

Preparation for Small Group Session – Health Care in America

In his book “Sick, The Untold Story of America’s Health Care Crisis, Jonathan Cohn tells the story of a woman whose husband lost his job and was just barely able to keep their family of five afloat through consulting work. Since consulting jobs do not generally offer health insurance, the family went several years without it. Because of this his wife did not see a doctor at all during this time, despite a decline in her health which became marked over time. By the time her husband understood the extent of her illness and took her to a doctor, she was dying of metastasized breast cancer. She died only a few weeks after her diagnosis. She was 36 years old and left 3 school age children behind.

“Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today”
- *Robert McAfee Brown*

In preparation for this session, please spend some time looking at one or more of the resources listed below and consider the following questions:

1. Was there a time where you, a member of your family, or someone else close to you was uninsured or had inadequate insurance? How did this situation affect you and other members of your family? What feelings did it bring up for you? In whatever detail you feel comfortable with, share this story with your group.
2. What do think the role of religion in general and/or the role of our church in addressing the Healthcare crisis in America? What in our principles and purposes addresses this situation? What would move you to take action on this problem?
3. How does this crisis impact the promises of our principles, particularly: “Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are all a part”? What are our responsibilities to our fellow human beings if we claim that principle as our own?
4. What barriers do you see to effective change in the arena of Healthcare access in California and in the United States?
5. Name something you can do today, this week or this month to take action on healthcare.

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Resources to learn more on this topic:

<http://www.uulmca.org/programs/health.html>

<http://www.itsourhealthcare.org/>

<http://www.health-access.org/>

<http://www.onecarenow.org/index.html>

<http://www.pnhp.org/>

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