

Thinking Box Group Taster Session Programme Facilitator Notes

Preparation

It isn't imperative to watch the videos before you host a session but it is recommended. It will help you introduce the topics more effectively and prepare you for the kind of responses likely in the discussions. You can also report briefly how you responded to the videos and this can help set an open tone for the session.

Facilitator tips

You do not have to have any experience to run a good Thinking Box session. The videos and the questions go a long way to engaging people and getting them talking. As a host you can help by being genuinely interested in your guests and what they think about the topics you present to them. The preparation above will help with this and a little introduction to each video is useful.

Small group discussions

- We only have one 'rule' in Thinking Box and that is that small groups should be no more than 3 people. The intro video gives some of the reasons for this but please trust that it does make a difference. It is best to make this clear in advance but if larger groups do form simply politely ask for them to split before the discussions begin.
- Always take part yourself in one of the small groups.
- Keep an eye on time and bring the group back together after 15-20 mins

Plenary discussion

- Facilitating the plenary discussion is by far the most exciting part of the role and the one where you will be most awake, alive and present. It can be exhilarating to be able to host a conversation with many people and you will also have a unique perspective on the views of different guests. If you are interested in the video content, thinking and answering social questions of importance, you will naturally be curious and enthusiastic about what others think. So look forward to finding out the range of views in your group.
- As host, try to simply ask questions and reflect comments made back to the group, this is not the session to add your own thoughts (although this is not forbidden – you are a member of the group too).
- Listen to the points being made and move the conversation onto another question if you feel it is time to.
- Try to hear from a range of people and avoid any guest from dominating.
- Keep an eye on time and conclude the session with the final short heart warmer video.

1 hour session

Session title: **How to buy happiness**

Session blurb: Most of us would prefer to have more money than less but many of us would also say that money cannot buy happiness. In this provocative video the speaker thinks we can buy happiness providing we spend our money in a particular way. A great video to reflect on our attitude towards money and explore alternative approaches to spending it.

Video listings and links

Description	Title	Time	Link	Notes
Short 1A	Jody Williams on activism	2.05	https://www.youtube.com/embed/w0n3JHJzgBQ	This short explores what empowers people to take action and what can happen when we don't.
Intro video	What is Thinking Box	1.51	https://vimeo.com/138610586	This is a short video which explains how a Thinking Box session works and how to get the most from it.
Feature presentation 1	Michael Norton – How to buy happiness	10.58	http://www.ted.com/talks/michael_norton_how_to_buy_happiness	See blurb above
Small group	Small group discussions (2s/3s)	20.00	https://vimeo.com/173910047	Play then pause the video to retain the Qs. Always read the questions out loud to introduce them to your guests. Then ask them to get into 2s/3s (only) and join one of the groups yourself.
Plenary	Plenary discussion (all)	20.00		Call time on the small group discussions and then invite people to share. You might choose to begin with the first question and work through each one. Another option is to let the guests decide and by using an open question such as 'where do you want to start?'
Heart warmer	To love at all	1.25	https://www.youtube.com/embed/XweNvRxjJG8	

How to buy happiness questions

- **Reflect on when you have spent money on yourself/others:**
 - How did each make you feel?
- **How has spending money on others made you happy?**
 - Did it have to be a big (amazing) thing?
- **Does it make a difference if the person you are giving to thanks you (or if you can see the difference it made)?**
 - Is feedback important?
 - How can you get it?
- **What would be a great 'pro-social' gift for a team?**
 - Would it include a shared activity?

Full 2.5 hour session

Session title: **Exploring prejudice**

We all pre-judge situations and other people at least a little bit but most of us try to be impartial. So how can we become better at spotting prejudice in ourselves? What can we do about it once we do? This session will include a powerful and moving talk about prejudice that provides great discussion material to explore some fundamental questions about how we relate to others.

Before that, in the first half we take a look at a provocative video in which the speaker claims we can buy happiness providing we spend our money in a particular way. A great video to reflect on our attitude to money and explore alternative approaches to spending it.

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Plenary	Plenary discussion (all)	20.00		Call time on the small group discussions and then invite people to share. You might choose to begin with the first question and work through each one. Another option is to let the guests decide and by using an open question such as 'where do you want to start?'
#Break				10-15 min break for tea and biscuits
Feature presentation 2	The danger of a single story	18.42	https://embed-ssl.ted.com/talks/c_himamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html	See blurb above
Small group	Small group discussions (2s/3s)	20.00	https://vimeo.com/172949380	Play then pause the video to retain the Qs. See guidance above
Plenary	Plenary discussion (all)	20.00		See guidance above
Heart warmer	To love at all	1.25	https://www.youtube.com/embed/XweNvRxjJG8	We always end with a heart warmer

Danger of a single story questions:

- **Do you agree that having a single story/stereotype of a person**
 - Robs people of dignity?
 - Implies that we are different and not similar?
- **Are there people for whom you have a single story?**
- **How impressionable are we (generally) in the face of a story?**
 - How easily 'sold' are we?
- **How can we become less susceptible to stereotypes?**
 - How do we spot them in ourselves?
 - How can we actively find out a fuller picture?