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# Millennial World-Changers: Engaging This Cause-Driven Generation

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

MILLENNIAL WORLD-CHANGERS:  
ENGAGING THIS CAUSE-DRIVEN GENERATION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

KATHERYN ANNE SAUNDERS

PORTLAND, OREGON

FEBRUARY 2019



Portland Seminary  
George Fox University  
Portland, Oregon

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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DMin Dissertation

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This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

Katheryn Saunders

has been approved by  
the Dissertation Committee on February 15, 2019  
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation first, to my husband Craig. I could not have completed this monumental undertaking without his constant love, patience, support, and sense of humor. You are my rock and my best friend in the world. I am grateful also to my children. Thank you for hanging in there with me even when I was distracted or crabby. I am grateful for my dearest friends Elizabeth, Lorri, Kate, and Anne who encouraged me and never gave up on me, even when my time was limited. As always, we come together with love and laughter as if no time between us has passed at all.

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## ABSTRACT

As the youngest members of the millennial generation emerge into adulthood, nonprofit organizations have an increased awareness that a generational, philanthropic culture gap exists. Due to a number of factors, including the growth of technology and a significant decrease in consistent charitable giving over the last thirty years, nonprofit organizations are realizing that they need to develop more effective strategies for attracting millennial donors and supporting them in translating their values of fairness, authenticity, and social justice, into active and sustained giving. This dissertation reviews the common behavioral attributes and attitudes of members of the millennial generation, current effective and ineffective methods of engaging this generation in philanthropy and suggests that when nonprofits facilitate opportunities for millennials to experience empathy, consistent giving by millennials will increase. This dissertation offers three proposed solutions for consistently engaging this generation in nonprofit philanthropy based on their behavioral patterns, combined with research which demonstrates that when empathy increases, giving increases, the results of which will have direct implications for nonprofit fundraising.

## SECTION 1: THE PROBLEM

### **Introduction**

*Water Walk*, a Christian organization that drills wells to provide clean water in developing countries, knows that they need to begin engaging millennials<sup>1</sup> if they want to sustain their biblical mandate to serve the poor. After accumulating data on poverty giving trends, *Water Walk* realizes that if they fail to engage millennials as donors, by the year 2030 a lack of funding for their critical work will cause the death rate of children in developing countries under the age of five to again begin to rise. Based on millennials' use of digital platforms, *Water Walk* has developed an online engagement strategy that presents beautiful photos, statistics, and drilling locations, along with call to action links. They believe this will capture millennials' attention and cause them to feel connected and philanthropically compelled. However, the majority of the millennials exposed to this campaign questioned the authenticity and transparency of the organization, did not feel drawn in empathetically, and did not respond financially.

The fictional story above is indicative of the conversations I've had with multiple organizations regarding the challenges both Christian and secular nonprofits are facing today in consistently engaging members of the millennial generation as donors. There is a funding challenge for nonprofits that seek to help poor and at-risk populations. It's not

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<sup>1</sup> Dates vary slightly depending on the researcher, but based on the most common findings millennials are the generation born between the early 1980s and the year 2000.

that millennials don't care or don't give. The challenge is that nonprofits have not figured out how to communicate with millennials in a way that is meaningful to them and that causes them to want to dig deeper into the emotional and spiritual implications of giving. Their giving is impulsive and sporadic rather than consistent or committed. This fact is affirmed in a five-year study conducted by the Case Foundation, in which researchers found that regardless of income, millennials give in modest amounts to multiple charities. Their data showed that in order to give and engage more deeply, millennials stated that they must have an "intrinsic passion for the cause."<sup>2</sup> While some organizations may seek to cast a wider net for smaller dollars but higher volume, this dissertation seeks to address the unique qualities and challenges of this generation and to propose solutions for nonprofit organizations to engage millennials at a deeper level.

### **Problem Statement**

Between 1980 and 2000 a generation was born which has been called everything from a "tribe of narcissists" to the "next greatest."<sup>3</sup> Social scientists refer to them as Generation Y but the most commonly used term to describe this group is *millennials*. Nonprofits need millennials in order to continue their mission of serving people in need, but as millennials emerge into adulthood the huge cultural shifts taking place mean that

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<sup>2</sup> Derrick Feldmann, Amy Thayer, Melissa Wall, Cindy Dashnaw, and Hilary Celebi, "The 2017 Millennial Impact Report, Year In Review: An Invigorated Generation For Causes And Social Issues," *The Case Foundation*, 2017, 9.  
[http://www.themillennialimpact.com/sites/default/files/reports/FinalReport\\_MIR2017\\_030618-v4.pdf](http://www.themillennialimpact.com/sites/default/files/reports/FinalReport_MIR2017_030618-v4.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Barna Group, *Making Space for Millennials: a Blueprint for Your Culture, Ministry, Leadership and Facilities* (Ventura, CA: Barna Group, 2014), 5.



traditional means of engaging donors, which were effective for previous generations, are no longer relevant. Millennials' worldviews are significantly different from those of Generation X and the baby boomers.<sup>4</sup> Millennials were the first generation to become adults in a world with constant, nearly unlimited, access to information from all over the planet that is available almost instantly with a simple tap of a finger. In addition, some of the structures that undergird North American society such as churches, financial institutions, and political leadership have faltered; millennials have witnessed fallen church leaders, broken financial promises, and corruption in government and other organizational institutions.<sup>5</sup> These events have profoundly impacted millennials' view of organizations, the world, and their place and purpose in it.

In order to understand how these generational cultural shifts are impacting nonprofits, it is necessary to first examine the characteristics of millennials in order to provide a more holistic view of this generation and establish a roadmap for nonprofits to move forward.

### **Say Hello to the Millennial**

The millennial generation in the US, with over ninety million people, is the largest generation to date, outnumbering Generation X by twenty-six million.<sup>6</sup> This

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<sup>4</sup> Dates vary slightly depending on the source. The Pew Research Center lists date ranges as: Baby Boomers, 1946-1964; Generation X, 1965-1980.

<sup>5</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Kari Much, Amy M. Wagener, Holly L. Breitreutz, and Miranda Hellenbrand, "Working With the Millennial Generation: Challenges Facing 21st-Century Students from the Perspective of University Staff," *Journal of College Counseling* 17, no. 1 (April 2014): 37, <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1882.2014.0046.x>

generation is highly diverse socioeconomically, politically, racially, culturally, and interpersonally. This dissertation, and the research cited here, focuses on the millennial generation as a whole, understanding that there are subsets and outliers within the generation. Examples of subsets would include variations on data relating to college educated black millennial males for example, versus statistics on education for other subsets within the generation. Because this dissertation is focused on engaging the millennial generation as a whole in the nonprofit world, this section will not go into detail regarding subsets and outliers, but instead will look at common trends within the generation as a whole. Although this generation is highly diverse, there are significant and striking commonalities that cut across the lines that have traditionally divided US society. They share a certain zeitgeist, a spirit of the times in which they came of age and are coming into their prime.<sup>7</sup> There are many social divisions of the millennial generation, but this section will tease out the common experiences and attitudes in order to paint a broad-brush picture of the modes of being in, and thinking about, the world that are distinctively millennial. All millennials may not recognize themselves in every aspect, but just about every millennial will recognize something of themselves here.

Among millennials, “44.2 percent belong to racial or ethnic minority groups compared to 21.7 percent of baby boomers.”<sup>8</sup> Like every generation before it, this one is

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<sup>7</sup> Ingeborg Hoesterey, *Zeitgeist in Babel the Postmodernist Controversy* (Indiana, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), ivvv.

<sup>8</sup> Jean Accius and Christine Yeh Jarmin, “America Must Invest in Its Next Generations,” *Generations – Journal of the American Society on Aging* 40, no. 4 (Winter 2016-2017): 101, ProQuest Education Database.

defined by its values, its attitudes, and even its quirks. Millennials have a reputation for having an attitude of entitlement, but they also possess many positive attributes. Although they have been criticized for laziness in the workplace, research shows that they have much to offer.<sup>9</sup> It is true that their views differ from traditional nine-to-fivers on work-style and work-life balance, yet millennials want to make an impact.<sup>10</sup> They want to feel passionate about their jobs (42%) and they want jobs that do more than just make them financially secure (34%).<sup>11</sup> “According to a 2012 Net Impact Study, graduating university students say they would go so far as to take a 15 percent pay cut for a job that makes a social or environmental impact (45%) or to work for an organization with similar values to their own (58%).”<sup>12</sup> Scholars note that this socially connected generation, as they enter the workforce, is prepared “to contribute to the betterment of the world [in which] they live.”<sup>13</sup>

Millennials want to be taken seriously in the workplace and many feel held back because of their age. This could be because they hold nontraditional work views. This generation is committed to work-life balance and they prefer flexible work schedules,

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<sup>9</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 25.

<sup>10</sup> Lisa Anne Speer, “Four Generations Working Together in the Workforce and in Higher Education” (EdD diss., East Tennessee State University, Tennessee, 2011), 54, <https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2435&context=etd>.

<sup>11</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 55

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> James J. Weber, “Discovering the Millennials’ Personal Values Orientation: A Comparison To Two Managerial Populations,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 143, no. 3 (2017): 520, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2803-1>.

including autonomous or remote offices. As a general rule, they have a preference for digital communication technologies versus in-person interactions and they are proficient at multitasking.<sup>14</sup> Because this generation has always had information at their fingertips their world is a much smaller place. Their perspectives are global, and privileged<sup>15</sup> millennials are often well-traveled and knowledgeable about the world. They tend to be culturally inclusive. Millennials are interested in sustainability, fair trade, and the environment. They often have a heightened awareness of social justice and have created organizations like TOMS shoes<sup>16</sup> and other nonprofits which benefit people in need. They are entrepreneurial, creating crowdsourcing sites like Kickstarter and Indiegogo.<sup>17</sup> Millennials are also optimistic. They have an expansive concept of what is possible, and millennials aren't afraid to try new things.

This is the most highly educated generation in history, yet the younger members have had the lowest rate of employment of any generation of young adults since 1948 (54%).<sup>18</sup> The average student loan debt for millennials is \$27,253 and many of them are working part time jobs without health insurance.<sup>19</sup> This has impacted families as many

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<sup>14</sup> Maeona Mendelson, "The Millennial Generation: Receiving a Fair Exchange?" *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* 11, no. 3 (2013): 324, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15350770.2013.810056>.

<sup>15</sup> For the purposes of this dissertation I am defining privilege as having advantage or immunity from some of the ills that might impact someone living in extreme poverty or circumstances. The researcher understands that not every millennial is privileged.

<sup>16</sup> TOMS Shoes is a company founded by millennial entrepreneur Blake Mycoskie in 2006. For each new pair of shoes that is purchased, a new pair of shoes is given to an impoverished child.

<sup>17</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 60.

<sup>18</sup> Mendelson, 325.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

members of this “boomerang generation” are returning home to live with their parents until they can provide for themselves.<sup>20</sup> Some research suggests that millennials have unrealistic adult life expectations.<sup>21</sup> It is common for young adults to experience instability, to be self-focused, and to feel caught between a sense of possibilities and lack of actual opportunities.<sup>22</sup> In some cases, parents of privileged millennials have exacerbated or extended this period of limbo.<sup>23</sup> In a journal article written by college counselors, some interesting new statistics appear. Because the parents of millennials tend to be “immersed” in their college student’s lives, approximately 70 percent of universities now employ “Parent Coordinators.”<sup>24</sup> When this generation began attending college, the school administrators started reporting a large number of “helicopter parents” who would call the school wanting to talk about their student’s food, grades, moods, or other areas in which they felt their child required additional care. Parents have also expressed increased health concerns for this particular generation including obesity, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, as well as asthma.<sup>25</sup> The students themselves

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<sup>20</sup> Jill D. McLeigh and Liepa V. Boberiene, “Young Adults in Conflict: Confident but Struggling, Networked but Disconnected,” *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 84, no. 6 (2014): 625, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0099864>.

<sup>21</sup> Christian Smith with Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), 235.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>23</sup> Much et al., 42.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

are experiencing high levels of stress and a feeling of being overwhelmed.<sup>26</sup> Counselors report that millennial students often have a dependence on others and that they tend to take a “passive approach to problem solving.”<sup>27</sup> They also tend to believe that problems will go away if ignored. “As a result of being sheltered by parents, many millennials were not taught to solve their own problems as children.”<sup>28</sup>

It is important to understand this generation, because by the 2020 election, there will be ninety million eligible millennial voters, which is forty percent of the electorate.<sup>29</sup> Millennials tend to focus on social agendas and to be more progressive in their thinking. They tend to be nontraditional in their support of social justice and equity issues. For example, when surveyed, many felt that it was socially acceptable to support gay marriage (62%), compared to less supportive older generations (31%).<sup>30</sup> In addition, there has been a trend, increasing over the last decades, for members of this generation to delay marriage.<sup>31</sup> The millennial electorate as a whole tends to identify as more liberal with less than one third holding a favorable view of the Republican Party.<sup>32</sup> The 2016 election

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> David Madland and Ruy Teixeira, “New Progressive America: The Millennial Generation,” *Center for American Progress*, May 6, 2009, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2009/05/13/6133/new-progressive-america-the-millennial-generation/>.

<sup>30</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 104.

<sup>31</sup> Smith and Snell, 99.

<sup>32</sup> William A. Galston and Clara Hendrickson, “How Millennials Voted This Election,” *Brookings*, November 22, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2016/11/21/how-millennials-voted/>.

showed some cleavages in the millennial electorate.<sup>33</sup> Fear seems to have been a big driver in the election, as many millennials, especially non-white males without a college degree, stated that they were fearful of a Trump presidency. The majority of millennial Trump voters were white.

**Table 1: How Millennials Voted in the 2016 Election**

|                                      | Clinton | Trump |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| White Women w/ College Degree        | 15%     | 15%   |
| White Women w/out College Degree     | 12%     | 18%   |
| White Men w/ College Degree          | 11%     | 14%   |
| White Men w/out College Degree       | 10%     | 32%   |
| People of Color w/ College Degree    | 17%     | 7%    |
| People of Color w/out College Degree | 35%     | 13%   |

*Source:* William A. Galston, and Clara Hendrickson, “How Millennials Voted This Election,” Brookings, November 22, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2016/11/21/how-millennials-voted/>.

As nonprofits engage this generation, they must adjust to their digital and social habits. In spite of millennials’ educational debt and employment challenges, current research shows that they actually spend in excess of \$600 billion dollars a year.<sup>34</sup> Millennials do their shopping online and 71 percent are more likely to make a purchase based on a friend’s social media sharing.<sup>35</sup> They are nearly four times more likely to share content on their social media platforms than any other generational group and they are twice as likely to click on items shared by peers. Most of the tools millennials use are

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Link Walls, “Marketing to Millennials: Understanding The Digital Demographic,” *Retail Touchpoints*, June 23, 2015, <http://www.retailtouchpoints.com/features/executive-viewpoints/marketing-to-millennials-understanding-the-digital-demographic>.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

digital and much of their digital and social engagement is on their phones. In a Barna study, 56 percent of this generation said that they check their phones first thing in the morning, compared to 40 percent for other generations, and 12 percent say that they check their phone in the middle of the night, compared to 6 percent for other generations.<sup>36</sup> In that same Barna study, some millennials acknowledged this might be to their detriment: “My personal electronics sometimes separate me from other people” (49%).<sup>37</sup> More than half say: “There are times when I think I have too much information” (56%).<sup>38</sup> In a survey conducted by Bank of America, 96 percent of this generation considered the smart phone to be the most important product in their lives, spending over 15 hours each week on their phones.<sup>39</sup> For millennials, their sources of news and information are online and most use Yahoo.com (23%) or Google (11%). Only 1 percent use traditional legacy broadcasts sites such as ABC.com, NBC.com or CBS.com. Interestingly, approximately 1 in 5 (19%) say that they do not follow current events or politics online or otherwise.<sup>40</sup> Thus, millennials’ engagement with the world of news, information, and commerce is digitally focused to a much greater degree than seen in

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<sup>36</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 25.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Walls.

<sup>40</sup> Robert P. Jones, Thomas Banchoff, and Daniel Cox, *A Generation In Transition: Religion, Values, and Politics Among College-Age Millennials* (Washington, DC: Public Religion Research Institute, 2012), 31. <http://www.ppri.org/research/millennial-values-survey-2012/>.



previous generations, a fact which necessitates innovation in effectively reaching out and engaging them in philanthropy.

Finally, the millennial generation is the first generation to grow up understanding the impact humans are having on the environment. Although there are exceptions, many people in this generation grew up in urban rather than rural settings. When surveyed by Barna, millennial survey participants stated that they enjoy being in nature.<sup>41</sup> Especially in regard to worship, Bible study, and prayer, when given a choice of working outside, or bringing the outside in, Christian millennial participants “showed a strong, consistent preference for personal reflection and prayer in an outdoor setting.”<sup>42</sup>

### **Millennial Culture and the Working World**

Every generation has unique attributes depending, in part, on the influence of previous generations and world events. The unique characteristics of millennial culture have been shaped by the unprecedented availability and speed of access to information from multiple sources. Millennials have been watching TV since they were toddlers and have been “relentlessly marketed to.”<sup>43</sup> Because of this, millennials tend to be savvy; they can see the “catch” buried within the advertising. Whether it is media advertising, church marketing, or the sales pitch from other businesses or nonprofit organizations, millennials usually know when they are being marketed to and, rather than objecting, they often

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<sup>41</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 15.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Walls.

enjoy clever marketing. They like incentives but they want the marketer to be transparent about it. They want to be engaged ethically, and if a mistake is made, they want organizations, churches, and individuals to be forthright in admitting their error.<sup>44</sup>

According to Link Walls, Channel Advisor's VP of Product Management for Digital Marketing, because this generation appreciates the transparency when organizations admit their mistakes, they will share the marketing materials of these organizations with their friends on social media platforms. The millennial culture appreciates honest and forthright communication.<sup>45</sup>

Where previous generations may have felt there were given objective, universal truths, this is not so for millennials: "They simply cannot, for whatever reason, believe in—or sometimes even conceive of—a given, objective truth, fact, reality, or nature of the world that is independent of their subjective self-experience and that in relation to which they and others might learn or be persuaded to change."<sup>46</sup> The only truth they can believe with certainty is their own, because of the mixed, and sometimes corrupted messages they have received.

