Why did it?
5. What made you sad? Why?
6. Did anything inspire you? What?
7. What surprised you the most?
8. How do you feel now?

Persuasion

1. What were your thoughts about the movie when you sat down to watch it? Were you excited, skeptical, dreading that it might be a boring subject?
2. What are your thoughts about the movie now, as a movie?
3. Did the movie change your mind about anything? What?
4. What did you think about that thing before you saw the movie and what do you think now?
5. How do you feel about being persuaded? Excited? Guilty that you felt another way for so long?
6. Why do you think the movie persuaded you?
7. Why do you think we cling to ideas that don't work for so long?

The Nonprofit Sector

1. What did you think about charities before seeing the movie?
2. Did you ever think about charities collectively, as a sector? Do you use the phrase, “nonprofit sector,” and what did you think of the sector as a whole before watching the movie?
3. Do you think the nonprofit sector could play a major role in changing society now? Why?
4. Did you think that before seeing the movie? if not, why not?



Practical Questions for Philanthropists of All Means

1. When considering giving, what are the questions not to ask and why?
2. What are the main reasons that make asking about overhead misguided?
3. How do overhead ratios actually weaken charitable services and programs?
4. How might overhead ratios diminish civil society and civic engagement?
5. How do overhead measures discourage growth and adversely affect impact?
6. How do low salaries undermine an organization's ability to have an impact?
7. Why do you think the general public think charities waste so much money on overhead?
8. What was the main thing the media got wrong with the Boys & Girls Clubs? How was it unjust? How did the media impact services for boys and girls?
9. What was the main thing the media got wrong with Wounded Warrior Project? How was it unjust? How did the media impact veterans services?
10. Same questions for Invisible Children and the AIDS Rides and Breast Cancer 3-Day events run by Dan's company
11. Can you see the Puritan roots in our current approach?
12. Why would setting up two bank accounts, like Charity:Water, not be the best idea? How does it take the conversation backward?
13. What are three of the double-standards between the economic freedoms of the nonprofit and for-profit sector?

For Nonprofit Organizations

1. If you knew you couldn't fail, what would your dream be?
2. What dream lives in your heart that you are afraid to declare because it sounds too big, too audacious, too impossible?
3. Can you state it clearly, as clearly as, "I believe this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth?" What investments could you have made in growth but did not because you didn't want to invest the money?
4. What investments have you not made in overhead and how has that impacted your impact?
5. How has that impacted your growth?
6. Has your entire board and staff seen the movie?
7. Can you develop a plan to have everyone see the movie, so that you can all be on the same page about the future?
8. By when will you do that?

What Next?

1. What can you do to spread the word about the movie?
2. Host a screening at work or at your home, or even at a local community gathering place.
3. Ask everyone in your group to write a one-sentence testimonial for the movie and send it to us with each person's name and title to info@uncharitablemovie.com. These are valuable to us building enthusiasm for the movie.
4. Approach your favorite nonprofit organization and work with them to host a screening for their entire staff, board and donor community.

Resources

We recommend you start with:

“The Everyday Philanthropist”

By Dan Pallotta

Published by Wiley

https://www.amazon.com/Everyday-Philanthropist-Better-Make-World/dp/1394190506/ref=sr_1_2?crid=2J5QIMS6R3CIL&keywords=the+everyday+philanthropist&qid=1680293672&s=books&stripfix=the+everyday+philanthropist,stripbooks,78&sr=1-2

It's meant for the layperson. Your grandmother. Your best friend. Big friendly type, micro chapters, plain spoken language, and smart graphics make it easy for all of your constituents to understand that there's a better way to do giving. “The Everyday Philanthropist” is a one-hour read - it literally fits in your pocket - and it will help you further your understanding of the issues that were raised in the movie and give you helpful tips for yourself and/or your organization.

“Uncharitable,” by Dan Pallotta

Brandeis University Press

<https://www.amazon.com/Uncharitable-Restraints-Nonprofits-Undermine-Potential/dp/1684581249>

Uncharitable is a big read, if you're up for it. It's the book the movie is based on, recently re-issued by Brandeis University Press with a new preface by Dan. It ventures where no other book on the nonprofit sector has dared to go. Where other well-intended books suggest ways to improve performance within the existing nonprofit paradigm, Uncharitable argues that the paradigm itself is the problem, and calls into question our fundamental canons about charity. Its insurgent thesis is that society's nonprofit ethic undermines our ability to eradicate great problems, and, ironically, puts charity at a severe disadvantage to the for-profit sector at

every level. We have two rule books; one for charity, and one for everything else. This economic apartheid denies charity the powerful tools of capitalism, while everyone else is permitted to use them without restraint. This all occurs in the name of charity, but it is a charity whose principal benefit flows to the for-profit sector.

The Bold Training For Nonprofit Boards and Staff

<https://theboldtraining.com/>

This is a powerful online course that will transform your organization overnight. A month from now, you could all be living in a different world. Imagine it as part of your onboarding process for all new staff and board members. Even key strategic donors. You've never had that kind of a tool. You deserve it. What kinds of things might be possible if your entire ecosystem left the past behind, departed from old ways of thinking, began a quest for breakthroughs, and aligned on an impossible dream for impact in the world?

The Training is delivered in seven convenient modules that you consume at your own pace. About three and a half hours of total content. You can pause the video at any time, even in the middle of a module, and return to it later.

Quizzes after each module and embedded writing assignments help reinforce what you're learning.

Dan's instruction comes from personal experience with successes at scale, from the AIDS Rides and Breast Cancer 3-Days to helping to create TED's Audacious Project. You're not listening to a theorist. And the Training is packed with examples and data and the success stories of others. Not only will you learn, you'll get inspired.

The content isn't full of dry, impenetrable specialty jargon. Dan delivers the Training in common sense language that everyone can understand, with heartfelt personal anecdotes and stories, humor, and pitch-perfect slides and graphics that help make data easily understandable.

If you purchase a package, your coordinator can get feedback reports with participant data on length of time spent on the Training, quiz results, and writing assignments.

“The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle”

Ann Goggins Gregory, Don Howard, The Bridgespan Group

<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/the-nonprofit-starvation-cycle>

A seminal paper by one of the nation's leading philanthropy consulting practices that describes how, “a vicious cycle leaves many nonprofits so hungry for decent infrastructure that they can barely function as organizations—let alone serve their beneficiaries.” It's a powerful short read for board members, donors and staff that advises that , “to break the nonprofit starvation cycle, funders must take the lead and recalibrate their expectations about what it costs to run a nonprofit.”

“Ending the Nonprofit Starvation Cycle”

By Jeri Eckhart-Queenan, Michael Etzel, and Julia Silverman, The Bridgespan Group

<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/ending-the-nonprofit-starvation-cycle>

An overview describing the decisions by the Presidents of five leading foundations that have agreed to experiment with practices and policies to address chronic underfunding of their grantees' indirect costs.

“Revolution of the Heart”

By Billy Shore

<https://www.amazon.com/Revolution-Heart-Bill-Shore/dp/1573220191>

A powerful book, ahead of its time when published in 1996, by Billy Shore, who appears in the movie and who created No Kid Hungry. As the Library Journal said, “He presents a new vision for revitalizing our communities--simple, powerful ways to affect positive social change through personal contributions of skill, talent, and time. It is an important work that could change the way America thinks about its future.



Contact us at ...uncharitablemovie.com.

A diverse crowd of people of various ethnicities and ages is shown looking upwards with expressions of awe and hope. In the background, the curved horizon of the Earth is visible against a dark, starry space, with a bright sun or light source creating a lens flare effect on the left side of the image.

Thank you.