

Ten Things You Should Know about Occupy NL

1. Occupy NL is a public expression of concern from people who worry about unfairness and inequality in our province, country, and world today. It sees that our democracy is full of shortfalls. Our camp at Harbourside Park in St. John's was the longest occupation of public space in Canada, lasting from October 15-May 15, [when we were evicted](#). Catch up on the media coverage of OccupyNL [here](#).
2. Occupy NL makes connections between the unfairness experienced by ordinary people in Newfoundland and practices in the global corporate marketplace. It recognizes that invisible and often secret manipulation of money by distant banks, governments, investment firms, and multinational corporations cause unemployment, underemployment, full-time employment too poorly paid to sustain a family, health-injuring employment, unstable employment, and employment without benefits.
3. Occupy NL is a peaceful, non-violent, open and inclusive movement. A "movement" develops when different people discover they share the same serious concern and collaborate to learn, teach, spread awareness, and advocate for change about that concern.
4. Occupy NL has one clear message: If we go on ignoring or being blind to the macro-forces dominating the global economy, most of us will find that our lives, options, and hopes will only get smaller. (The media is wrong that the Occupy movement has no focus and no message – Occupy's call for social change cannot be adequately expressed in the sound bite and photo-op formula of TV news.)
5. Occupy NL's message is simple: It's not right that 99% of the world's population is at the mercy of the 1% that control wealth and economic opportunity. In fact, it's undemocratic that a few have far more than they need while many people are unable to fulfill basic needs. It's not fair that you can't afford the drugs you need to work again without pain when some people who bought stocks in the companies that make and sell those drugs spend more on their pets than you will make in 10 years. It's unfair that it takes longer for new seniors to receive money from the CPP and OAS because "efficient" computers and voice-mail don't allow seniors to ask a human being the questions they need answered in any timely way.
6. The media reports saying Occupy NL has no spokespeople and no leaders miss a very important point. The strength of Occupy NL is in its engaged membership; every member actively but quietly **doing** something concrete, without depending on a slick top dog to motivate and direct them.
7. People engaged in Occupy NL include people with blond hair, grey hair, long hair, short hair and no hair. They include trades workers, clergy, students, educators, journalists, the unemployed, social workers, artists, business people, entrepreneurs, retirees, professors, union members. Some who can stand the cold, irregular meals, and not having the comforts of home, physically occupy a tidy, well-kept meeting tent in downtown St. John's. Like anyone camping out day and night, they dress for comfort and warmth. Others do Occupy NL work before and after their workday, or on their lunch break.

8. Occupy NL has a number of engaged youthful idealists. Pragmatically speaking, people who are not already burdened with working to pay off mortgages, cars, and credit cards have more flexibility and time to give to the movement. Change needs idealism.

9. Occupy NL will not be a failure if the downtown encampment ends. Participants are already holding meetings, workshops, and conversations in a church basement, in university seminar rooms, in private homes in order to better understand the complex, systemic reasons that have led to contemporary consumerism, materialism, and greed. The occupation of most significance is occupying the attention, mind and energy of people who want to reveal and challenge economic injustice.

10. Occupy NL is in sympathy with the Arab spring and its brave reach for freedom of assembly and expression. Occupy NL is also in sympathy with Occupy Wall Street because Wall Street is a global symbol of obscure, unscrupulous, uncaring financial dealings that make the lives of ordinary people miserable.

To learn more about Occupy NL, visit www.occupynl.ca.