While young adults do not expect perfection in their leaders, they do want transparency. This generation is critical of hypocrisy, especially in Christians, so this can have an impact on Christian nonprofits. Two-thirds of millennials "believe churchgoers

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Walls. In Marketing, a "channel" is the activities, people and organizations which transfer goods or services from production to consumption. It is the way in which products and services get to the consumer. A Channel Advisor is a marketing role which oversees the channel.

<sup>46</sup> Smith and Snell, 140.

are a lot or somewhat hypocritical.”<sup>47</sup> This is true of both secular and Christian members of this generation. Christian millennials say that they do not need more information from anyone, including the church. They have access to more information than they could ever use. What they are seeking is wisdom and spiritual understanding that they can use in their real lives. They do not consider wisdom to be a list of what not to do. “Many millennials are seeking a more holistic, cohesive approach that is fully integrated with the Christian understanding of what it means to be created in God’s image.”<sup>48</sup> Millennials want relationship not rhetoric.

The workforce is changing rapidly as millennials enter the market. Their values are different from those of previous generations. This generation has watched their boomer parents spend long hours at work, often giving up family time only to lose their jobs due to downsizing or the collapse of businesses. Adding to the uncertainty in millennials’ lives has been their parents’ high divorce rates. This has resulted in millennials choosing “making a life” over “making a living.”<sup>49</sup> Millennials also have a strong affinity for working collaboratively in social settings and seek that ability in employment. This generation grew up doing group projects at school and they often enjoy collaborating with coworkers, forming friendships, and learning from one another.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>48</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 25.

<sup>49</sup> Eddy S. W. Ng, Linda Schweitzer, and Sean T. Lyons, “New Generation, Great Expectations: A Field Study of the Millennial Generation,” *Journal of Business and Psychology* 25 no. 2 (June 2010): 282, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9159-4>.

In previous generations, church, family, and work were somewhat monolithic. All things worked together and there was a commitment to the greater system. But millennials organize their lives in modules.<sup>50</sup> Each piece of a millennial's life can be taken apart and moved around to create different combinations, as desired or needed. If one module no longer suits their purposes they will move it or simply eliminate it from their lives. And while it is true that this generation lacks loyalty when it comes to organizations or institutions, they are generally loyal to individual people and to causes.<sup>51</sup> For example, in a study conducted with younger millennials, they strongly supported the DREAM Act, which allows illegal immigrants who arrived as children to become residents, join the military, or go to college (61%).<sup>52</sup> This generation has high expectations for ethical behavior and social responsibility.

### **Millennials and the Church**

Since over 60 percent of humanitarian work in the world is done by churches and Christian nonprofits,<sup>53</sup> it is important to examine the millennial generation's views on Christianity, spirituality, and the church. When millennials take issue with the church, or by extension, Christian nonprofits, these biases impact their response to requests for

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<sup>50</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 9.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>52</sup> Jones, Banchoff, and Cox.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Olsen, *Evangelicals and International Aid: Insights from a Landscape Survey of US Churches* (Medford, MA: The Fletcher School, Tufts University, 2016), 3, [https://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/research/documents/USMissionsSurvey\\_FINALReport.pdf](https://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/research/documents/USMissionsSurvey_FINALReport.pdf).

funding and engagement. As millennials express a desire to make the world better, they wrestle with a perceived disconnect that they see in the church. For example, because millennials are seeking authenticity, when it comes to church, they are not interested in the building it happens in. They are not impressed by longevity or nepotism in the church either. What they want is the “realest, truest, best thing to come forward and they want to be part of it.”<sup>54</sup> As a general rule, millennials do not actually care if they attend church or not. They are seeking meaningful spiritual experiences which can happen in many different settings outside the church walls. This generation is looking for a departure from conventional assumptions and traditions and a move toward “agility and fragility.”<sup>55</sup> They are not afraid to step into unpredictable or fragile situations and they expect the organizations they partner with to have the same mentality. Millennials have a lot to offer the church and Christian nonprofits with their digital and social media skills, social justice savvy, and desire to make their community and world a better place.

They are moving away from the traditional religious communities of their childhoods. Millennials are not interested in which church people go to, or which church is the better church. Millennials are asking: “Why church?” They are interested in truth, relationships, and spirituality; they are less interested in disciplines, institutions, events, laws, and traditions.<sup>56</sup> Some of the issues are cultural. In an effort to be friendly, churches

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<sup>54</sup> Stephanie Vos, “Why The Church Needs Millennials, But Millennials Don’t Need Church,” *The Salt Collective*, <http://thesaltcollective.org/why-the-church-needs-millennials-but-millennials-dont-need-church/>.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Peter Balaban, “Jesus’ Methodology of Storytelling Is an Effective Means of Communication in Our Emerging Culture,” (DMin diss., George Fox University, Portland, 2005), 42.

often welcome millennials by shaking their hands when they come in, and asking for multiple pieces of personal information so they can contact them later. Both of these actions are abrasive and go against social norms for millennials. They equate information with power and are reticent to share too much until they have established relationships at the church. “The only piece of information a sizeable majority of millennials is comfortable sharing with your church is their first name (82%).”<sup>57</sup>

Interestingly, millennials who have served the poor through their church are two times more likely to stay active in church compared to those who have not.<sup>58</sup> In addition, those that have served the poor in a church setting are more likely than not to state that they found an issue or a cause to be involved with (24% versus 10%).<sup>59</sup> For millennials who have disengaged from the church because of a lack of trust, they could be missing this feeling of connection and relationship which could lead to less consistent involvement with causes.

According to the Barna Group, “cultural discernment, mentoring, vocational discipleship and life-shaping relationships with God and other people” will help millennials stay connected to a Christian community.<sup>60</sup> The task of Christian nonprofits is both to be discerning about the culture of millennials and to help millennials become discerning about the culture of others. Critical to this is the development of life-shaping

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<sup>57</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 7.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

relationships, both with older Christians and with God. A consistent, long-term relationship with an older Christian who invests in their life and spiritual growth can profoundly affect the life course of a millennial.<sup>61</sup> Millennials who are disengaged from the church are missing this. They are foregoing the opportunity to walk alongside a more seasoned Christian through a firsthand experience of Jesus: going through seasons of challenge and experiencing God's revelation through that experience. Older generations in the church are also missing the opportunity for reverse mentoring, in which they could learn from millennials. This could dovetail with and support vocational discipleship, which would help millennials understand their work as a God-given calling.<sup>62</sup>

### **Millennial Philanthropy**

While millennials have developed a reputation in some circles for being entitled, lazy, and smartphone obsessed, in fact, a close look at their attitudes toward giving, volunteering, and fundraising reveals them to be more of a "We" than a "Me" generation.<sup>63</sup> However, this is all too often lost on traditional, hierarchically-oriented institutions, whose leaders fail to understand and are perturbed by millennials' out of the box systems of exchange. When millennials are asked about voluntary giving to

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<sup>61</sup> Janelle Anderson, "Millennials: The Unreached In Our Midst. A Practical Theology of Reaching Millennials Through Organic Church Principles and Repurposing the Church," (MA diss., Southeastern University, Florida, 2014), 36, <https://firescholars.seu.edu/maml/49/>.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>63</sup> Michèle Paulin, Ronald J. Ferguson, Nina Jost, and Jean-Mathieu Fallu, "Motivating Millennials to Engage in Charitable Causes through Social Media," *Journal of Service Management* 25, no. 3 (2014): 344, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-05-2013-0122>.

organizations some say they don't have money to give.<sup>64</sup> For some millennials this is certainly true, yet research shows that large sectors of this generation have both quite a bit of discretionary income and a desire to make a difference in the world. As a whole, millennials are idealists – skeptical idealists – but idealists nonetheless, and they are positioned to become catalysts for change in the nonprofit world.<sup>65</sup> The first step is for nonprofits to understand who millennials are as a group.

Millennials are frustrated with nonprofits because this generation wants to use all of their assets to give, including their time, talent, and finances, as well as their voices. Many traditional nonprofits simply want millennials to give financially, but don't understand how, or don't have the capacity to involve them in other ways. For example, millennials want to use their digital social skills in creative new ways. They are building smart phone apps that are doing good around the world, including feeding the hungry, clothing people, and sheltering the homeless.<sup>66</sup> One app, Feedie, lets users share photos of their meals in participating restaurants and then the restaurant makes a donation, which helps feed hungry children.<sup>67</sup> As of December of 2017, Feedie had funded over 12 million meals for children worldwide.<sup>68</sup> Millennials also want to use their social network

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<sup>64</sup> Smith and Snell, 36.

<sup>65</sup> Kari Dunn Saratovsky and Derrick Feldmann, *Cause for Change: The Why and How of Nonprofit Millennial Engagement* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013), 64.

<sup>66</sup> Logan Kugler, "Smartphone Apps for Social Good," *Communications of the ACM* 59, no. 8 (August 2016): 20, <https://doi.org/10.1145/2949664>.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.



sites, including peer-to peer-pages, for outreach, connection, brainstorming, and fundraising.<sup>69</sup> These systems, which are based on horizontal, collegial links rather than vertical hierarchies, are the millennials' preferred mode of engagement.<sup>70</sup> Yet larger, more traditional nonprofits continue forward with digital and direct mail marketing campaigns, expecting that millennials, like previous generations, will receive the marketing piece and make a commitment to give. And once a donor gives to a nonprofit, the nonprofit standard is to send a thank you note in hopes that the donor will feel appreciated and give again. This may not be the case with millennials. Studies show that millennials like to be publicly lauded when they successfully influence other members of their networks.<sup>71</sup> Additionally, traditional nonprofits have focused on marketing their organization first, and the cause second. This does not align with millennial thinking. Millennial fundraising campaigns on social media are more effective when the millennial fundraiser focuses not on themselves and their efforts, but on the cause itself or the person in need.

Lastly, there are challenges associated with Christian philanthropy in particular. It is true that millennials feel skeptical and mistrustful of churches when they perceive a balance of spending that leans toward institutional maintenance and enhancement and

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<sup>69</sup> Paulin et. al., 334.

<sup>70</sup> Caroline Urbain, Christine Gonzalez, and Marine Le Gall-Ely, "What Does the Future Hold for Giving? An Approach Using the Social Representations of Generation Y," *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 18, no. 3 (2012): 169, <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1448>.

<sup>71</sup> Paulin et. al., 334.

away from serving others.<sup>72</sup> Millennials tend to feel that faith communities should be leading the charge in alleviating poverty, and they believe that the church has money, yet to them the church often “feels like a really big business,” with all the implications of self-seeking and profit-making.<sup>73</sup> Thus, one of the challenges that Christian nonprofits face is millennials assuming that since the organization is Christian, it must then operate in the same way as the church, and they don’t trust the church. Millennials won’t give financially to nonprofits unless those organizations find meaningful ways to engage them by fostering trust and transparency and by creating a shared agenda. Christian nonprofits (including churches) need to work to build a continuum of meaningful engagement opportunities for effective recruitment and retention of millennials.

### **Giving: The Biblical and Spiritual Implications**

For Christian nonprofits, there is an overarching obligation to both positively affect the poor and to consider the wellbeing of the donors. Christian charity is known to “enhance a sense of obligation and loyalty towards others,”<sup>74</sup> and to “share common elements [with]... sustainable procurement.”<sup>75</sup> This is in part because Christians are

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<sup>72</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 49.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Paul G. Schervish, “Major Donors, Major Motives: The People and Purposes Behind Major Gifts,” *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 47 (2005): 89, <https://doi.org/10.1002/pf.95>.

<sup>75</sup> Mansi Mansi, “The Relationship between Spirituality and Sustainable Procurement in the Higher Education Sector,” (Ph.D. diss., RMIT University, Australia, 2012), 204. <http://researchbank.rmit.edu.au/eserv/rmit:160414/Mansi.pdf>.

called to love God and love others.<sup>76</sup> This love for God and others builds community and creates a sense of commitment. That commitment helps sustain the work itself and the funding that supports the work. Thus, philanthropy conducted in the realm of Christian spirituality should impact both the wellbeing of the millennial donor and the wellbeing of the beneficiary of the donor's gifts. If millennials are disconnecting from Christian nonprofits, or only engaging sporadically, they are missing the potential spiritual growth that can happen when one is committed to a cause or to people in need, over a long period of time. That long-term commitment requires patience, diligence, and faithfulness; all traits which refine and spiritually mature a person.

There are two primary biblical principles that apply to giving. First, we are responsible to help those in our immediate sphere of influence, primarily our closest friends and family. In 1 Timothy 5:8 we are told: "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." Second, we are responsible to help those who are not able to help themselves.<sup>77</sup> Generally, the Bible references widows and orphans but there are many biblical references, especially in the Gospels, to helping the poor and suffering, including those in prison. The early references regarding giving to the poor can be found in Leviticus 10:9-10 and Deuteronomy 24:19-20. These scriptures refer to farmers leaving

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<sup>76</sup> Mark 12:30-31. 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.

<sup>77</sup> Kevin Deyoung, "Obligation, Stewardship, and the Poor," *TGC: The Gospel Coalition*, July 17, 2012, <https://9marks.org/article/journalhow-should-we-think-about-our-obligation-help-poor/>.

corners of their fields unharvested for the poor to glean. In the Old Testament, the tithe was another method of helping the poor. In the New Testament, one can find scriptural references to meeting the needs of the poor and many admonitions reminding Christians that they should distribute their resources compassionately (such as 2 Corinthians 9:7).<sup>78</sup> There are biblical principles to guide Christians as to how they should live in regards to wealth and giving: first, they should acknowledge that they are simply stewards of the things that God has given them. The earth, and everything on it is the Lord's (Psalms 24:1). Second, Christians should guard against the dangers of greed and covetousness. There is freedom in materialistic simplicity, which can leave space for an enriched spiritual life.<sup>79</sup>

### Summary

Millennials will have a critical role to play in the future of nonprofit giving. In order to move forward with the work of nonprofits, charitable boards and executives will need to understand the cultural shifts that are manifesting with the millennial generation. Due to their exposure to large amounts of information via the internet and digital media, this generation both communicates differently than previous generations, is less trusting and has a much broader view of humanity than previous generations. Their social and community structures are different as well. They are technologically and intellectually savvy and they require transparency, authenticity, and flexibility in order to establish trust

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<sup>78</sup> 2 Corinthians 9:7, Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

<sup>79</sup> Kerby Anderson, "Wealth and Poverty—A Biblical Perspective," *Probe Ministries*, May 27, 1992, <https://www.probe.org/wealth-and-poverty/>.

and develop a willingness to fully engage in the nonprofit world. The good news is that millennials are entrepreneurial, social justice minded, and have a desire to lead meaningful lives that make a difference in the world. If nonprofits are willing to step outside the box of traditional donor engagement and fundraising, millennials could be the generation to finally address some of the major issues in our world such as poverty, hunger, a lack of safe drinking water, access to education, and gender equality.

Section One makes clear that traditional nonprofit marketing will not be enough to build trust and engage millennials deeply and consistently. And although this generation is digitally proficient, it will not be enough to engage them on digital platforms alone. This section demonstrates that millennials want out of the box experiences. They are social, they want to collaborate and they want to give their time as well as their treasure.<sup>80</sup> While Section One presented the unique qualities of the millennial generation, which sets them apart from previous generations when it comes to nonprofit giving and engagement, Section Two will present current and historical trends in US giving. In addition, section two will address some of the philanthropic challenges nonprofits face and examine millennial-specific giving trends and the spiritual and biblical mandate regarding wealth and giving.

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<sup>80</sup> For additional data on millennial giving, reference Appendix B, page 149.

## SECTION 2:

### PHILANTHROPY PAST AND PRESENT: OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

#### **Introduction**

If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune.  
If you want happiness for a lifetime, help someone else.  
— Confucius

Non-profit organizations need to develop effective strategies for attracting US millennial donors and supporting them in translating their values of fairness, authenticity, and social justice, into active and sustained philanthropy. In order to identify the strategies with more potential for attracting and engaging US millennial donors, one must consider current and historical trends in US philanthropy in general. One must also take into account some of the philanthropic challenges nonprofits face, including proximal giving, diffusion of responsibility, and the science of giving. It is also important to examine both millennial-specific giving behaviors, and the spiritual and biblical mandate regarding wealth and giving.

#### **The Philosophy, Theology, and the Spirituality of Giving**

In a time of affluence, spirituality can play a role in giving.<sup>81</sup> Del Garrison, a wealthy, prominent Hollywood actor, describes the impact of wealth upon his consciousness and behavior as having “opened up a world to me that I never knew

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<sup>81</sup> Schervish, 83.

existed, a world that is not just one of consumption but of understanding! Of seeing the world in a different way. It's an education."<sup>82</sup> The transformation inspired by philanthropy, he clarifies, "is not so much a value thing as it is a very basic thing" in that he became introduced to a way of life he "either didn't know existed or knew existed but [I thought was only] for somebody else."<sup>83</sup> Through his giving, Del experienced a form of spiritual formation. Spiritual Formation is the lifetime process by which one's relationship with God matures. This happens in believers through the work of the Holy Spirit, in community, and in response to God's grace, as he forms people into the likeness of Jesus Christ for the sake of the world.<sup>84</sup> Spiritual Formation is the place where one's "behaviors (orthopraxy), feelings (orthopathy), and thoughts (orthodoxy) meet."<sup>85</sup> It is the process of examining one's spiritual longings, and questioning what God desires of us, and what we desire of God".<sup>86</sup> Romans 12:2 instructs us to renew our minds so that we can test and approve God's perfect will. Spending time with God through the practice of spiritual formation tethers one to the Trinity and provides a navigational system. This map could help millennials learn how to live out their theology rather than separating

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis, *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 24.

<sup>85</sup> Face to face lecture with MaryKate Morse. Partial definition of Spiritual Formation.

<sup>86</sup> Gerald Lawson Sittser, *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2010), 85.

their theology from their spirituality. This life-long practice takes discipline, and one of those disciplines is the realization that everything we have belongs to God.

Millennials are missional in the sense that they want to go out into the world and serve people in need.<sup>87</sup> Research shows that when young adults discover a sense of mission within a church context, they cultivate a faith that lasts.<sup>88</sup> This could be because they are being discipled in church and taught about the spiritual connection between faith and deeds.<sup>89</sup> Then, through serving as the body of Christ alongside other members of their church, they experience not only a spiritual connection to those they serve because of the teaching they have received, but also a deeper connection to other members of their church family as they serve together. Those spiritual connections, both with those they serve and in mentoring relationships can increase.<sup>90</sup> This is important, because increased empathy, increases giving, which will be explored in section three.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Caitlin Burke, "Millennial Missionaries: How This Generation Is Impacting the World," *The Christian Broadcasting Network*, June 23, 2016, [www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/2016/june/millennial-missionaries-how-this-generation-is-impacting-the-world](http://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/2016/june/millennial-missionaries-how-this-generation-is-impacting-the-world).

