



Discussion Guide for “Legalize Democracy”

Gather a group to watch Legalize Democracy. Plan in advance who will facilitate the discussion, and give each participant a copy of this discussion guide.

Make the Move to Amend Petition available for people to sign, either online and/or via hardcopy:

Online: <http://movetoamend.nationbuilder.com/petition>

Hardcopy: <https://movetoamend.org/sites/default/files/mta-movetoamendpetition.pdf> (submit signed petitions online here: <http://movetoamend.org/submit-petitions>)

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

1. **Use a Stack** -- During group discussions, Using the "stack" amounts to taking turns so that everyone has a designated time to say what they wish to say, and no one gets squeezed out through interruptions. The facilitator will open the stack - anyone who has a question or comment should raise their hand. The facilitator will keep track of the order of the speakers so everyone knows whose turn it is to go next.
2. **Step Up / Step Back** -- If you normally contribute a lot to discussions, be mindful of stepping back at times to help make space for everyone. If you normally tend to hold back, be mindful of stepping up and contributing your voice.
3. **Listen like your life depends on it** (i.e. really listen to what people are saying while they are speaking rather than thinking of what you are going to say next). A notepad can be helpful for jotting down immediate responses while others speak, so you can be free to really listen without worrying you'll forget an idea.
4. **Turn off / down cell phones**
5. **Foster a culture of mutual respect and consideration.** When in a small group, make a point of learning others' names and using them during the discussion to refer to one another's comments.
6. **Cultivate a sense of humor**
7. **Stay on topic and be concise**
8. **Speak from your own experience.** Use “I” statements, rather than speaking for or about others.
9. **Foster coalition building;** avoid divisiveness and search for common ground

DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES

Note: The event host can decide whether to organize the discussion as outlined below in small groups and pairs, or the full group can simply discuss the questions in italics, one at a time. Small groups help make it easier for everyone to participate when the group is larger, but if the full group is smaller than 8 people or if you're not comfortable facilitating these exercises you may consider keeping everyone together and just keeping a "stack" to help make sure everyone gets to participate without being interrupted.

(1) Get with a partner, introduce yourselves, and then take turns answering the question below.

Listen attentively as your partner speaks and remember key points. When the group reconvenes, each person will introduce their partner and share with the group some of the important points they mentioned.

What was your previous experience with the issue of corporate power? How were you impacted by this documentary? What did you learn? What is the big take-away for you?

(2) First, spend 5 minutes gathering your thoughts by reflecting and writing on the issue outlined below.

After 5 minutes, the facilitator will prompt you to gather in groups of 3-4 to discuss. After 10-15 minutes in the small groups, facilitator will prompt you to gather in the larger group to share highlights.

In the documentary, Ashley Sanders (4:20) described how her everyday experience is shaped by corporate power and influence. As she mentions, there is a box that corporations have drawn and that we exist within. Here are a few examples:

- 1. Ten corporations control almost everything you buy at the grocery store:
Coca-Cola Company; PepsiCo; General Mills; Kellogg's; Mars, Inc.; Unilever; Johnson & Johnson; Procter & Gamble Company (P&G); Nestlé; Kraft Foods Group (source: <http://themindunleashed.org/2013/12/10-corporations-control-almost-everything-buy.html>)*
- 2. Six corporations control more than 90% of what we read, watch, or listen to from media communications:
Comcast; News Corporation; Disney; Time Warner; Viacom; CBS (source: <http://www.businessinsider.com/these-6-corporations-control-90-of-the-media-in-america-2012-6>)*
- 3. Ten financial institutions hold more than half of America's total financial assets:
JPMorgan Chase; Bank of America; Citigroup; Wells Fargo; Goldman Sachs; Morgan Stanley; American International Group, Inc.; General Electric Capital Corporation, Bank of New York Mellon Corporation, US Bancorp (source: <http://www.ffiec.gov/nicpubweb/nicweb/top50form.aspx>)*

In your groups, work together to name as many examples as you can of how corporate rule impacts your daily life. Then pick 3-5 examples and think together about how you can move outside of that box.

(3) Get with a partner, introduce yourselves, and then take turns answering the question below.

After 5-10 minutes, facilitator will prompt you to gather in the larger group to share highlights.

In the documentary, Kaja Rebane (24:00) says that we should make corporate power our #2 issue because whatever issue is our #1 is not going to see substantive progress until corporate constitutional rights and money as speech is addressed. Identify your #1 issue and explore how it is inter-related to corporate power and how corporate power blocks true reform on that issue.

(4) First, spend 5 minutes gathering your thoughts by reflecting and writing on the issue outlined below. After 5 minutes, facilitator will prompt you to gather in groups of 3-4 to discuss. After 10-15 minutes in the small groups, facilitator will prompt you to gather in the larger group to share highlights.

In the documentary, David Cobb (0:25) says that the “most dangerous threat to democracy in the United States of America is the mistaken belief that we actually practice one.” Democracy, he says, is not a noun, it’s a verb and means “the people rule”. Imagined what it could mean for “We the People” to actually participate in a meaningful way in how our society is organized? What place can you imagine for yourself in a true participatory democracy?

(5) First, spend 5 minutes gathering your thoughts by reflecting and writing on the issue outlined below.

After 5 minutes, facilitator will prompt you to gather in groups of 3-4 to discuss. After 10-15 minutes in the small groups, facilitator will prompt you to gather in the larger group to share highlights.

Social movements change laws and change culture. In the documentary, we see a timeline of the history of people coming together and rising up to change laws and change the culture (20:45). What social movements inspire you and why? What kind of movement can you imagine will be required to overturn corporate rule? What place can you imagine for yourself in this movement?