

Americans are talking about the economy—a lot. They're talking about Occupy Wall Street and the Super Committee, about an economy that only works for the 1% and about unemployment.

But thanks to Fox News and Rush Limbaugh, lots of talk about the economy means lots of misinformation about the economy.

So if you're spending this Thanksgiving holiday with friends and family, and want to be ready with the facts to *gently* correct any myths you hear (they are family and friends, after all), we put together a short guide with five common myths you might hear and easy-to-remember facts to respond to them.

Remember that you're the most important source of information for your family and friends. Happy Thanksgiving.

MYTH #1 : The congressional Super Committee failed because both sides refuse to compromise.

REALITY : The Super Committee failed because Republicans' number one, non-negotiable priority is to protect millionaires and billionaires from paying even one more penny in taxes. 1 Democrats repeatedly offered to make deep spending cuts—far deeper than most progressives would like—in exchange for raising taxes on the wealthy and closing corporate loopholes, only to be refused again and again. 2 So even though the vast majority of Americans say they want to protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits, and raise taxes on the rich and corporations, 3 that won't happen until Republicans put aside their extremist stance.

MYTH #2 : Nobody knows what Occupy Wall Street is about.

REALITY : Occupy Wall Street may not have a formal list of demands, but anyone who's been paying attention understands the core problems that occupiers are protesting—that corporations have far too much power in our political system, that Wall Street banks crashed our economy but were never held accountable, and that the richest 400 Americans have more wealth than half of all Americans—156 million people—combined. 4

MYTH #3 : Occupiers should stop protesting and just get a job.

REALITY : As anybody who's looked for a job in the last few years knows, there just aren't jobs out there. That's a big part of why occupiers are protesting. In September, there were *four times* as many unemployed people as job openings. 5 And for those who are lucky enough to find a job, median wages today are lower than they were a decade ago. 6

MYTH #4 : Occupy Wall Street is intent on provoking violence, especially against banks and the police.

REALITY : Occupations across the country have committed themselves to nonviolent protest, in the greatest traditions of protest movements. Some of their protests have been met with acts of police violence—tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets 7 —but in many cases, protesters have reminded police that the police officers are part of the 99%, too. 8 And in the few cases when people have shown up at Occupy demonstrations and committed acts of vandalism, other protesters have even repaired their acts of vandalism. 9

MYTH #5 : The biggest crisis facing our country is out of control government spending.

REALITY : The two biggest drivers of our deficit—by far—are the economic crash and the Bush tax cuts. 10 We have millions of people out of work, corporations hoarding cash, and factories sitting idle. If we put all those people back to work—rebuilding infrastructure, educating our children, and researching new technologies—it'll shrink the deficit and make our economy stronger for the long haul. And we can easily afford it if we make sure the rich—who are taking home a larger percentage of income than any time since 1917 11 —pay their fair share.

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