<sup>88</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 59.

<sup>89</sup> James 2: 14-26, What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

<sup>90</sup> Deborah Small, George Loewenstein, and Paul Slovic, "Sympathy and Callousness: The Impact of Deliberative Thought on Donations to Identifiable and Statistical Victims," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 102 no. 2 (2007): 144, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.01.005>.

<sup>91</sup> Sung-Ju Kim and Xiaonan Kou, "Not All Empathy Is Equal: How Dispositional Empathy Affects Charitable Giving," *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing* 26, no. 4 (2014): 316, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10495142.2014.965066>.



## Millennial Spirituality

Tim Suttle, in *An Evangelical Social Gospel? Finding God's Story in the Midst of Extremes*, says "To profess true salvation ... we must judge the authenticity of our conversion according to its social manifestations, not simply its inner, personal ones."<sup>92</sup> This points out the undercurrent happening in the church as millennials are watching to see if the churches actions match their teachings. According to Suttle, if a person is "saved" there should be a physical manifestation. In other words, their professed heart and their words should match their actions. Millennials are examining their beliefs about what the role of the church should be in culture and how that is or is not manifesting itself in the world.<sup>93</sup>

Previous generations have viewed church congregations as the heart of spiritual life in the US<sup>94</sup>. The move away from religious institutions could be a reaction to the politicization happening in the church so that the church no longer feels relevant.<sup>95</sup> The good news is that "faith has become less a taboo topic."<sup>96</sup> Older generations may have

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<sup>92</sup> Tim Suttle, *An Evangelical Social Gospel? Finding God's Story in the Midst of Extremes* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 17.

<sup>93</sup> Sarah Margaret Vaughn, "Why Millennials Are Leaving the Church: a Qualitative Study Analyzing Multiple Factors Contributing to the Decline in Millennial Engagement within the Church" (Honors Thesis, Appalachian State University, NC, 2016), 61.

<sup>94</sup> Paul Taylor and Scott Keeter, "Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change," *Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project*, February 24, 2010, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/02/24/millennials-confident-connected-open-to-change/>.

<sup>95</sup> David P. King, "Millennials, Faith and Philanthropy: Who Will Be Transformed?" *ValpoScholar* 11, no. 1 (April 2016): 6, <https://scholar.valpo.edu/ilasbw/vol1/iss1/2/>.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

avoided the topic in polite company but this is not the case with millennials. They are honest and open when it comes to discussions about their faith.<sup>97</sup> Rather than aligning themselves with a religion that includes certain expectations and obligations (that they may or may not be able to meet), they favor “theological ideologies that align with their lifestyle choices.”<sup>98</sup> In one qualitative study a millennial said, “The biggest reason millennials have a problem with Christianity is that when you ask the question, ‘what can Christianity give me that spirituality can’t [provide]?’ you [will] find yourself in the position [in which you would rather] be spiritual; because, with spirituality I can do all of the things that I love about the Bible, [however] I’m not constricted by it – no one thinks I’m judgmental, [but rather] it is just my personal, individual spirituality.”<sup>99</sup> This reinforces the 2010 Pew Research findings that millennials do not prioritize religious life or religious affiliation.<sup>100</sup> This seems to suggest that this generation is interested in living out a spiritual life in which they can adopt their own beliefs from the Bible without being judged or confronted by organized religion for not adopting their entire belief system.<sup>101</sup> This aligns with the reputation millennials have for being noncommittal to

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Vaughn, 39.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Taylor and Keeter, 85.

<sup>101</sup> Vaughn, 37.

organizations.<sup>102</sup> Nonprofits must more closely align the seemingly conflicting narratives (spiritual but not religious) in order to match the behavioral patterns of this generation versus aligning with the patterns of behavior for previous generations.<sup>103</sup> Millennials appear to want a relationship with God, so time will tell whether they are drawn to organized religion in the future. It does seem clear that their God is a markedly personal one.

Although one can find much research showing that millennials are shallow and self-centered, more research is coming out that shows that this generation wants to be involved in deep meaningful work and experiences.<sup>104</sup> They want to be part of a spiritual experience, one that involves helping people and making the world a better place.<sup>105</sup> They seem to want answers to life's big questions. That deeper spiritual experience, which supports their values, could lead to empathy for others<sup>106</sup> and a deeper engagement with those in need.

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<sup>102</sup> Brandon Rigioni and Bailey Nelson, "Millennials: Not Attached to Employers or Institutions," *Gallup.com*, September 20, 2016, <https://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/195677/millennials-not-attached-employers-institutions.aspx>.

<sup>103</sup> Nicolette Manlros Weber, "The Millennials God," *Democratic Underground*, January 18, 2017, [https://www.democraticunderground.com/?com=view\\_post&forum=1218&pid=243194](https://www.democraticunderground.com/?com=view_post&forum=1218&pid=243194).

<sup>104</sup> Karen K. Myers and Kamyab Sadaghiani, "Millennials in the Workplace: A Communication Perspective on Millennials' Organizational Relationships and Performance," *Journal of Business and Psychology* 25, no. 2 (2010): 232, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9172-7>.

<sup>105</sup> "2006 Millennial Cause Study," *Cone Communications*, 2006, 18, <http://www.centerforgiving.org/Portals/0/2006%20Cone%20Millennial%20Cause%20Study.pdf>.

<sup>106</sup> The subject of empathy will be addressed in Section Three including research which shows that increased empathy increases giving.

### United States Philanthropy – General Characteristics and History

The Greek term, *philos anthropos* literally means “love for others, mankind or humanity.”<sup>107</sup> This is, in the most general and generous sense, the definition of philanthropy. “It refers to the voluntary commitment to the wellbeing of others, a group or society at large.”<sup>108</sup> Views of philanthropy vary according to the priorities, values, and presuppositions of the person who is assessing the philanthropic engagement. Giving is “real... if it is at the expense of the giver, for example, if it reduces his or her possessions, income, or assets.”<sup>109</sup> People are moved to give philanthropically due to a range of motives from the joy they receive by giving, to Christian duty, or even fear of being judged if they do not give. At times they give to others with the goal of receiving something in return, such as gaining social prestige or proving to themselves and others that they are good people.<sup>110</sup> As Schuyt observes, “people develop the capacity to reward themselves for their own good works.”<sup>111</sup> Some philanthropists simply give out of a sense of joy and abundance.

Throughout history, wealthy citizens and churches have helped the ill, poor, homeless, orphans, widows, and the elderly. Thus philanthropy has been associated in

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<sup>107</sup> Theo N. M. Schuyt, *Philanthropy and the Philanthropy Sector: An Introduction* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2016), 1.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

part with meeting people's basic human needs.<sup>112</sup> But philanthropy has served other purposes as well. A broader philanthropic project in fostering education got its start in America in 1636 with the foundation of *The New College*, the first of a string of privately funded schools.<sup>113</sup> In another notable early philanthropic endeavor, Harvard launched the first American fundraising campaign in 1643.<sup>114</sup> This campaign raised the funds to build Harvard's new college as well as an individual gift from philanthropist Ann Radcliffe to establish their first scholarship fund.<sup>115</sup> Additionally, early in America's history, churches and individual people were giving to help the poor and oppressed. In 1727, a group of nuns established a school, hospital, and orphanage in New Orleans, and in 1735, a dying sailor endowed the first United States charity hospital.<sup>116</sup>

Most people know very little about philanthropy yet it appears in one form or another in almost every civilization and culture throughout history and has a distinctive place in our lives.<sup>117</sup> Philanthropy has played a role in making America what it is today. Unlike government, philanthropy can be inventive, nimble, and individualized instead of bureaucratic and cumbersome. Individual philanthropy is pluralistic, with many dispersed

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>113</sup> Karl Zinsmeister, *The Almanac of American Philanthropy* (Washington, DC: Philanthropy Roundtable, 2016), 1321.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Robert L. Payton and Michael P. Moody, *Understanding Philanthropy: Its Meaning and Mission* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008), 9.

individual sources of giving. This pluralism not only allows for individual people to give to support the issues they care about (gives them a voice and a way to make an impact) but it also diversifies giving so that funding is not primarily coming from only one source. For example, if the government decides to stop funding low-income housing, all of that funding immediately stops. But if a few individual donors decide to stop giving to low income housing, there will still be other individuals continuing to support this need.

The United States is a polyarchal society versus a monarchy.<sup>118</sup> The US culture of independent grassroots philanthropy capitalizes on this fact.<sup>119</sup> “Polyarchy, fed by philanthropy, increases variety in our lives and protects non-mainstream points of view.”<sup>120</sup> This means that each person in the US has the independent choice to give to the issues that they most care about, based on their interests and point of view. The US has thousands of government entities, but over 85,000 foundations, and millions of separate US donors.<sup>121</sup> Because of this individualism, philanthropic funding tends to be more flexible and efficient than government funding and it often seeks to transform, not just treat a problem.<sup>122</sup> There is even more power to accomplish big things when those of humble means join with the wealthy to tackle vital needs. For example, in the early 1800s

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<sup>118</sup> Polyarchy is a society in which there are many independent sources of power versus a monarchy with one source of power.

<sup>119</sup> Zinsmeister, 38.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> “Key Facts on U.S. Foundations,” *Foundation Center*, 2014, 2.  
[http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/keyfacts2014/pdfs/Key\\_Facts\\_on\\_US\\_Foundations\\_2014.pdf](http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/keyfacts2014/pdfs/Key_Facts_on_US_Foundations_2014.pdf).

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

when government funding was not available, individual people in Salem, Massachusetts funded the building of the famous frigate, the USS Essex for \$74,700. This money included gifts ranging from \$10 to two gifts of \$10,000.<sup>123</sup> When government funding (one source) was lacking for this needed ship, individual donors, whether they were giving large or small gifts, and based on their personal desires and interests, were able to join together to fund this need. This demonstrates the flexibility and efficiency of nongovernmental (philanthropic) giving.

Today, three out of four American families give to charity; about a third of the funds go to religious activities – including houses of worship (39%)<sup>124</sup> – with the rest going to secular purposes such as education (19%), human services (15%), health (12%), arts (6%), overseas, (5%), and nature (4%).<sup>125</sup> One of the strengths of philanthropy is the multitude of reasons that people have for giving. Different people can pursue their own visions of support based on their personal reasons for giving.

Philanthropists come from all backgrounds and levels of financial advantage but, surprisingly, it is persistent giving by the most humble Americans, which often makes the biggest impact. For example, Zinsmeister relates the story of one couple – a plumber and a nurse – who lived a quiet, frugal life and left \$3 million to charity on their death.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>124</sup> Arthur C. Brooks, *Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth about Compassionate Conservatism* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006), 3.

<sup>125</sup> Zinsmeister, 1116.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 18.

Zinsmeister argues that, “philanthropy takes people just as they are and helps them to do wondrous things, even when they’re not saints.”<sup>127</sup> This fact leads to the idea that millennials, even those with college debt or lower paying jobs, can respond philanthropically to the social justice issues that they care about. They can make a difference.

Philanthropy can offer a profound sense of meaning and happiness. Eighty percent of people report that they donate to charity because of a sense of duty: “those who have more should give to those who have less.”<sup>128</sup> Other common reasons included religious obligation or simply that they were asked to give. Only a few (20%) say that they gave to get a tax deduction.<sup>129</sup> There are many reasons that people give to charity including a personal connection with the people that the charity serves, but there is also a science to giving.

### **Giving as a Science and Human Behavior**

The news is filled with gut-wrenching stories of famine, natural disasters, and poverty, yet sometimes millennials, and Americans in general, do not give as much as they could, or they do not give at all. This could be in part because the problem seems too far away and those in need are far removed from our daily lives. It is also possible that the problems seem too vast and overwhelming. It is easy to think, “I am just one person.

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>128</sup> Brooks, 6.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.



How can I possibly make a difference?” There are many reasons that people in the US give or choose not to give.

Research reveals that people are more likely to give to a single identifiable person than to a group of people or a general need.<sup>130</sup> Peter Singer, modern philosopher and professor at Princeton University, states in his book *The Life You Can Save*, that human beings feel more empathetic when they connect with someone personally,<sup>131</sup> and research demonstrates that certain types of empathy increase charitable giving.<sup>132</sup> Additionally, Singer’s research reveals that US Citizens tend to care and respond to those in closest proximity to them.<sup>133</sup> For example, in 2004 US donors gave \$1.5 billion to the victims of the Southeast Asian Tsunami, yet that was barely one quarter of US donations given in 2005 to the victims of Hurricane Katrina at \$6.5 billion, even though 220,000 people died in the tsunami versus 1600 in Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, nonprofits raised \$230.7 million for the earthquake in Nepal in 2015<sup>134</sup> versus the \$742.6 million raised by

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<sup>130</sup> Joanie Fritz, “6 Unexpected Ways Your Fundraising Appeal May Turn Off Donors: Are You Turning Empathy On or Off?” *The Balance*, August 3, 2016, <https://www.thebalance.com/why-donors-dont-give-2502028>.

<sup>131</sup> Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty* (New York, NY: Random House, 2010), 46.

<sup>132</sup> Kim and Kou, 313.

<sup>133</sup> Maferima Touré-Tillery and Ayelet Fishbach, “Too Far to Help: The Effect of Perceived Distance on the Expected Impact and Likelihood of Charitable Action,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 112, no. 6 (2017): 866. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000089>.

<sup>134</sup> “Millions Raised for Nepal Earthquake Relief,” *Charity Navigator*, April 20, 2016, <https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=2176>.

charities to help the victims of Hurricane Harvey in Houston Texas in 2017<sup>135</sup>. This highlights a US giving pattern toward an insular view of the world and the tendency to give to issues which might feel the most familiar or familial.<sup>136</sup> Because of proximity, people's giving can also reflect prejudiced or exclusionary beliefs. In addition to preferring to give "close to home," some people prefer to give to people "like me," which is often a result of ethnocentrism<sup>137</sup>.

People's willingness to give is directly related to the number of people they believe that they can save.<sup>138</sup> US citizens are more willing to help if data or marketing shows them that the ratio is better; for instance, the prospect of helping 1,000 people out of 4,000 attracts more giving than helping 1,000 out of 10,000.<sup>139</sup> This could be due to a sense of guilt about those they could not help. Additionally, there is a phenomenon called *diffusion of responsibility*, or "bystander effect,"<sup>140</sup> where one assumes that someone else will respond, which relieves the giver of obligation or imperative.

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<sup>135</sup> Chris Mathews, "One Year Later, This Is How Much Was Donated to Charities after Hurricane Harvey," *The Business Journals*, August 15, 2018, <https://www.bizjournals.com/houston/news/2018/08/15/one-year-later-this-is-how-much-was-donated-to.html>.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ethnocentrism is the evaluation of other cultures according to preconceptions originating in the standards and customs of one's own culture.

<sup>138</sup> Fritz.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

Wealth influences philanthropic giving. It can increase individualistic behavior in the wealthy and reduce the desire for community engagement.<sup>141</sup> Fritz reports that “once something can be bought, the need for communitarian cooperation is lessened.”<sup>142</sup> In other words, a very wealthy person may believe that they have the means to potentially solve, or make a large impact, on a need by themselves. Therefore they do not need to join together with others to address the issue as a community. However, in general, donors are more likely to give to nonprofit organizations when they are incorporated into associational relationships and when there are more people committed to a particular cause.<sup>143</sup>

Research shows that if you engage donors in participatory activities, listen closely to their interests, and whenever possible, connect them directly with the beneficiaries of their gifts, their philanthropic giving will increase.<sup>144</sup> Although there are not hard and fast rules, science can provide some insight into giving behaviors.

There are studies on the topic of the science of philanthropy but these studies have never led to a distinctive theoretical framework: a theory of philanthropy, or a “philanthropology.”<sup>145</sup> In other words different researchers have different opinions about why people give. Philanthropology is essentially the anthropology of giving. It is the

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Schervish, 84.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Schuyt, 2.

study of human beings who are in need, and other human beings who might meet those needs. Researchers from diverse disciplines – from evolutionary biology to behavioral psychology to sociology – have examined behaviors that are identified as philanthropic. Evolutionary biologists Maria Abou Chakra and Arne Traulsen wanted to find out if there was a biological or evolutionary component to generosity versus being strictly learned.<sup>146</sup> They conducted one experimental study in the form of a game between ‘rich’ and ‘poor’ individuals. Subjects were given two types of endowments, a working account and external assets, with the ‘rich’ players receiving twice the working and external assets as the ‘poor.’ “Subjects had to collaborate in order to reach a certain target amount in a common pool.”<sup>147</sup> In the end, the scientists concluded that resource division must be imprinted on us evolutionarily with a sense of “fairness for allocating resources,” because the rich players increased their contributions in order to compensate for the poor. One might consider, however that this behavior benefited the poor players but it also helped the rich players by preventing the loss of their assets.<sup>148</sup> In other words it is possible that the rich players gave, not because humans are evolutionarily or biologically wired to do so, but because assisting the poor helped them win the game. This outcome is in contrast

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<sup>146</sup> Maria Abou Chakra and Arne Traulsen, “Under High Stakes and Uncertainty the Rich Should Lend the Poor a Helping Hand,” *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 341 (2014): 124, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtbi.2013.10.004>.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 129.

to research that shows that those with wealth give less (overall) to charity than those with less wealth.<sup>149</sup>

In addition to evolutionary biologists, behavioral scientists have studied giving. In a series of experiments conducted at Carnegie Mellon University, researchers looked at giving driven by data versus giving driven by narrative.<sup>150</sup> They found that although people understood that they should give to charities that make the biggest impact, statistical data and impact statements turned subjects off.<sup>151</sup> This demonstrates that although data that reflects impact is important and could cause an individual to give to one charity over another, story is more attractive to potential donors. These researchers found that when it comes to charitable giving “we are often ruled by our hearts and not our heads”.<sup>152</sup> The majority of subjects in this study gave to charities that had a single, identifiable recipient.<sup>153</sup>

Another study, conducted by economic professors Smith, Windmeijer, and Wright, showed that giving is social.<sup>154</sup> If subjects knew or knew of the person asking them to give, they were more likely to say yes; and the size of the gift often correlated

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<sup>149</sup> Paul K. Piff, Michael W. Kraus, Stéphane Côté, Bonnie Hayden Cheng, and Dacher Keltner, “Having Less, Giving More: The Influence of Social Class on Prosocial Behavior,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 99, no. 5 (2010): 781. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020092>.

