



NAVIGATING UNCERTAIN TIMES

The Personal, Organizational and
Public Roles of Philanthropy

The times we live in...

- Anxiety, stress, fear, turbulence, no easy fixes, no end in sight – what do we do?
- It's economic, but it's also personal, political, perhaps even spiritual
- Fundraising these days seems a good bit like pastoral care – absorbing the pain, listening, accompanying people in the anxiety

What difference does philanthropy make?

- Is it simply another economic decision?
- Or is it an opportunity to find meaning, purpose, sanctuary, a longer horizon, perhaps even glimpses of hope, in tough times?
- If the latter, what are the roles of philanthropic fundraisers in offering people an alternative to the bottom-line?

What is philanthropy?

- What the word means...where we find it in our lives.
- The philanthropic dimension of our lives – how we love each other.
- Ghettoized in a sector, nonprofit organizations, fundraising...
- Say something philanthropic!

The role of philanthropy in our lives

- Personally – our stories of giving, volunteering, receiving...
- Organizationally – leadership and common purpose, being philanthropic together
- In public – the public practice of philanthropy and how it shapes our democracy

(1) It begins with you

- You are the chief philanthropic officer in your life!
- What does that mean? How does that feel? Have you any training or preparation for that role?
- Are you prepared to tell your philanthropic story?

Philanthropic autobiography

- What are the experiences, people, and values (positive and not so!) that have shaped your understanding of philanthropy?
- Take a few moments to recount your philanthropic autobiography – then share it with someone
- If we can't make these links, how can we hope to lead philanthropic lives?

My philanthropic autobiography

- Rooted in a place, a community, a set of values, a religion, a family...
- Learning to be a grain-gatherer
- Understanding how my role as grain-gatherer is connected to all of us who care about the world

(2) *A vision for philanthropy*

- We then turn to our duties to lead various institutions in their philanthropic efforts...
- One persuasive vision for philanthropy is “common work”
- The story of Jane Addams and her notion of “humane philanthropy”

Philanthropy as common work (1)

- Philanthropy as common work means that philanthropy is at the core of the mission of your institution
- Think about where philanthropy “resides” in the organizations you work with and for
- How do we integrate the “philanthropic dimension” of all aspects of our mission-based work?

Philanthropy as common work (2)

- Philanthropy as common work means that philanthropy involves everyone in the community
- Reclaiming roles for professional staff, faculty, executive directors, volunteers, board members, alumni, students, and so forth
- Redressing the imbalance of the philanthropic community

Philanthropy as common work (3)

- Philanthropy as common work means that philanthropy must be publicly accountable
- Since it belongs to everyone, everyone has a right to know what went well (and what did not!)
- Pursuing rather than waiting for accountability to be imposed – the lessons of 9-11

(3) The public practice of philanthropy

- One of the several practices that help to form a democracy – along with education, justice, and health
- Think about what we assume and count on as we navigate our lives together – what happens when those goods and practices are not there?

The component parts of the public practice of philanthropy

- A sense of history – remembering
- A sense of place – rooted
- A sense of values – grounded
- A sense of hope – faithful
- A sense of service – the connection between knowing and doing

Practicing philanthropy in public

- Who are our role models?
- The role of civic teachers and philanthropic counselors
- Helping to promote perspectives of trust, generosity, and abundance in our commonweal

Say something philanthropic!

- It is about stewardship, accountability, and changing the way we live
- It is about a new mythology for our work in seeking philanthropic support for our institutions – it's not all about economics!
- It is about being both responsible and successful

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