



EQUITY SOLUTIONS
Training and Consulting
On Poverty and Economic Inequality
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Critical Thinking: How Economic Inequality Harms Societies

In preparation for our upcoming training, please view Richard Wilkinson's 15-minute TED talk, [How Economic Inequality Harms Societies](#) (Captions can be turned on if they are helpful to you.)

Wilkinson's presentation makes some important and striking points about the impacts of inequality within societies. However, like most resources, it's imperfect, and benefits from some critical thinking. After viewing the video, consider these questions. You could journal about them, discuss them with a friend or family member, or just think them through to yourself:

- In your own words, how would you explain Wilkinson's key point? (There are a few important points here - everybody might not choose the same one!)
- What's your initial reaction to the key point? Is it surprising, or unsurprising? What aspects of your previous understanding does this presentation support and/or contradict?
- Was anything else in the presentation surprising to you? How so?
- What question do you still have about the information discussed in the video?
- Wilkinson demonstrates his key point by examining various measurements that he claims are markers of the negative impact of economic inequality: life expectancy, children's academic scores, infant mortality, homicides, incarceration, births to teenage mothers, trust, obesity, mental illness (including addiction), social mobility, child wellbeing, and some others. What differences are there among these markers? In your view, are some of them more appropriately understood as "negative" outcomes of inequality than others? Are there markers that you understand differently than Wilkinson or his data sources seem to? Which ones, and why? How does that matter, if at all, for your understanding of Wilkinson's overall points about inequality?
- Consider *how* Wilkinson presents the information. In what ways do you find it effective, and in what ways do you find it ineffective, for you personally? Who do you think this talk really "speaks to" or works well for, and who might it not work well for? What might *that* have to do with economic inequality?



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