<sup>150</sup> Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic, 12.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Sarah Smith, Frank Windmeijer, and Edmund Wright, “Peer Effects in Charitable Giving: Evidence from the (Running) Field,” *The Economic Journal* 125, no. 585 (2014): 1069, <https://doi.org/10.1111/eoj.12114>.

with the size of their peer's gift.<sup>155</sup> When prompted or encouraged by a prominent person in their life, subjects quadrupled the size of their gift.<sup>156</sup> Seeing others give prompted giving. Additionally, in two matching grant experiments conducted by economists Dean Karlan and John A. List, outcomes demonstrated that donors gave more to charity match-funding campaigns when it was a recognizable foundation, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, rather than an unknown or anonymous organization.<sup>157</sup> In other words, when donors were personally aware of certain foundations they were willing to give so that their charity could receive those matching funds. Additional research showed that the same was true with celebrity endorsers (people gave more money if they were familiar with that celebrity), but only when the donor had given to that charity before.<sup>158</sup> Lastly, the authors of *Happy Money: The New Science of Smarter Spending* state that spending money on others actually makes people happier than spending it on oneself.<sup>159</sup> This bodes well for a generation that values relationship and quality of life. There is much research to show that in general, people give to those they feel connected to in one way or another.

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Dean Karlan and John List, "How Can Bill and Melinda Gates Increase Other People's Donations to Fund Public Goods?" *National Bureau of Economic Research*, March 2012, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17954>.

<sup>158</sup> Michael Sanders and Francesca Tamma, "The Science behind Why People Give Money to Charity," *The Guardian*, March 23, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2015/mar/23/the-science-behind-why-people-give-money-to-charity>.

<sup>159</sup> Elizabeth Dunn and Michael Norton, *Happy Money: the New Science of Smarter Spending*, (London, UK: Oneworld Book, 2014), 137.

### **Millennial Philanthropy: Their Giving and Nonprofit Engagement Behaviors**

In preparation for the future of nonprofit philanthropy, social scientists at Pew Research have begun studying the millennial generation's giving behaviors.<sup>160</sup> Millennial giving begins with engagement and millennials engage in ways that are unique.<sup>161</sup> Millennial engagement takes place on a continuum, generally beginning with micro-level involvement with nonprofits.<sup>162</sup> This continuum may start on social media, with a like or comment, opening a link, or sharing with friends, and progress to volunteering, giving at smaller amounts, and then eventually giving at higher levels and encouraging their friends to do the same.<sup>163</sup>

Millennials are flipping the nonprofit engagement paradigm. Traditionally, nonprofits connect with people through a direct appeal for money. In contrast, millennials want to start by participating in a variety of ways. Using research from over 10,000 millennials, Kari Dunn Saratovski and Derrick Feldman, authors of *Cause for Change*, found that allowing this generation to engage in their own way, and at a slower pace, leads to more involvement and higher giving over time.<sup>164</sup> Millennials are inquisitors, content consumers, activists, and peer-agents (they promote cause-activity to their peer groups).<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Taylor and Keeter.

<sup>161</sup> Saratovsky and Feldmann, 95.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>165</sup> Feldmann et. al., 2.

Non-profits are beginning to use a blend of traditional and innovative models to engage millennials. These include but are not limited to: marketing mailers with envelope-inserts requesting donations, invitations to large and small events, their website, social media channels, phone calls and some organizations offer volunteer opportunities. What nonprofits sometimes fail to address are millennial consumer behaviors, such as how millennials are accessing their websites, the types of events they prefer to attend, and the methods by which they want to respond once they receive a phone call or direct mail piece.

Current trends in Millennial philanthropy include many of the same giving platforms, events, and opportunities as previous generations. However, there are some distinct differences. Although millennials enjoy events, they take issue with the over-the-top fundraising galas of previous generations.<sup>166</sup> Millennials question how non-profit money is spent and because they demand transparency, some will take the time to research financial details such as overhead and administrative expenses.<sup>167</sup> Traditional nonprofit fundraising events might include a live band, catered dinner, big-name speaker, an expensive marketing campaign to promote the event, and parting gifts for attendees.<sup>168</sup> These types of events are costly, which means less money goes to the beneficiary. Since

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<sup>166</sup> Cynthia M. Gibson, “Beyond Fundraising: What does it mean to build a culture of philanthropy,” *Trek Advancement*, 2013, [https://www.haasjr.org/sites/default/files/resources/Haas\\_CultureofPhilanthropy\\_F1\\_0.pdf](https://www.haasjr.org/sites/default/files/resources/Haas_CultureofPhilanthropy_F1_0.pdf), 15.

<sup>167</sup> Feldmann et. al.

<sup>168</sup> Many nonprofits hold traditional fundraising events. This website is an example of one gala planned for 2019. <https://seattleguildjdrf.org/dream-gala>.



millennials are more interested in giving to a cause or a person than an organization, they are wary of high-cost events.<sup>169</sup> Millennials do however, want to attend events.<sup>170</sup> In a study done by Eventbrite, three-quarters of millennials said that they prefer experiences over things, and four out of five said that attending live events made them “feel more connected to other people, the community, and the world.”<sup>171</sup> In fact, 75 percent of millennials believe that participating in an event makes more impact than taking action online.<sup>172</sup> For example, nearly half of millennials (48%) say that they attend events so that they “have something to share on their social media channels.”<sup>173</sup> Because of this, some nonprofits are creating events that include on-site photo opportunities, hashtags, and livestreaming opportunities.<sup>174</sup> In addition, because 53 percent of millennials are now parents,<sup>175</sup> some nonprofits are offering daytime, family-friendly fundraising events.<sup>176</sup> Millennials however, want to engage deeply with causes rather than simply attending events.

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<sup>169</sup> Feldmann et. al.

<sup>170</sup> “Millennials Report 2017,” *Eventbrite US Blog*, December 28, 2017. <https://www.eventbrite.com/1/millennialsreport-2017.pdf>.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> “Instagram Photo Booth | LIVE Hashtag Printer,” <https://tipbooth.com/live-hashtag-printer/>.

<sup>175</sup> “Millennials Report 2017,” 13.

<sup>176</sup> Jeff Fromm, “The Key To Getting Millennials To Donate: Create Something They Can Experience,” *Forbes Magazine*, March 28, 2016, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jefffromm/2015/11/11/the-key-to-getting-millennials-to-donate-create-something-they-can-experience/#87804f33cebf>.

Nonprofits face significant hurdles to move millennial hearts and minds toward generous giving if they want to continue their work going forward. While US millennials have access to enough money to address some of the major social justice issues in the world,<sup>177</sup> not every millennial is a generous or consistent giver. There are ways to strengthen philanthropic engagement and increase giving by fostering human connection. Volunteering is a prime example of something that some charities are offering to increase millennial engagement and giving.<sup>178</sup> One Harris Study<sup>179</sup> showed that “Americans who volunteered gave 11 times as much money to charity in a year as those who did not volunteer.”<sup>180</sup> Volunteering often personalizes the contribution. When givers and recipients become involved or familiar with each other, the commitment flourishes and philanthropic gifts increase.<sup>181</sup>

Volunteerism is another way that some nonprofits engage millennial prospects in their work in order to affirm impact, build relationship, and later procure donations.<sup>182</sup> A

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<sup>177</sup> Jeff Fromm, Joe Cardador, and Angie Read, “The Power of Gen Z Influence: Marketing to Gen Z,” *Millennial Marketing*, January 2018, [www.millennialmarketing.com/research-paper/the-power-of-gen-z-influence/](http://www.millennialmarketing.com/research-paper/the-power-of-gen-z-influence/).

<sup>178</sup> Eniko Eva Baranyi, “Volunteerism and Charitable Giving among the Millennial Generation: How to Attract and Retain Millennials” (MPA Thesis, Kennesaw State University, Georgia, 2011), 22.

<sup>179</sup> Harris Insights and Analytics is an organization that has been doing market research since 1963.

<sup>180</sup> “Statistics on US Generosity,” *The Almanac*, 2016, <https://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/almanac/statistics/u.s.-generosity>, 1128.

<sup>181</sup> Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic, 144.

<sup>182</sup> Daniel C. Batson, “Self-Report Ratings of Empathic Emotion,” in *Empathy and Its Development*, eds. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 357.

recent study by researchers Dunham and Company showed that US millennials volunteer 40 hours a year on average, compared to Generation X at 34 hours, and baby boomers the most at 41 hours per year.<sup>183</sup> Volunteer experiences can provide face-to-face engagement with beneficiaries.<sup>184</sup> One example is the nonprofit Crossing Points Art in New York, which offers local artists an opportunity to teach art classes to survivors of human trafficking.<sup>185</sup> PRANA, Permanent Residents and Naturalized Americans, is another nonprofit offering volunteer opportunities which connect volunteers directly with beneficiaries. PRANA fights against unjust immigration laws in the US and educates communities on cultural differences.<sup>186</sup> Volunteers with this organization “raise awareness about social justice issues for immigrants, and educate communities about cultural diversity, aiming to abolish immigration stereotypes.”<sup>187</sup> Some nonprofits however, do not provide volunteer opportunities. In the case of World Vision’s work outside the US, for example, volunteerism goes against their community-based model where the recipients do the work in the community, such as digging their own wells, to

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<sup>183</sup> Rick Dunham, *Millennial Donors: They’re Not Who You Think they Are* (Plano, TX: Dunham Books, 2017), 8.

<sup>184</sup> “Crossing Point Arts,” 2018, [www.crossingpointarts.org/](http://www.crossingpointarts.org/)

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> PRANA is a consortium which defends immigrants in the courtroom, empowers them to defend themselves with policy, and works to destroy stigmas in communities. <https://prana-c.org>.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

elicit a sense of ownership.<sup>188</sup> Other nonprofits do not have the staffing capacities to offer volunteer experiences.

Some nonprofits are exploring ways to engage millennials in their work through websites and social media. There is evidence to support the usefulness of digital tools.<sup>189</sup> For example, millennials have a much higher propensity to respond financially to something they see on a charity website (36% versus 14% for Generation X and 11% for boomers).<sup>190</sup> However, millennials are more likely than other generations to access those digital platforms via their mobile phones versus computers.<sup>191</sup> Millennials state that they are not afraid to ask people in their sphere of influence for money if they feel strongly about the cause.<sup>192</sup> More than half said that they would respond to a direct mail request from a charity, but they would use the contact information on the paper document to donate using the charity's website.<sup>193</sup> This is divergent from previous generations who would mail in the gift using the enclosed envelope. Also, the majority of millennials surveyed (81%) believe that it is appropriate to receive a phone call from a charity at least

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<sup>188</sup> World Vision is a Christian relief and development organization which serves people living in extreme poverty in third-world countries. Their model seeks to help empower members of the community to take ownership of the poverty-related issues which impact their lives so that they own the solutions to those issues and the solutions will be sustainable for generations.

<sup>189</sup> Katherine Taken Smith, "Digital Marketing Strategies That Millennials Find Appealing, Motivating, or Just Annoying," *SSRN Electronic Journal* 19, no. 6 (2011): 492, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1692443>.

<sup>190</sup> Dunham, 19.

<sup>191</sup> Kathryn Zickuhr, "Generations and Their Gadgets," *Pew Research Center*, February 3, 2011, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/02/03/generations-and-their-gadgets/>.

<sup>192</sup> Dunham, 19.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

once a year and 38 percent said that a monthly call was acceptable.<sup>194</sup> Lastly, gift matching opportunities are appealing to millennials.<sup>195</sup> This generation is motivated by financial multipliers.<sup>196</sup> While it is not surprising that millennials give online (primarily on their mobile phones), charities might not have predicted that they would like to receive a phone call or a piece of snail mail. In spite of some measurable millennial engagement, non-profits still perceive that they need to more effectively engage with millennials to develop an enduring future donor pool.<sup>197</sup>

### Summary

In section one we examined the challenges that the nonprofit world is facing in engaging the next generation of donors, the millennials. We also looked at the philosophy, theology and spirituality of giving, including biblical teaching, which instructs followers to help people in need. Section two examined some of the general characteristics and history of US philanthropy and touched on the science of giving including research which demonstrates that people feel more when they connect with someone personally, and that increased empathy increases giving. Lastly, section two considered how current and historical approaches to philanthropy work in some

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid. 29.

<sup>195</sup> Jeff Fromm, "Millennials Are Influencing The Future Of Philanthropy," *Forbes Magazine*, February 27, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jefffromm/2017/02/25/millennials-are-influencing-the-future-of-philanthropy/#50de0b0f78f9>

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Bradley Depew, "Learn How Millennials Have Blown Up Traditional Charitable Giving," *The Balance Small Business*, March 5, 2018, <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/how-millennials-have-changed-charitable-giving-2501900>.

instances, and don't work in others. In section three we will examine how nonprofits can better engage with millennials through building on the cultural and behavioral factors, which we have begun to identify as essential to this generation. Nonprofits are beginning to develop these opportunities, but it isn't enough. In the next section we will explore more meaningful ways to engage millennials.

### SECTION 3:

#### EMPATHY: THE KEY TO NONPROFIT MILLENNIAL ENGAGEMENT

##### **Introduction**

“If every millennial donated just one percent of his or her income to a charitable organization each year, \$16,000,000,000 will be raised.”<sup>198</sup> According to economist Jeffrey Sachs, it would take \$175 billion dollars to end extreme poverty worldwide.<sup>199</sup> This means that millennials, if they donated one percent of their income each year, could end extreme poverty in 10.9 years. Millennials have the power to change the world for good. Nonprofits need to harness that power. They need to develop better strategies to engage millennials in long-term committed giving. Section One explained that millennials’ worldviews are unique as compared to previous generations, so nonprofits cannot continue to do what they have been doing and expect this generation to respond.<sup>200</sup> Nonprofits wrongly assume that since millennials are digitally savvy, these (digital) methods of engagement alone will resonate with millennials and elicit a consistent financial response. The research in this dissertation tells a different story.

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<sup>198</sup> Jane Stein, “Will Millennials Be Our Next Generation of Philanthropists?” *The Hampton Roads Business Journal*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/millennials-our-next-great-generation-philanthropists-stein-m-b-a-/>.

<sup>199</sup> Mark Anielski, “The Real Cost of Eliminating Poverty in 2016 - The Economics of Happiness,” *Anielski Management Inc.*, December 6, 2016, <http://www.anielski.com/real-cost-eliminating-poverty/>.

<sup>200</sup> Dates vary slightly depending on the source. The Pew Research Center lists date ranges as: Baby Boomers, 1946-1964; Generation X, 1965-1980.

Section One reveals that millennials are untrusting of organizations,<sup>201</sup> highly educated, and social-justice oriented.<sup>202</sup> In fact, their values are so important to them that they are willing to take a pay-cut to work at an organization with similar values as their own.<sup>203</sup> They appreciate forthright communication<sup>204</sup> and will share what they learn with their community. They are also deep-thinking and interested in spiritual and personal reflection.<sup>205</sup> Research from Section One reveals that relationships with older mentors who invest in their lives and spiritual growth “can profoundly affect the life course of a millennial.”<sup>206</sup> Section Two affirms this and takes it one step further with research that demonstrates that spirituality plays a role in giving.<sup>207</sup> This is critical, because spiritual formation is the place where one’s behaviors, feelings, and thoughts meet.<sup>208</sup> In other words, as one becomes spiritually formed their behavior changes. Section Two also

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<sup>201</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 5.

<sup>202</sup> Ryan Rudominer, “Corporate Social Responsibility Matters: Ignore Millennials at Your Peril,” *The Huffington Post*, December 7, 2017, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-rudominer/corporate-social-responsi\\_9\\_b\\_9155670.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-rudominer/corporate-social-responsi_9_b_9155670.html).

<sup>203</sup> *Making Space for Millennials*, 55.

<sup>204</sup> Walls. In Marketing, a “channel” is the activities, people and organizations which transfer goods or services from production to consumption. It is the way in which products and services get to the consumer. A Channel Advisor is a marketing role which oversees the channel.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 91

<sup>206</sup> Anderson, 36.

<sup>207</sup> Schervish, 83.

<sup>208</sup> Face to face lecture, MaryKate Morse, definition of Spiritual Formation.



demonstrates that spiritual formation can take place through serving and mentoring relationships and that those relationships can increase empathy.<sup>209</sup>

According to social science researchers Fritz and Singer, people are more likely to give to an “identifiable person” rather than a group of people in need<sup>210</sup> and people feel more empathetic when they make a connection with someone personally.<sup>211</sup>

Associational relationships increase giving.<sup>212</sup> We know also from Section Two that when it comes to nonprofit millennial engagement, this generation prefers experiences over things.<sup>213</sup>

Section Three will explore the importance of empathy and how increased empathy increases giving.<sup>214</sup> Thus, in order to assess the value of empathy in attracting and consistently engaging US millennials in nonprofit giving, Section Three will explore the research which demonstrates that when empathy increases, giving increases. The empathic response is discussed: what it looks like and some of the challenges nonprofits face in facilitating opportunities for empathic experiences. Finally, three solutions are proposed: Intergenerational Philanthropic Mentoring and Reverse Mentoring, Volunteer and Service Learning, and Perspective-Taking through Conversation and Story-Sharing.

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<sup>209</sup> Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic, 144.

<sup>210</sup> Fritz.

<sup>211</sup> Singer, 46.

<sup>212</sup> Schervish, 84.

<sup>213</sup> “Millennials Report 2017,” 12.

<sup>214</sup> Kim and Kou, 313.

All three proposed solutions involve authentic and unfiltered associational relationships, which will provide opportunities for millennials to experience empathy, thus increasing committed giving to nonprofits.

### **Empathy and Giving**

Millennials, though they feel a desire to be socially responsible, worry that their donations will not make an impact.<sup>215</sup> They cannot tangibly see the connection between their gift and the nonprofit beneficiary. When nonprofits facilitate opportunities for millennials to experience empathy for people in need (beneficiaries), this generation is more likely to trust and financially support the nonprofit serving those people. This disconnect could impact the results of nonprofit funding appeals. This contention is based on research that shows that certain types of empathy, especially those that involve prosocial behavior, increase charitable giving.<sup>216</sup> Social science professors Kim and Kou state that empirical research employing multiple methods such as field studies, interviews, laboratory experiments, historical analysis, and personal reflections showed that empathy is one of the most important factors identified as a motive for giving.<sup>217</sup> Another study conducted by Bekkers revealed that generosity rose when empathy

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<sup>215</sup> Feldmann *et. al.*, 15.

<sup>216</sup> Kim and Kou, 313.

<sup>217</sup> Debra J. Mesch, Melissa S. Brown, Zachary I. Moore, and Amir Daniel Hayat, "Gender differences in charitable giving," *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 16 (2011): 343, <https://doi-org/10.1002/nvsm.432>.

increased.<sup>218</sup> This is corroborated by psychological, meta-analytic evidence which demonstrates that empathetic traits and empathetic states can predict positive giving behaviors.<sup>219</sup> Additionally, research conducted by social neuroscientists Tusche, Bockler, Trautwein, and Singer, collected in random order using a continuous rating scale, demonstrated that “empathy and perspective taking for beneficiaries of the charities, are associated with increased levels of generous behavior.”<sup>220</sup> Further, empathetic concern, when people are in an experimental setting, positively impacts charitable giving.<sup>221</sup> In other words, when a person has a new and different empathetic experience with a charity, they increase their giving. This aligns with the millennial desire for experiences over “things.”<sup>222</sup>

### **Empathy: Definitions and Descriptions**

Ask a scientist, psychologist, business leader, or pastor for the definition of the word empathy, and one is likely to get a variety of responses. In one comparative study

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<sup>218</sup> René Bekkers, “Participation in voluntary associations: Relations with resources, personality, and political values,” *Political Psychology* 26, no. 3 (2005): 447. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3792605>.

<sup>219</sup> Nancy Eisenberg and Paul A. Miller, “The relation of empathy to prosocial and related behaviors,” *Psychological Bulletin* 101, no. 1 (1987): 91, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.101.1.91>. Also see, Olga M. Klimecki, Sarah V. Mayer, Aiste Jusyte, Jonathan Scheeff, and Michael Schöenberg, “Empathy Promotes Altruistic Behavior in Economic Interactions,” *Scientific Reports* 6, no. 1 (2016): 1.

<sup>220</sup> Vanessa Era, Martina Fusaro, and Selene Gallo, “Commentary: Decoding the Charitable Brain: Empathy, Perspective Taking, and Attention Shifts Differentially Predict Altruistic Giving,” *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience* 11 (2017): 2, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnbeh.2017.00110>.

<sup>221</sup> Jorge A. Barraza and Paul J. Zak, “Empathy toward strangers triggers Oxytocin release and subsequent generosity,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1167, no. 1 (2009): 187, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-6632.2009.04504.x>.

<sup>222</sup> “Millennial Report 2017,” 12.

on the measurement of empathy, researchers defined empathy as “infeeling,” from the Greek word *empathia*, implying “...an active appreciation of another’s feeling experience, a sort of imaginative sensitivity.”<sup>223</sup> Helen Ashton, in her Ph.D. dissertation on the measurement of empathy, differentiates between empathy (feeling what another is feeling), sympathy (wanting to help), insight (a person views himself as the others do), and projection (the opposite of empathy – one projects his or her own thoughts or feelings onto the other person).<sup>224</sup> This highlights that empathy is unique, different than sympathy, insight, or projection, each of which have different components and elicit different responses.

Researcher Roman Krznaric, in his book *Empathy: Why it Matters and How to Get it*, states that some social scientists believe that empathic response or lack thereof is based solely on brain science (the cognitive aspect or neurobiology). Others believe that it relates more to emotion and feelings (the affect aspect or psychology) And still others believe it is a combination of the two.<sup>225</sup> There are researchers who believe that empathy is something we all possess but it simply needs to be developed over time as we mature.<sup>226</sup> Karen Randall states, “Research indicates that empathy is considered an innate emotional skill that is affected through development of maturation of cognitive capacity

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<sup>223</sup> Helen S. Astin, “A Comparative Study of the Situational and Predictive Approaches to the Measurement of Empathy” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1957), 1.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>225</sup> Roman Krznaric, *Empathy: Why It Matters, and How to Get It* (London, UK: Rider Books, 2015), 11.

<sup>226</sup> Karin Randall, “The Role That Spirituality Plays in the Development of Empathy and Interdependence” (MA thesis, Marylhurst University, Oregon, 2005), 34.

and our environmental influences.”<sup>227</sup> Others believe it is a skill that can be learned.<sup>228</sup> Still another definition that demonstrates the complexities says, “In its most basic form, empathy is feeling and understanding the emotions and experiences of others. Although seemingly straightforward, this definition is full of complications. Feeling something and understanding what it means are different experiences.”<sup>229</sup> If empathy is an understanding of how someone else feels, one might wonder then, if it is really possible to step into another person’s shoes, since each person is unique, with a specific history, experiences, and culture. In considering descriptions of empathy, some studies focus on whether empathy is something that varies depending on the situation, or whether it is a trait one possesses.

One might speculate that people use the same mechanisms to cognitively understand others as we do to understand ourselves. Some researchers believe that “empathy is quite generally the term of choice for the experience of another consciousness.”<sup>230</sup> In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*, researchers Decety and Ickes explore three alternative definitions for empathy. The first is a psychological exploration and understanding of another person: “Empathy is knowing another person’s internal

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Sayantani Dasgupta and Rita Charon, “Personal Illness Narratives: Using Reflective Writing to Teach Empathy,” *Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges* 79, no. 4 (April 2004): 355, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15044169/>.

<sup>229</sup> Elizabeth A. Segal, Karen E. Gerdes, and Cynthia A. Lietz, *Assessing Empathy* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2017), 68.

<sup>230</sup> Dan Zahavi, *Self and Other: Exploring Subjectivity, Empathy, and Shame* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), 125.

state, including his or her thoughts and feelings.”<sup>231</sup> This type of empathy can come from one’s personal experience, or more commonly, because one is already familiar with the person they are empathizing with. The second is more cognitive or neurobiological in nature, often called *mimicry*: “Empathy is adopting the posture or matching the neural responses of an observed other.”<sup>232</sup> This includes matching the facial expressions of another person and/or mimicking body position. Some science suggests that this second definition is an intentionally manipulative action. Decety and Ickes argue that mimicry might not be “reactive and automatic.”<sup>233</sup> Their evidence demonstrates that “imitation is an active, goal-directed process even in infants. And in adults, mimicry often serves a higher-order communicative function.”<sup>234</sup> In other words, the parent for example, might show the child how (the child) feels in order to communicate support.<sup>235</sup> This might take place in the form of a facial expression. Last, in Decety and Ickes’ third definition of empathy, one comes to feel what the other person is feeling. In this third scenario, in order to determine if empathy has occurred, the psychological response of the person experiencing empathy would need to essentially match the depth of feeling of the person they are empathizing with: “Empathy is an observer’s reacting emotionally because he

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<sup>231</sup> Jean Decety and William Ickes, *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy* (London, UK: MIT Press: 2011), 5.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

perceives that another is experiencing or is about to experience an emotion.”<sup>236</sup> If one is experiencing empathy toward another person, *emotional reciprocity* can occur.<sup>237</sup> In this process, an individual experiences distress as they feel another person’s emotions. In other words, the distressed person’s emotions arouse distress in the person offering empathy. This can also be referred to as limbic resonance where two people can share deep emotional states, which arises from the limbic system in the brain.<sup>238</sup>

To be clear, empathy is not the same as sympathy. Whereas sympathy is a feeling of pity for another person, empathy explores what it would feel like to be the other person.<sup>239</sup> Sympathy does not seek to understand the other person’s perspective, rather “sympathy typically refers to an emotional response that is not shared.”<sup>240</sup> In other words, “I feel badly for you, but I don’t personally feel badly.” If one does not feel badly, they might be less likely to respond. In contrast, if one empathizes with another person’s situation, relationships can be formed through shared experience. In fact, empathy is critical in cultivating healthy communities of all kinds.<sup>241</sup> In *Assessing Empathy*, the authors contend that empathy is “vital to all human interactions,”<sup>242</sup> and that it is critical

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<sup>236</sup> Michael Douglas Murray, “Empathy and Injustice,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, 1969), 1.

<sup>237</sup> Gerben A. Van Kleef, Christopher Oveis, Ilmo van der Löwe, Aleksandr Luokogan, Jennifer Goetz, and Dacher Keltner, “Power, Distress, and Compassion,” *Psychological Science* 19, no. 12 (2008): 1315.

<sup>238</sup> Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon, *A General Theory of Love* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2001), 227.

<sup>239</sup> Astin, 2.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>241</sup> Segal et. al., 49.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

to society because it binds communities together, helping them to be aware of one another's needs so that they can care for each other. As we engage with individual people in need, whether in our own community, a community of like-minded philanthropists or volunteers, or from another part of the world, we begin to experience our alikeness as human beings. As we spend time together, we become aware of the other's feelings and needs, which allows us then (if we desire) to care for that person or others like them. This experience can build relationship, humanity, and community. This is how lives can be changed, both the lives of the millennial who is serving and giving, and the lives of those being served.

For the purposes of this dissertation I will be using the following definition for the word *empathy*. "Empathy is the art of stepping imaginatively into the shoes of another person, understanding their feelings and perspectives, and using that understanding to guide your actions."<sup>243</sup> This definition comes closest to accepted definitions of empathy<sup>244</sup> as it includes both feeling (affect) and thinking (cognition) and then includes a response (using that information to guide one's actions). I chose this definition because the goal is not only to elicit an empathetic feeling or understanding toward the people that the nonprofit serves, but then to have the millennial participant actually respond to that empathetic feeling or understanding. In order to assess whether it is possible to facilitate experiences that elicit empathy in millennials, it is important to explore some of the key

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<sup>243</sup> Roman Krznaric, *Empathy: Why It Matters, and How to Get It* (London, UK: Rider Books, 2015), 11.

<sup>244</sup> Martin L. Hoffman, "Empathy and Prosocial Behavior," in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldmann Barrett (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2008), 440.



components of empathy, and whether those components could be used to build empathic bridges.

### **Components, Conditions, and Implications**

Knowing what another person is thinking or feeling can be referred to as empathic accuracy or cognitive empathy. Shared physiology is simply feeling (which is not actually simple at all) what another person is feeling, although some researchers refer to this as sympathy.<sup>245</sup> What we call, colloquially, “walking in someone else’s shoes,” scientists refer to as “cognitive empathy, role-taking, or simulation.”<sup>246</sup> In contrast, the process of projecting oneself (mentally) into another person’s situation can be called “aesthetic empathy.”<sup>247</sup> Researchers also use the phrase “emotional contagion” when they refer to catching another person’s distress.<sup>248</sup> All of these descriptions feature the process whereby “one person can come to know the internal state of another and can be motivated to respond with sensitive care.”<sup>249</sup> This is healthy empathy, in which the person is able to focus on the other person’s experience, versus imagining oneself in the other person’s situation or “other-oriented perspective-taking.”<sup>250</sup> This is a way to

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<sup>245</sup> Segal, Gerdes, and Lietz, *Assessing Empathy*, 89.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 84.

connect with the other person through their experience but maintain one's own identity or self-other differentiation.

Social empathy applies to the experience of empathy in community. In order to comprehend the experiences of people, or groups of people, especially when they are different from our own, we need to consider the cultural and historical events that shaped that person or group.<sup>251</sup> As stated previously, many scientists agree that humans possess an innate capacity to empathize. Even though they possess it, people may not use this ability. In some instances, people are impacted by another person's internal state automatically, and at times they are not even aware that they are reacting.

Motivation plays a role in whether one engages, or disengages, empathically. "At least three phenomena—suffering, material costs, and interference with competition—motivate people to *avoid* empathy,"<sup>252</sup> Experiencing emotional pain when exposed to a hurting person (suffering), having to give of one's personal finances (material costs), and conflicting desires (interference with competition) can cause a person to avoid empathy. Conversely, affiliation (a feeling of connection to the hurting person), positive affect (an affirmative feeling or state of mind), and social desirability (collective or community motivation) tend to motivate people to approach others with empathy.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 528.

<sup>252</sup> Jamil Zaki, "Empathy: A Motivated Account," *Psychological Bulletin* 140, no. 6 (2014): 1608, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037679>.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 1612.

While scientists over the years have worked through the cognitive and biological implications and properties of empathy, philosophers developed ideas about empathy as well. Philosopher Vischer (1807 – 1887), studied the process of contemplating a piece of artwork “to the point of projecting oneself into it.”<sup>254</sup> Philosophers later applied this concept to relationships between human beings but they used different terms. For example, rather than using the word “empathy,” they wrote about the concept of “centrality of inter-subjective, person-to-person relationships in meaningful life.”<sup>255</sup> Martin Buber (1878 – 1965) was a philosopher known for studying the spiritual connections that one can have with another person. He referred to this as the “I-Thou” relationship, as opposed to an “I-It” relationship.<sup>256</sup> In other words, one can perceive another person’s suffering as an object or thing (I, it), detached from themselves, or they can view the other person as spiritually connected to themselves as a human being (I, Thou).

The study of empathy underwent a significant shift in 2000, with Martin Seligman’s study of “positive psychology.”<sup>257</sup> Prior to Seligman, psychologists viewed empathy as a tool to address mental illness, but Seligman viewed empathy as “an end in

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<sup>254</sup> Katharina Manassis, *Developing Empathy* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 6.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Martin Buber, and Ronald Gregor Smith, *I And Thou* (New York, NY: Scribner Classics, 2000), 56.

<sup>257</sup> Manassis, 7.

itself.”<sup>258</sup> In other words, rather than empathy being a diagnostic tool for mental illness, Seligman believed that one could use empathy to achieve the goal of a satisfactory life.<sup>259</sup> In his research he references a longitudinal study of Harvard students done by another researcher, which demonstrates that strong healthy relationships are an important part of “happy living” and that empathy is an “important aspect of healthy relationships.”<sup>260</sup> In a healthy family, children are first taught to have concern for their immediate family. Then as they become young teens, that view should extend out to a concern for a “common humanity and common needs.”<sup>261</sup> As young people move into their late teens, healthy young adults begin to experience a sense of empathy toward global humanity and they can begin to see themselves as global citizens.

To reiterate, the definition of empathy includes feeling (affect), thinking (cognition), and action. Healthy millennials care. They see themselves as global citizens (affect), they are well educated and have access to information (thinking) and they are extremely cause-driven (action), all three necessary ingredients needed to experience empathy. Nonprofits need to tap into this. They need to find ways to foster empathy in millennials because increased empathy increases giving.<sup>262</sup> In order to help nonprofits

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Christine M. Bachen, Pedro F. Hernández-Ramos, Chad Raphael, “Simulating REAL LIVES: Promoting Global Empathy and Interest in Learning Through Simulation Games,” *Simulation & Gaming*, January 2012, 439, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1046878111432108>.

<sup>262</sup> Kim and Kou, 313.

achieve their goal of helping people in need, nonprofits need to consider how to generate an empathetic response in which the millennial engages at a deeper level. Just as there are ingredients necessary to experience empathy, it is also important to examine the things that would cause someone not to experience empathy.<sup>263</sup>

### **Lack of Empathic Response**

Whoever battles with monsters had better see  
that it does not turn him into a monster.  
And if you gaze long into an abyss,  
the abyss will gaze back into you.  
— Nietzsche

A variety of factors can lead to a lack of empathic response. One component to consider is that what matters to us, is directly related to who we are. One's identity is partly choice, partly social construction, and partly neuroscience based on both biology and early development.<sup>264</sup> One might fail to respond empathically either because they do not care about the issue at hand, their own culture, or how they were raised, or because they simply are not wired to do so.<sup>265</sup> In addition, one might strategically and intentionally inhibit empathy in order to stave off responding for the wrong reasons, such as a feeling of guilt or social pressure.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Decety and Ickes, 153.

<sup>264</sup> Zahavi, 188.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Murray, 41.

Religiosity can also impact one's empathic response to a person in need based on the beliefs and expectations of their faith tradition or church. Some people feel they must adhere explicitly to their church's dogmas, which can close them off from or limit tolerance to giving or serving outside the church. As Randall observes, "Suppression and individual consciousness can be associated with people who adhere strictly to religiosity."<sup>267</sup> These individuals, who may not respond empathically to anything outside their own religion's practices, may be motivated by a desire for order, aversion to ambiguity, or a need for unwavering knowledge.<sup>268</sup> They may prefer predictability, be close-minded (prefer that no one disagrees with them), and have a preference for decisiveness and closure.<sup>269</sup>

Although there are many social or community-related reasons why one might not respond empathetically, this is also influenced by a person's learned empathic skills and abilities. Some research shows that a lack of empathy is directly correlated to a failure or inability to truly listen.<sup>270</sup> This can be associated with a person's level of emotional intelligence. It is not enough to simply be in the presence of someone who is suffering, to nod one's head, even to repeat back what the hurting person has shared.<sup>271</sup> These are not

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<sup>267</sup> Randall, 6-7.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>270</sup> Daniel Goleman, Annie McKee, and Adam Waytz, *Emotional Intelligence: Empathy* (Brighton, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2017), 33.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

listening skills. In order to evidence hearing, the listener must be able to ask questions related to the hurting person's experience.<sup>272</sup>

One Harvard study on empathy yielded some surprising results. Participants who had previously experienced life challenges, such as a divorce or unemployment, were more judgmental and demonstrated less empathy toward people experiencing the same life challenges.<sup>273</sup> In contrast, participants who had been bullied in the past demonstrated more empathy toward a teenager coping with bullying.<sup>274</sup> One could interpret this result as a contrast between empathizing with a child versus an adult, or it could reflect the participants' attitude that, since they had overcome the divorce or unemployment, the subject should also be able to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and do the same. One contrasting view might be that the person has not sufficiently resolved or healed their own experience, and they have strong psychological defense mechanisms in place, including blaming and judging, in order to prevent themselves from experiencing their own pain.<sup>275</sup>

Social power also impacts empathic response. In another study, "participants with a higher sense of power experienced less distress and less compassion and exhibited greater autonomic emotion regulation when confronted with another participant's

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<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 32-33.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 54-55.

<sup>275</sup> Leslie Becker-Phelps, "Escaping the Grip of Emotional Pain," *Psychology Today*, January 14, 2014, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/making-change/201301/escaping-the-grip-emotional-pain>.

suffering.”<sup>276</sup> When the data was analyzed, findings showed that the lack of response was due to the degree of social power rather than a lack of emotional intelligence. Social power is the feeling that one has the ability to control or influence other people’s behavior. In this instance, people with more social power or privilege experience less empathy towards others.

Ethnocentrism<sup>277</sup> in an intercultural context could also cause an “inability to truly recognize and empathize with the other.”<sup>278</sup> Some people, whether for religious, cultural, racial, or other reasons might simply believe that other people’s cultural practices are incorrect. For example, it is not uncommon for those in the United States to believe that the poor in third-world countries have created or could fix their own poverty-related issues themselves.<sup>279</sup> Dr. Julie Dodge, a professor at Concordia University who specializes in cultural diversity and cultural competence as it relates to delivering social and faith based services, argues that, “cultural humility is a prerequisite for intercultural work.”<sup>280</sup> Cultural humility is defined as “a process of self-reflection and discovery in

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<sup>276</sup> Van Kleef, et al., 1315.

<sup>277</sup> Ethnocentrism is the evaluation of other cultures according to preconceptions originating in the standards and customs of one's own culture.

<sup>278</sup> Julie A Dodge, “But I Wouldn’t Do That: Teaching Cultural Empathy,” (DMin diss., George Fox University, Oregon, 2016), 13.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 14.



order to build honest and trustworthy relationships.”<sup>281</sup> This is important because relationships are an integral part of empathy.

A recent study showed that empathy has declined significantly (from 48% down to 34%) over the last thirty years.<sup>282</sup> This may be due, in part, to the emergence of the digital age where millennials in particular spend more time on their devices and less time in human contact. Turkle observes that when people “begin to shut off their feelings and quit trying to interact with others ... their ability to empathize is diminished as they learn to ignore others.”<sup>283</sup> The good news is that scientists believe that we are generally wired neurologically to empathize. In one study, young people significantly increased their ability to identify the feelings of others after only five days in a summer camp where no digital devices were allowed.<sup>284</sup> If empathy is accessible to everyone, given the right set of circumstances, one might wonder what causes someone to have an empathetic response.

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<sup>281</sup> Katherine A. Yeager and Susan Bauer-Wu, “Cultural Humility: Essential Foundation for Clinical Researchers,” *Advances in Pediatrics*, August 12, 2013, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3834043/>.

<sup>282</sup> Karina Schumann, Jamil Zaki, and Carol S. Dweck, “Addressing the Empathy Deficit: Beliefs about the Malleability of Empathy Predict Effortful Responses When Empathy Is Challenging,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 107, no. 3 (2014): 475, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036738>.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>284</sup> Lauren Cassani Davis, “The Flight from Conversation: An Interview with Sherry Turkle,” *The Atlantic*, October 7, 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/10/reclaiming-conversation-sherry-turkle/409273/>

## Empathic Response

Schumann, Zaki, and Dweck conducted a pilot study of the empathy deficit, finding that the majority of participants were highly motivated to empathize with others, even when empathy was distressing.<sup>285</sup> They tested whether a person's empathetic mindset might be a predictor of how much empathetic energy they expend when confronted with an empathetic challenge. Using both cognitive and affective approaches, they found that a willingness to make an empathic effort was key, and that people modulate the amount of empathy they feel based on how much effort they choose to exert.<sup>286</sup> For example, when participants spent more time with the person in need, asking them questions about themselves, and engaging with the person, they began to share the person's "physiological or affective states."<sup>287</sup> They stepped (metaphorically) into the other person's shoes.<sup>288</sup> Participants who believed that empathy could be learned or developed tended to make more of an empathic effort compared to participants who believed that empathy is biological and innate (you either have it or you don't).<sup>289</sup> This data reflects that one's beliefs about empathy can have a powerful effect on leveraging empathy.

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<sup>285</sup> Schumann, Zaki, and Dweck, 488.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid., 476.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid., 476-7. The idea that you either have empathy or you don't is related to Dweck's open/closed mindset research.

In addition to affect and choice, we know that part of our ability to respond empathically is based on neurology. Our brains have mirror neurons that respond to the behavior of others. People can physically influence one another, and this process is the basis for attachment.<sup>290</sup> For example, a baby might grin at his mother, which causes the mother's mirror neurons to mimic the pattern of the baby, resulting in the mother smiling back. According to Perry and Svalavitz, the child's and mother's neurons actually synchronize with one another, "with both sets of mirror neurons reflecting back each other's joy and sense of connectedness."<sup>291</sup> These social interactions between parent and child are the foundation for healthy social interactions as adults.<sup>292</sup> Healthy social interactions exist when one is aware of other people's feelings, beliefs, and intentions, which can lead to increased empathy for others. In addition, people who are highly empathic, tend to function more effectively in society.<sup>293</sup> Studies show that individuals are more likely to engage empathetically when they perceive that empathy is the norm socially and "when the person experiences a greater sense of affiliation or connection with the other."<sup>294</sup> Psychologists and philosophers today are interested in this type of pro-social consciousness: "what leads us to respond with sensitive care to another's

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<sup>290</sup> Bruce Duncan Perry and Maia Szalavitz, *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog: And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist's Notebook: What Traumatized Children Can Teach Us about Loss, Love, and Healing* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2017), 90.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>292</sup> Astin, 5.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Schumann, Zaki, and Dweck, 413.

suffering.”<sup>295</sup> They are not so much concerned with empathy itself (it’s form), but with empathy in action.

Affect, including the physical sensations happening in the body when a person encounters someone in need, can play a critical role in whether one experiences empathy toward the other person.<sup>296</sup> This can happen face-to-face, where the person in need is present, or in other contexts. Experiences, such as movies, training, or exhibits can direct one toward “particular kinds of forces and feelings.”<sup>297</sup> With the “Girl Rising” curriculum,<sup>298</sup> creator Karishma Desai was able to elicit an empathic response in millennials by providing a rich, emotional, contextual experience by sharing real stories of girls in need.<sup>299</sup> To do this, she explored how people’s “truths are constructed and made desirable.”<sup>300</sup> People’s truths can be impacted by their self-esteem. Another study showed that people with high self-esteem tend to be less pre-occupied with self and more interested in the wellbeing of others.<sup>301</sup> The millennial generation, while described by

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<sup>295</sup> Decety and Ickes, 4.

<sup>296</sup> Karishma Desai, “Teaching the Third World Girl: Girl Rising as a Precarious Curriculum of Empathy,” *Curriculum Inquiry* 46, no. 3 (2016): 249, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2016.1173510>.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> The Girl Rising curriculum divides the film Girl Rising into chapters to be viewed one at a time. After each chapter of the movie is viewed teachers lead students through the curriculum which help students better understand of issues around poverty. This includes how poverty impacts a girl’s ability to go to school, by educating students on some of the political, cultural, community, and economic issues tied to poverty.

<sup>299</sup> Desai, 240.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 254.

<sup>301</sup> Manassis, 3.

some as self-absorbed, exhibits high self-esteem and tends to be social-justice and cause oriented.<sup>302</sup> In addition, they are not afraid to speak up to get things done. Considering this, it is encouraging to see that yet another study showed that “what makes highly empathic people unusual is their desire and capacity to defy authority when empathic action calls for it.”<sup>303</sup> Millennials will speak up and respond if they feel empathetic. It is up to nonprofits to build a bridge that will help this generation cross the divide between apathy and empathy.

### **Crossing the Empathy Barrier with Millennials – The Future of Giving**

Although in the early 2000s, a gloomy picture developed as research on the millennial generation started appearing in books and journal articles, perspectives are beginning to change. Initially, millennials were said to be arrogant, narcissistic, lazy, self-absorbed, and entitled.<sup>304</sup> While some of this is true, a fuller picture of millennials is emerging as they age and mature. According to *Time Magazine*: “This could be our next Great Generation.”<sup>305</sup> Traits initially viewed as negatives are now seen as positives as this generation is confidently setting goals and challenging norms with an egalitarian

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<sup>302</sup> Michael Wilson and Leslie E. Gerber, “How Generational Theory Can Improve Teaching: Strategies for Working with the Millennials,” *Currents in Teaching and Learning* 1, no. 1 (2008): 38, ProQuest Central.

<sup>303</sup> Krznaric, 41.

<sup>304</sup> Stein.

<sup>305</sup> Josh Sanburn, “Millennials: The Next Greatest Generation?” *Time*, May 9, 2013, <http://nation.time.time.com/2013/05/09/millennials-the-next-greatest-generation/>.

leadership style in both the workplace and the philanthropy field.<sup>306</sup> However, some nonprofits are having trouble keeping up.

Millennials are throwing out the rules and doing things their way. The potential is enormous. By the year 2060, this emerging generation will inherit fifty-nine trillion dollars, almost half of which is projected to go to charitable causes.<sup>307</sup> One cannot overstate how important it is that nonprofits understand the millennial mindset as they become the next generation of philanthropists.

This generation is unique when it comes to giving. Prior to the 1990s, a traditional definition of a philanthropist held that they had a “love of humankind in the form of time, talent, and treasure.”<sup>308</sup> While those items—time, talent, and treasure—are important to millennials and are an integral part of their philanthropic endeavors, this generation also wants to socialize, engage their passions, and increase their expertise.<sup>309</sup> The world needs philanthropists now more than ever and this generation can lead the way by adding to the traditional definition. In addition to volunteering, using their talents, and donating large and small amounts of money, millennials also want to advocate for the oppressed, educate other people about their charity of choice, and more generally, leverage their

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<sup>306</sup> Myers and Sadaghiani.

<sup>307</sup> “The Impact Millennials Will Have on Philanthropy,” *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, podcast audio, February 9, 2018, <https://www.philanthropy.com/article/podcast-the-impact/242499>.

<sup>308</sup> Derrick Feldmann, “How Millennials Are Changing the Definition of ‘Philanthropy,’” *Case Foundation*, February 23, 2015, <https://casefoundation.org/blog/millennials-changing-definition-philanthropy/>.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

personal networks for good.<sup>310</sup> Gone are the days of marketers, businesses, churches, and nonprofits telling consumers or congregants what they want or need. This might continue to work for generation x, boomers, or the great generation<sup>311</sup> but the “command and control model is probably over” when it comes to millennials.<sup>312</sup> They are much too savvy for that. They want to work *with* organizations not *for* them.

Millennials now make up half of the workforce, but their work profiles vary greatly from those of previous generations. This generation wants work-life balance, flexible work schedules, and opportunities for relationships with different generations.<sup>313</sup> They want to work for organizations that are philanthropic and social-justice oriented.<sup>314</sup> Millennials are looking for inclusivity, transparency, and less corporate and hierarchical organizational structures. They want rich, meaningful engagement.<sup>315</sup> Nonprofits need to keep up, in part, by helping this generation tap into their own “inner experiences and not be limited to the tangible, the visible, the audible.”<sup>316</sup> They need to offer experiences

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> The Great Generation consists of those born before 1946, Baby Boomers 1946-1964, Generation X 1965-1984.

<sup>312</sup> Fiona Elsa Dent, and Mike Brent, *The Leader's Guide to Coaching and Mentoring: How to Use Soft Skills to Get Hard Results* (Harlow, UK: FT Publishing, 2015), 157-58.

<sup>313</sup> Paul Taylor, *The Next America: Boomers, Millennials, and the Looming Generational Showdown* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2015), vii.

<sup>314</sup> Michael Zimmerman, “Millennials in the Workforce: What They Want, and How to Manage Them,” *SmartCEO*, January 11, 2017, <http://smartceo.com/zimmerman-millennials-in-the-workforce-what-they-want-and-how-to-manage-them/>.

<sup>315</sup> Emily Davis, *Fundraising and the Next Generation: Tools for Engaging the Next Generation of Philanthropists* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 24-25.

<sup>316</sup> David Knowlton, and Kevin Jack Hagopian, eds., *From Entitlement to Engagement: Affirming Millennial Students' Egos in the Higher Education Classroom* (San Francisco, CA: Wiley 2013), 28.

which have the potential to be transformational for the millennial, not transactional.

Researchers have identified an “empathy-helping hypothesis” which proposes that people are more likely to “help those we care about and therefore empathize with.”<sup>317</sup> In other words, we need to connect with other human beings in order to care and respond, and we tend to care more for those we have had a personal connection with. This generation seeks to learn and think deeply. Organizations that can facilitate these types of experiences will find a willing audience in millennials.

Given all that we know about the millennial generation, and that prosocial behavior increases empathy, and increased empathy increases giving, I submit that in order to engage this generation in consistent nonprofit philanthropy, nonprofits need to facilitate opportunities for unlikely and unfiltered conversations. These (prosocial) conversations take place in the three proposed solutions:

1. Intergenerational Philanthropic Mentoring and Reverse Mentoring,
2. Volunteering and Service Learning, and
3. Perspective-Taking through Conversation and Story Sharing, including in-person and live digital experiences.

I suggest that these three prosocial activities will elicit and increase empathy and that those empathetic responses will lead to increased and consistent financial giving. In order for this to happen, nonprofits must also build financial response mechanisms into these three activities.

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<sup>317</sup> Daniel C. Batson, “Prosocial Motivation: Is It Ever Truly Altruistic?” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 20 (1987): 52, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60412-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60412-8).



### Proposed Solution Number One:

#### Intergenerational Philanthropic Mentoring and Reverse Mentoring

*What it is:*

**Philanthropic mentoring** is, either formally or informally, when a more experienced (and usually senior) person (philanthropist) with wisdom and experience, “...teaches, counsels, and helps a less experienced or less knowledgeable person to develop philanthropically and personally.”<sup>318</sup> **Reverse mentoring** involves a younger, or junior person acting as a mentor to an older or senior person in order to share their expertise.<sup>319</sup> **Intergenerational mentoring** is mentoring that pairs people of different generations together. The purpose of mentoring and reverse mentoring is intergenerational knowledge sharing where each generation learns from the other. There must be mutual trust for mentoring to have positive impact.<sup>320</sup> Mentoring is different from coaching in that mentoring, like the development of spirituality, evolves over a long time and can be less formal. Coaching is more structured and time-bound. For a millennial, coaching can feel more like the control and command model, which works for activities, but not necessarily for life-change. Over time, mentoring can help someone see

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<sup>318</sup> Teresa M. Moon, “Mentoring the Next Generation for Innovation in Today’s Organization,” *Journal of Strategic Leadership*, 5, no. 1 (2014): 27. <https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jsl/vol5iss1/fullvol5iss1.pdf#page=29>.

<sup>319</sup> Wendy Marcinkus Murphy, “Reverse Mentoring at Work: Fostering Cross Generational Learning and Developing Millennial Leaders,” *Human Resource Management*, 51, no. 4 (July–August 2012): 550, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/944d/06a237840b57e74a2c49e4818fe0f4c8203d.pdf>.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

things in a different way and help expand their horizons. Quality mentoring begins with listening.

The impact of quality mentoring is extensive. Even though there is a stereotype that millennials do not want to be mentored, in research done by Ashbridge Business School, 56 percent of college graduates said that they did want to be mentored.<sup>321</sup> Mentoring is quickly becoming an important tool both for millennials and boomers. This two-way dialogue is effective for sharing history, innovation, and strategies for business, personal life, spiritual life, and one's potential call to address social injustice.<sup>322</sup>

As baby boomers are coming to grips with getting older, millennials are looking for a roadmap into the adult world.<sup>323</sup> The two generations need each other. Boomers need help keeping up with a rapidly changing world and millennials need an experienced guide as they begin thinking about the type of impact they want to make. However, the gap between the two generations is wide; from the way that they vote, the composition of their families, and their ethnic and racial makeup, to their understanding of their gender roles.<sup>324</sup> Yet they are also each other's parents and children, "bound together in an intricate web of love, support, anxiety, resentment, and interdependence."<sup>325</sup> While Generation X comprises a portion of the millennial generation's parents, baby boomers

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<sup>321</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>322</sup> Davis, 29.

<sup>323</sup> Taylor, 17.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

make up the majority. This is due in part to the significant increase in birth rates from the early 1980s to the mid 1990s.<sup>326</sup> Close relationships and affection between millennials and their boomer parents is at a higher level than previous generations.<sup>327</sup> In the case of nonprofits, through a rich exchange of dialogue between older-generation philanthropists and millennials, there is an opportunity for millennials to see their role as the next generation of philanthropists who will address some of the world's toughest issues.

*How it Elicits Empathy:*

Research from Kim and Kou reveals that when empathy involves prosocial behavior<sup>328</sup> there is an increase in charitable giving.<sup>329</sup> Therefore, one goal is for nonprofits to increase empathy in millennials through activities that include prosocial behaviors. In the *Handbook of Social Psychology*, researcher Daniel Batson, explains that some prosocial behaviors include “a broad range of actions intended to benefit one or

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<sup>326</sup> “Live Births and Birth Rates by Year” Infoplease, Last modified 2011, <https://www.infoplease.com/us/births/live-births-and-birth-rates-year>.

<sup>327</sup> Vern L. Bengtson, “Beyond the Nuclear Family: The Increasing Importance of Multigenerational Bonds,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63, no. 1 (2001): 11.

<sup>328</sup> Prosocial behavior, is a voluntary behavior intended to benefit another. It is a [social behavior](#) that benefits other people or society as a whole and includes behaviors such as helping, sharing, donating, co-operating, and volunteering. This term was introduced by social scientists in the 1970's.

<sup>329</sup> Kim and Kou, 313.

more people other than oneself – behaviors such as helping, comforting, sharing and cooperation.”<sup>330</sup> Mentoring relationships can elicit all of these behaviors.<sup>331</sup>

According to research on social influence and neuroplasticity, there is evidence that the brain can experience “structural changes after mental training” including changes in the socio-emotional domains like altruism and compassion.<sup>332</sup> This study showed that empathy and altruism are trainable skills. Another study showed that empathy has to be developed “within a context and with another person.”<sup>333</sup> In this study, one participant described the sudden realization that she was experiencing the same feelings as her mentor.<sup>334</sup> Empathy that is built during the mentor/mentee relationship persuades each person to give power or “empathetic authority” to the other, based on the level of empathy generated.<sup>335</sup> These studies reinforce the idea that empathy can be increased through relationship and through training.<sup>336</sup> Mentoring increases empathy not only between mentor and mentee, but also for the beneficiary. This occurs as the more

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<sup>330</sup> Kendra Cherry, “The Basics of Prosocial Behavior,” *Verywell Mind*, June 21, 2017, <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-prosocial-behavior-2795479>

<sup>331</sup> Tammy D. Allen, “Mentoring Others: A Dispositional and Motivational Approach,” *NeuroImage*, February 11, 2003, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001879102000465>.

<sup>332</sup> Richard J. Davidson, and Bruce S. McEwen, “Social influences on neuroplasticity: stress and interventions to promote well-being,” *Nature Neuroscience*, 15 no. 5 (2012): 693. EBSCOHost Academic Search Premier.

<sup>333</sup> Gerard Egan, *The Skilled Helper* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2001), 83.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>335</sup> Michael Eraut, *Developing Professional Knowledge and Competence* (London, UK: Falmer Press, 1994), 27.

<sup>336</sup> Elaine Cox, “For Better, for Worse: The Matching Process in Formal Mentoring Schemes,” *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 13, no. 3 (2005): 411, doi:10.1080/13611260500177484.

experienced mentor has opportunities to share their feelings and wisdom broadly with the mentee.<sup>337</sup> This is true because empathy and altruism are trainable skills.<sup>338</sup>

Millennials understand that the boomer generation has more experience than they do and they are listening. This opens the door to knowledge and experience-sharing, exchanged cross-generationally.<sup>339</sup> By offering mentoring opportunities, nonprofits can give millennials a chance to not only learn from their mentors and share their own knowledge, but to develop empathy for the people that the nonprofit serves. Mentors can help their millennial mentees understand the feelings of those that the nonprofit serves and then guide them toward action.<sup>340</sup>

*Example:*

Nonprofits can engage millennials in intergenerational mentoring relationships through the establishment of a millennial Board of Directors. In this scenario each millennial board member is paired with a senior board member in a mentoring relationship. In this way, some boomer mentors are learning about oppression and injustice from their highly educated and digitally connected millennial mentees, while millennials learn about philanthropy from their senior mentors. Both millennials and boomers place a high premium on direct feedback and the sharing of experiences.<sup>341</sup> Most

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<sup>337</sup> Egan, 78.

<sup>338</sup> Davidson and McEwen, 693.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Segal, Gerdes, and Lietz, 56.

<sup>341</sup> Jessica McManus Warnell, *Engaging Millennials for Ethical Leadership: What Works for Young Professionals and Their Managers* (New York, NY: Business Expert Press, 2015), 85.

nonprofit board members are expected to be major donors to the organization with which they serve. This mentoring relationship is beneficial as the junior member learns about their mentor's giving behaviors and beliefs and also about the nonprofit's work. The senior member learns from the social and technology skills of the millennial and from their giving beliefs and behaviors (and by extension, the giving habits of the generation as a whole, which makes them a better board member). Some organizations such as Starbucks, with the addition of millennial Clara Shih, rather than creating a millennial Board of Directors, are inviting them onto their senior boards for diversity, mentoring, and reverse mentoring.<sup>342</sup> Nonprofits can do the same. This can open up funding opportunities where older members of the board provide the financial gift and the younger board members decide where they want the gifts to go.<sup>343</sup> By making these decisions alongside experienced board members millennials can learn that “new money for new programs does not help to meet the bottom line but new money to fund, improve and expand the proven areas of impact does.”<sup>344</sup>

*How to Facilitate it:*

It is imperative that in conjunction with this mentoring activity, the nonprofit establish giving mechanisms that are appropriate to their organization and that work for both generations. The goal is for these mentoring relationships to elicit empathy and empathy must result in action. Ultimately, the goal is to increase consistent nonprofit

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<sup>342</sup> Stein.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

giving, thus there must be a clear way, once the millennial is moved empathetically, for them to respond financially to the need. Remember that the millennial generation's preferred method of giving is their mobile phones and that they enjoy peer-to-peer fundraising. Nonprofits create the framework, including mentoring training and giving platforms, but must also leave room for personal growth and exploration that happens in the mentoring process. It is about the journey as much as the destination.

Mentoring opportunities will require thoughtful frameworks and training materials. Mentoring that focuses only on the destination and not the exploration of the questions for the journey, will not only hamper the benefit of the mentor/mentee experience but will also eventually damage the relationship. Materials that include suggestions for deep inquiry and active listening are critical.<sup>345</sup> An imperative task is for both the mentor and mentee to learn to ask good questions and listen well. A good question does not assume an answer.<sup>346</sup> A good question does not insert the asker's opinion.<sup>347</sup> The best questions encourage reflection and allow space for deep exploration. The challenge is to help different generations work together when the political and cultural gap between generations appears to be widening.<sup>348</sup> Boomer philanthropists can help empower millennials, who are interested in making the world a better place, to face some of the world's social justice issues. They can do this by instilling in them the

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<sup>345</sup> Dent and Brent, 52.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Taylor, vii.

confidence that it will take to create a more equitable world when, to this untrusting generation, the task might seem too great.<sup>349</sup> In order for this to be effective, boomers need to be authentic, transparent, and willing to learn from millennials as well.<sup>350</sup> Openness and unfiltered dialogue are key. This, and other proposed solutions must include training and preparation for the participants.

### **Proposed Solution Number Two: Volunteering and Service Learning**

*What it is:*

Volunteering is the practice of giving, without pay, one's time or talents to help a cause, nonprofit, or individual who is not a family member. Service Learning is another form of volunteerism or community service where one, in an educational setting, learns about civic responsibility and strengthening communities while giving their unpaid time. While some nonprofits offer volunteer opportunities, many do not, either because of a lack of staffing to manage these activities, or because they simply have not developed a way to facilitate this. This is an area of great opportunity.

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<sup>349</sup> Knowlton and Hagopian, 73.

<sup>350</sup> McManus, 86.



*How it Elicits Empathy:*

Just as mentoring provides deep engagement opportunities, volunteerism is another rich experience for millennials to increase empathy and thus increase giving. In studies done by Batson,<sup>351</sup> and Small,<sup>352</sup> volunteering can lead to increased empathy toward the people they serve. Increased empathy motivates the volunteer to “act” and help the person in need.<sup>353</sup> Research conducted by Reed, Aquino, and Levy shows that reward centers in the brain are activated when people volunteer, inspired by the social and identity implications of volunteering.<sup>354</sup> In other words, there is an appealing relational aspect to volunteering and this affects the way we see ourselves.

Some members of this generation were introduced to social justice as early as elementary school through community service projects and many millennials had required volunteer service hours in high school.<sup>355</sup> Service learning<sup>356</sup> in young adults increases the development of empathy and compassion toward people with whom they

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<sup>351</sup> Batson, “Self-Report Ratings,” 358.

<sup>352</sup> Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic, 144.

<sup>353</sup> Batson, “Self-Report Ratings,” 358.

<sup>354</sup> Americus Reed II, Karl Aquino, and Eric Levy, “Moral Identity and Judgments of Charitable Behaviors,” *Journal of Marketing* 71, no. 1 (2007): 184. JSTOR Arts and Sciences.

<sup>355</sup> Melissa H. Sandfort, and Jennifer G. Haworth, “Whassup? A Glimpse into the Attitudes and Beliefs of the Millennial Generation,” *Journal of College and Character* 3, no. 3 (2002): 16, <https://doi.org/10.2202/1940-1639.1314>.

<sup>356</sup> Service learning is “A form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves,” (Edutopia).

had no previous contact.<sup>357</sup> This increase in empathy through service learning is also tied to an increase in emotional learning, which is a person's ability to assess and express emotions accurately.<sup>358</sup> Additionally, students who take part in service-learning activities demonstrate higher empathy scores as compared to students who did not take part in those activities.<sup>359</sup>

*Example:*

The millennial generation wants something more than annual events, such as luncheons and galas, which have become the standard in fundraising circles.<sup>360</sup> As a matter of fact, the millennial generation questions the amount of money spent on these types of activities versus lower-key, less expensive, hands-on events or activities where more revenue can be directed to the beneficiaries.<sup>361</sup> This generation wants to “touch the mission.”<sup>362</sup> They are not interested in checking off the volunteer box and serving one time. They want to engage personally and they want to do it repeatedly.<sup>363</sup> Instead of a

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<sup>357</sup> Susan R. Jones, and Kathleen Hill, “Crossing High Street: Understanding Diversity Through Community Service- Learning,” *Journal of College Student Development* 42, no. 3 (2001): 204, ProQuest Central.

<sup>358</sup> John D. Mayer, Marc A. Brackett, and Peter Salovey, *Emotional Intelligence: Key readings on the Mayer and Salovey Model* (Port Chester, NY: Dude Publishing, 2004), 507.

<sup>359</sup> Bringle Robert G. and Julie A. Hatcher, “A Service-Learning Curriculum for Faculty,” *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 2, no. 1 (1995): 115.

<sup>360</sup> Stein.

<sup>361</sup> King, 7.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> Baranyi, 10.

gala dinner they might want to serve and eat dinner with beneficiaries at a homeless shelter or read to children in a mentoring program at a low-income elementary school. They want to travel to third-world countries and meet face-to-face with the people that the organization serves.<sup>364</sup> These types of activities not only affirm the legitimacy of the nonprofit organization in the mind of the millennial, they also facilitate the opportunity for empathy and a spiritually rich experience through direct contact. Millennials want to lead meaningful lives and they want to make a difference in the world.<sup>365</sup>

This generation has diverse interests when it comes to serving and giving. Nonprofits that serve senior citizens need to be attuned to this. Because millennials are more interdependent with other generations, they are more supportive in their attitudes toward a “social safety net for seniors.”<sup>366</sup> This generation is less disposed toward conflict and much more interested in cooperation due to the boomer generation’s nurturing parental style.<sup>367</sup> As Taylor, in *The Next America* notes, “Millennials have a great respect for their elders.”<sup>368</sup> This bodes well not only for nonprofits, which serve an aging generation of boomers and the Great Generation, but also for nonprofits who are

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<sup>364</sup> Jeff Fromm, “How To Leverage Volunteer Trend To Win Over Millennials,” *The Business Journals*, July 26, 2016, <https://www.bizjournals.com/bizjournals/how-to/marketing/2016/07/leverage-voluntourism-to-win-over-millennials.html>.

<sup>365</sup> Erika Anderson, “How Millennials Will Save The World, Part I,” *Forbes Magazine*, December 12, 2016, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/erikaandersen/2016/12/09/how-millennials-will-save-the-world-part-i/>.

<sup>366</sup> Taylor, 46.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid.

seeking out the next generation of philanthropists and charity leaders. Nonprofits need to create volunteer opportunities which connect millennials with seniors. Connecting millennials with nonprofit beneficiaries through volunteerism increases empathy.

*How to Facilitate it:*

Even though early articles on millennials maligned them for being too digitally connected and less emotionally, empathically, and physically connected to other humans, newer research indicates that millennials, in fact, score 30 points higher than the average response ratings as being “connected in their community.”<sup>369</sup> Nonprofits need to realize that there are incredible opportunities for engagement with this generation, embedded in the trends that they embrace. One of those trends is volunteer engagement. Many members of this highly educated generation have traveled abroad either during their undergraduate education or during gap years.<sup>370</sup> Those who have not traveled internationally are still globally connected and have a much broader understanding of social justice issues both domestically and internationally.<sup>371</sup> Millennials see themselves as part of a global society. Global nonprofits would be wise to offer international volunteer opportunities and Service Learning.

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<sup>369</sup> “2018 Insights on Wealth and Worth Survey Results,” *U.S. Trust*, 2018, <https://www.ustrust.com/articles/insights-on-wealth-and-worth-2018.html>.

<sup>370</sup> Richard Fry, Ruth Igielnik and Eileen Patten, “How Millennials Today Compare with Their Grandparents 50 Years Ago,” *Pew Research Center*, March 16, 2018, [www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/16/how-millennials-compare-with-their-grandparents/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/16/how-millennials-compare-with-their-grandparents/). A gap year is a period, typically a year, taken by a student as a break between secondary school and higher education.

<sup>371</sup> Emily Esfahani Smith, and Jennifer L. Aaker, “Millennial Searchers,” *The New York Times*, November 30, 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/01/opinion/sunday/millennial-searchers.html>.

Millennial volunteerism can take many forms, including fundraising. Some millennials have created crowd-funding sites to raise money for their cause of choice.<sup>372</sup> In some cases, they have done it while going to school and working. Millennials have mastered the art of the side-hustle.<sup>373</sup> Kevin Breel, a young man in his early twenties, said, “Right now I’m doing the most random things you could ever possibly put together and turn into a “business”; writing, stand-up comedy, and speaking out about mental health as an activist.”<sup>374</sup> This generation doesn’t just want to dream and plan. They want to do it, to feel it, and taste it. This means that nonprofits need to find creative, out of the box ways to engage them. Because millennials are untrusting of organizations in general, this generation needs to see the work of the nonprofit with their own eyes, to meet the beneficiaries, and to engage with the data behind the rhetoric.<sup>375</sup> Simply put, they need to be hands-on. Volunteering and service learning is a great way to start this process.

The question is not whether to engage this generation in volunteer activities and events, but how to do this in a way that will be relevant and meaningful for them and elicit empathy. Direct contact with beneficiaries through volunteerism is a powerful tool.

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<sup>372</sup> Ben Paynter, “How Will The Rise Of Crowdfunding Reshape How We Give To Charity?” *Fast Company*, May 10, 2017, <https://www.fastcompany.com/3068534/how-will-the-rise-of-crowdfunding-reshape-how-we-give-to-charity-2>.

<sup>373</sup> Ryan Feldman, “Over 44 Million Americans Have a Side Hustle; Youngest Adults Are the Most Likely Age Group,” *Bankrate.com*, July 12, 2017, <https://www.bankrate.com/pdfs/pr/20170712-Side-Hustles.pdf>.

<sup>374</sup> Bachen, et al.

<sup>375</sup> Baranyi, 18.

This happens, in part, because of the conversations that happen during that volunteer engagement.

### **Proposed Solution Number Three:**

#### **Perspective-Taking through Conversation and Story Sharing**

##### *What it is:*

Perspective-taking is the act of considering or understanding another individual's point of view. Perspective-taking is critical to human development<sup>376</sup> and can lead to many social benefits including stereotype and prejudice reduction.<sup>377</sup> For the purposes of this dissertation, conversation and story sharing are an exchange of thoughts, personal stories, and ideas between a millennial and a nonprofit beneficiary. The opportunity for this interaction should be *facilitated* by the nonprofit but should not be *filtered* or manipulated in any way. Open dialogue is key.

##### *How it Elicits Empathy:*

Engaging with another person through story sharing or conversation can move millennials empathetically.<sup>378</sup> Feather and Sherman showed that exposure to prosocial

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<sup>376</sup> Decety, Jean, and Philip L. Jackson, "The functional architecture of human empathy," *Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Review*, 3, no. 2 (2004): 87, MEDLINE PubMed.

<sup>377</sup> Adam D. Galinsky and Gordon B. Moskowitz, "Perspective-taking: Decreasing stereotype expression, stereotype accessibility, and in-group favoritism," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 78 no. 4 (2000): 721, <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.78.4.708>.

<sup>378</sup> N. T. Feather, and Richard Sherman, "Envy, resentment, Schadenfreude, and sympathy: Reactions to deserved and undeserved achievement and subsequent failure," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28 (2002): 959, <https://doi.org/10.1177/014616720202800708>.

activities, even online, increased empathy and decreased *schadenfreude*<sup>379</sup> toward a person who is suffering.<sup>380</sup> As a matter of fact, “Focusing on our own thoughts and feelings reduces empathy, whereas focusing on those of distressed others increases empathy”<sup>381</sup> This is important because when empathy increases, giving increases.<sup>382</sup>

Whether online or in person, as we listen to other people’s stories we become more attuned to them as human beings. Researchers on mindfulness found that as we become more “mindfully attentive to the thoughts and feelings that [we] and others experience in the present moment, [we] are more likely to find common ground and greater intimacy.”<sup>383</sup> Researchers Kabat and Zinn found that participants who were “transported into the story exhibited higher affective empathy.”<sup>384</sup> Increased millennial empathy will help nonprofits to continue their important work as funding increases. One study on how empathy impacts giving showed that “empathetic emotion” lead to

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<sup>379</sup> Schadenfreude is the experience of gaining pleasure at another person’s misfortune.

<sup>380</sup> Feather and Sherman, 959.

<sup>381</sup> C. Daniel Batson, Karen Sager, Eric Garst, Misook Kang, Kostia Rubchinsky, and Karen Insko Dawson, “Is Empathy-Induced Helping Due to Self–Other Merging?” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73, no. 3 (1997): 496. EBSCOHost PsychArticles.

<sup>382</sup> Aileen Edele, Isabel Dziobek, and Monika Keller, “Explaining Altruistic Sharing in the Dictator Game: The Role of Affective Empathy, Cognitive Empathy, and Justice Sensitivity,” *Learning and Individual Differences* 24 no. C (2012): 97. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2012.12.020>.

<sup>383</sup> Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World Through Mindfulness* (New York, NY: Hyperion, 2005), 4.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

participants wanting to help. In this study, taking the perspective of the “needy other” induced empathetic emotion.<sup>385</sup>

Perspective-taking (understanding the perspective of another person) can lead to human empathy.<sup>386</sup> When we empathize with someone we begin to understand how that other person perceives the situation and as a result, how they feel.<sup>387</sup> Researchers Knoblich and Flach’s findings show that this leads to action.<sup>388</sup> This is called the “perception-action model” in which the perception of emotion can activate the mechanisms in our brain that generate emotions.<sup>389</sup> This system “prompts the observer to resonate with the emotional state of another individual.”<sup>390</sup> This model is part of the neural architecture of empathy.<sup>391</sup> In other words, we engage with another person, perceive what they are feeling, and then feel it ourselves. If nonprofit organizations want to engage the millennial generation they can use live or online conversation and story sharing opportunities to connect those they serve with millennial donors. In doing so they will demonstrate to millennials that “they are part of a universal narrative.”<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> Kim and Kou, 314.

<sup>386</sup> Decety, and Jackson, 84.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid.

<sup>388</sup> Knoblich, Günther, and Rüdiger Flach, “Action identity: Evidence from self-recognition, prediction, and coordination,” *Consciousness and Cognition*, 12, no. 4 (2003): 621.

<sup>389</sup> Decety and Jackson, 75.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>392</sup> Robert P. Imbelli, ed., *Handing on the Faith: The Church’s Mission and Challenge* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Co., 2006), 153.



*Example:*

Story sharing is a way to introduce a person to someone they might not have otherwise met thus expanding the listener's world. There are creative ways to share an in-person story. One is The Human Library, in which people volunteer to serve as human "books."<sup>393</sup> People can visit the library and check out a human book, sit down with them, and ask them questions. This program takes place at libraries all over the United States and is changing people's perspectives on individuals that they might have previously judged based on their race, career, gender, religion, or other reasons.<sup>394</sup> Human library books include Muslims, transgender people, obese people, people of various races and cultures, people with autism, police officers, refugees, and many more.<sup>395</sup> This experience can elicit empathy because the listener begins to "feel what the other person is feeling."<sup>396</sup> Nonprofits can create or utilize opportunities such as the Human Library to facilitate live, unfiltered conversations between millennials and the population that the nonprofit serves, whether in person or online. This type of unfiltered, conversation is appealing to the millennial generation and is a way to challenge stereotypes and create authentic learning in a transparent setting.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> "The Human Library Organization," May 24, 2018, <http://humanlibrary.org/>.

<sup>394</sup> Jim Joyner, "Calling All Humans: Baltimore County Needs Thoughts and Memories for 'Human Library' at Owings Mills," *Baltimore Sun*, March 1, 2018, <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/baltimore-county/bs-md-co-human-library-owings-mills-20180228-story.html>.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Decety and Ickes, 5.

<sup>397</sup> Walls.

*How to Facilitate it:*

Millennials are untrusting of organizations in general, so giving them the opportunity to hear directly from the person impacted by the work of the nonprofit in an unfiltered way is powerful. Nonprofits must let this generation ask the questions they would like to ask and let the beneficiary answer them as they wish. This is in contrast to the nonprofit either scripting a speech or writing the beneficiary's story and publishing it. These millennial-beneficiary conversations are most effective as a two-way, unfiltered dialogue where the participants share their stories and have open conversation.<sup>398</sup> There are times when this cannot be done in person and so may need to take place in alternative ways, such as on a digital platform.

It can be difficult to accurately hear someone else's story because each person has their own experiential and cultural biases. Carl Rogers wrote, "The tendency to react to any emotionally meaningful statement by forming an evaluation of it from our own perspective is the major barrier to interpersonal communications."<sup>399</sup> To a certain extent this is unavoidable. Each individual views the world through a specific, personal lens. Sometimes these cultural biases exist because we have never had direct exposure to people who are different than we are. Personal conversations can broaden our horizons and help us to see our shared-humanity. There are many ways for a nonprofit to help the people they serve to share their story. If they cannot do so in person, the organization can

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

<sup>399</sup> Dent and Brent, 50.

take advantage of live, web-based options such as Skype<sup>400</sup> or HoloLens.<sup>401</sup> No matter how beneficiaries communicate with potential millennial donors, there are some important factors to consider in advance. This cannot be for the purpose of manipulating the story or conversation in any way, but one must take context into account. Again, participant preparation and training is essential.

### **Summary: Engaging Millennials In Philanthropy**

We have looked at empathy, what it is, and how it works. I have suggested that if non-profits can increase the experience of empathy in millennials, there may be an increase first in connection to the beneficiaries, second to the nonprofit organization, and third to giving. I have suggested several activities that may increase empathy, each of which involves unlikely and unfiltered conversations. The key is that the nonprofit must be intentional in designing experiences that engage and increase empathy, and then give millennials an immediate and generationally appropriate way to respond financially. This is a continuum of engagement. It is not story-telling for the sake of story-telling, but to connect people and organizations. We believe in taking on the same causes – let's do it together.

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<sup>400</sup> Skype is a software application where one can have a conversation with someone over the internet. Typically this is done via webcam so that participants can see each other.

<sup>401</sup> HoloLens is made by Microsoft and is a holographic computer built into a headset where you can see and interact / engage with holograms. There is a feature that allows a person to video chat with live hologram images of another person in another part of the world.

This dissertation addresses a critical challenge that nonprofits face: consistently engaging members of the millennial generation as donors. The millennial generation is unique socioeconomically, politically, racially, culturally, and interpersonally. Traditional ways of engaging donors, which were effective for previous generations, are no longer relevant to millennials, whose world views are significantly different from those of both generation x and baby boomers. In order for nonprofits to continue their mission of serving people in need, they must understand this distinctive generation, and find ways to effectively engage them.

Understanding the historical trends in US philanthropy, the spirituality and theology of giving, along with some of the philanthropic challenges that nonprofits face provides a context for nonprofits as they develop activities specifically for millennials. The challenges include proximal giving, diffusion of responsibility, and the science of giving. The fact that giving philanthropically can positively affect not only the person being served, but also the person making the gift leads to the understanding that the act of philanthropy can be spiritually transformational. Research reveals that when empathy increases, giving increases. Definitions, descriptions, components, conditions and implications of empathy have laid the groundwork for proposals that nonprofits can explore.

The three proposed solutions explore meaningful opportunities for millennials to engage with, and develop empathy for, people in need. I argued that because millennials are untrusting of organizations, and because they demand transparency and authenticity, all of these solutions must involve unfiltered, live interactions in order to elicit an empathetic response. The artifact includes materials to teach nonprofits how to apply

these principles in their own contexts, engage millennials in philanthropic opportunities, and increase empathy in a diverse and complex world.

## SECTION 4:

### ARTIFACT DECSRIPTION

Based on the contents of this dissertation, and my expertise on millennial philanthropy, I intend to make this information available to nonprofits and churches. The purpose of this artifact is to market myself as a speaker on millennial philanthropy and to establish a collection of resources that I can draw from to present what I have learned. This section describes my marketing package as well as the materials that I will present at conferences and events. The artifact includes a variety of media, to teach and encourage nonprofit organizations how to consistently engage the millennial generation in giving:

- A website which includes speaker bio, a “Why Millennials” page, link to social media sites, a sample video, and a digital press kit including three speaking topics and three break-out session topics.
- One eight-minute speech and one 20-minute speech.
- The content of a 50-minute breakout session for conferences and events.

### *Application*

My current work with nonprofits and the research from this academic work has established me as an expert-resource to other nonprofits and churches. In order to teach others how to engage millennials in giving, I intend to use this artifact to increase my activities through speaking, presenting, and training. I will use my research to equip nonprofits to develop practices that actively engage millennials in giving. After three years of research on this topic I have become a leading voice in millennial philanthropy. Churches and nonprofits may not have the time to do the research that I have done. I am

now able to serve organizations, enhancing their skills and practices, by bringing what I know to them.

The components of the artifact combine to provide a knowledge-based approach to helping nonprofits activate the millennial generation in giving. It will help them understand some of the cultural shifts taking place today, provide a more holistic view of the generation, and help them establish a roadmap for moving forward.

## SECTION 5:

### ARTIFACT SPECIFICATION

#### ***Artifact Goals***

The research that I have completed in the past three years is beyond the scope of most nonprofit organizations. Many organizations have listened to early messaging which says that millennials are lazy and self-entitled. I am one of the few voices communicating a different message. The artifact is comprised of the key components of a marketing package and facilitation materials – *Philanthropy and the Millennial Generation*. This package is intended to pique interest on the topic of Millennial Philanthropy, eliciting a response from conferences, churches, and event producers to engage me to present on this topic. The goal of the speeches and breakout session materials is to inspire, educate, entertain, and motivate conference and breakout session attendees to engage the millennial generation in giving to their churches or nonprofits. Conference attendees will go away with a deeper level of understanding of the unique qualities of the millennial generation and will gain specific tools and ideas they can use to engage millennials in a consistent and meaningful way. These tools will ultimately increase giving to their causes.

#### ***Audience***

The promotional materials are intended primarily for Christian conference producers whose target audience is nonprofit staff and leadership attendees and/or church leadership and staff. Marketing materials will be adjusted appropriately for secular nonprofit conferences and events, or business organizations interested in attracting millennials. Speeches and breakout session materials were developed for a target



audience of nonprofit leaders and staff and church leadership and staff. Plans for further research regarding engaging the millennial generation in the nonprofit world through eliciting empathetic responses will be discussed in the Postscript.

### ***Scope and Content***

The marketing package portion of the artifact is published on a web based platform including:

- The katherynsaunders.com author / speaker website.
- Social media platforms including Twitter and Facebook.

The presentation and breakout session materials include:

- One eight-minute Ted-Talk-type presentation.
- One twenty-minute speech.
- Slides and notes of a fifty-minute *Unlikely and Unfiltered Conversations* breakout session/workshop.

### ***Budget***

- katherynsaunders.com website cost (\$375 for domain and website-builder package – I designed and built the website myself).
- Speech Editor - \$500.
- Breakout Session Materials – Printed items paid for by World Vision / *Unlikely and Unfiltered Conversations* breakout activity paid for by World Vision.

### ***Post-Graduation Considerations***

The development of the marketing package and presentation materials is a starting point for me to begin speaking at conferences, churches, and events on the topic of

millennial philanthropy. I will not begin speaking until after graduation due to my work schedule and dissertation work.

***Next steps include:***

- Launching the marketing materials at targeted conferences, churches, and events beginning September of 2019.
- Adapting breakout session materials and presentations for specific target audiences.
- Publishing a journal article in 2019 on the topic of millennial philanthropy.
- Exploring and testing specific millennial engagement activities including Hololens and a Storycorps interview-type experience.
- Publication of a book on my findings including the research from my dissertation, my field work with millennial philanthropists at World Vision, and my field-tests with millennial engagement activities.

***Standards of Publication***

There are no specific standards for marketing packages, websites, social media sites or breakout sessions other than the World Vision brand standards when appropriate. I am working to create materials that offer a visual representation of the topic and of the experience I will be presenting as a speaker.

## SECTION 6:

### POSTSCRIPT

Over twenty-five years ago I began working in the Christian nonprofit world as a fundraiser. I have worked with churches and charities both as a staff-member and collaboratively with other organizations, in order to better serve our shared beneficiaries. When I started this Doctor of Ministry program I decided to dig deeper into the causes for intergenerational bias and to better understand who millennials are, what motivates them, and what causes them to disengage from nonprofit organizations. The DMin in Leadership and Spiritual Formation program was of particular interest because I believed that spiritual formation could be one of the keys to building bridges between millennials and the populations that nonprofits serve. Over the past three years, as I researched the unique qualities of millennials along with empathy and giving, I realized that while there is research on the unique qualities of the millennial generation, and there are extensive studies on empathy and how it elicits giving, there is very little research which connects the two. After three years of studying this topic it is clear that churches and nonprofits are having difficulty understanding, and consistently engaging, this generation in giving. I seek to address this problem with my artifact, a speaker's portfolio and workshop leadership package on the topic of Millennial Philanthropy. I will be training churches and nonprofits on how to engage the next generation of philanthropists through activities which elicit empathy.

I am fortunate to be on staff at World Vision and they have expressed an interest in helping me test the three models that I propose in my dissertation. The first step will be to develop a research-based plan to measure millennial empathy and giving-behavior

outcomes tied to empathetic response. There are evidence-based tools to assess and measure whether participants are experiencing empathy, and at World Vision we have methods of tracking the response or lack-there-of over time. The second step will be to test the three proposed models (Intergenerational Mentoring and Reverse Mentoring, Volunteer and Service Learning, and Conversation and Story Sharing) with World Vision's millennial prospects and donors. I will test these models either concurrently or one at a time, depending on the level of support and assistance I receive. World Vision has not done this before and the process will benefit both parties. World Vision will gain knowledge in how to engage the next generation of donors as well as exposure in the nonprofit world as an innovator on this topic. They will also support me through their speaker's bureau as an expert on millennial engagement and giving. My artifact will help to accomplish this task. I will be able to leverage the assets, scope, and scale of World Vision as well as their millennial donor-base and prospect list. I will then adapt and adjust my philanthropic millennial marketing and engagement activity based on the results of these findings. In the future, I plan to compile my research with the results of our model testing into both a peer-reviewed journal article and a book.

## APPENDIX A:

### ARTIFACT

The artifact includes the key components of a marketing package called *Philanthropy and the Millennial Generation*. The goal of the marketing package is to inspire, educate, entertain, and motivate conference and breakout session attendees on how they can engage the millennial generation in giving to their church or nonprofit.

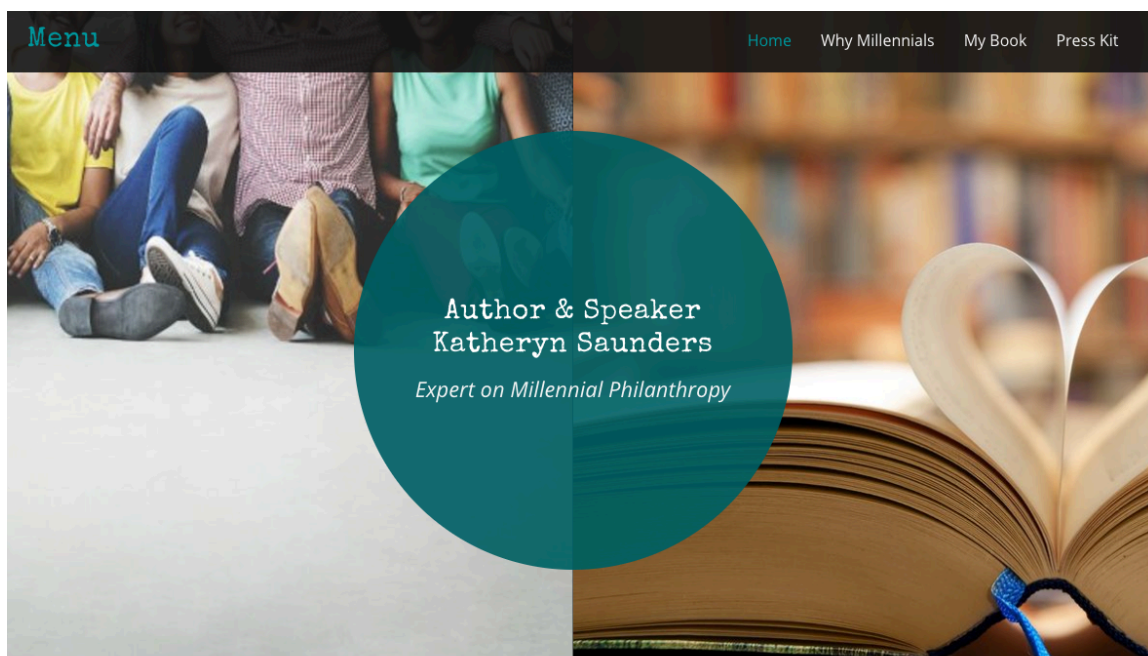
Included in the artifact are the following items:

1. A series of screen shots from the website [katherynsaunders.com](http://katherynsaunders.com).
2. The script for an 8-minute presentation (Presentation #1).
3. The script for a 20-minute presentation (Presentation #2).
4. The PowerPoint notes/slides for a 50-minute workshop.

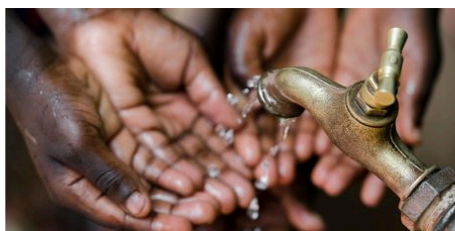
### KATHERYNSAUNDERS.COM

The website is a simple, effective way for churches and nonprofit organizations to engage me to present my research at their meetings and conferences. It is a clean, visual, interactive opportunity for clients to get to know me and understand the scope of the research and the possibilities for connecting with their attendees.

The platform is optimized for mobile devices and desktops and includes a prominent option to contact me directly. On the next few pages are some screen shots from the web site to convey the work that I have already done, and the experience that a potential client would have when they visit my site.



## Engaging Millennials in Nonprofit Giving



**"If every millennial donated just one percent of his or her income to a charitable organization each year, \$16,000,000,000 will be raised."** Jeffrey Sachs, Economist

By donating one percent of their income each year, millennials could end extreme poverty in 10.9 years. For this highly educated, consumer-savvy, spiritual but not religious, no BS generation, nonprofits need to remove the filters, give them access to beneficiaries, tell it to them straight and do it now.

Nonprofits leaders, did you know?



- **Millennials** values are different than previous generations. In fact, they will take a pay-cut to work at an organization that is making the world better .
- **Millennials** don't trust religion but they want a relationship with God. They want frank conversations with spiritual leaders.
- **Millennials** will live with less so that they can give more! This is the tiny-house generation.
- **Millennials** love new experiences. You could be the one to provide them.
- **Millennials** love boomers! Almost 60% of college graduates say they want to be mentored!

## Press Kit



### Millennials Matter

I believe that Millennials have the power to solve huge issues like extreme poverty, equal access to education and gender equality. But they tell me that they seek transformation not transaction. Volunteering for the sake of volunteering does nothing. Millennials and nonprofits believe in the same causes, let's do it together.

## Menu

[Home](#) [Why Millennials](#) [My Book](#) [Press Kit](#)

### Katheryn's Bio

#### Calling

Katheryn has been a fundraiser for over 25 years. As Northwest Area Director for the Philanthropy team at World Vision U.S., she has empowered donor partners to address issues such as child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, lack of access to education, the impact of dirty water on women and children, and mother and child health.

#### Passion

Katheryn's primary focus is engaging millennials, the next generation of philanthropists. Her passion is to inspire and empower nonprofits to harness the power of this incredible generation.

#### Focus

Katheryn has met people living in poverty who are spiritually rich but she's also met wealthy Americans who are spiritually poor. She sees her role as building a bridge between the two. "Each has something to share with the other."

I hold a Masters Degree in Teaching and Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) in Leadership and Spiritual Formation. My doctoral dissertation was on Millennial Philanthropy.



The following screen shots demonstrate how the website looks on a mobile phone:

Marching off the  
philanthropic map -  
adventure not tradition.



***"By the year 2060, this emerging generation will inherit fifty-nine trillion dollars, almost half of which is projected to go to charitable causes. Organizations that invite millennials to work with, not for them will harness that power to change the world for good."** Kathryn Saunders*



### Keynote Topics

- 5 Ways to Engage 50 Millennials
- Staying Alive - Engaging the Next Generation of Philanthropists
- Empathy, the Key to Millennial Giving



### Breakout Sessions

- Meet Mwebe! - Engaging millennials through unlikely and unfiltered conversations
- Empathy - Learn why it matters to millennials and what to do about it
- Millennials - Lazy tribe of narcissists or cause-driven clan of world changers?

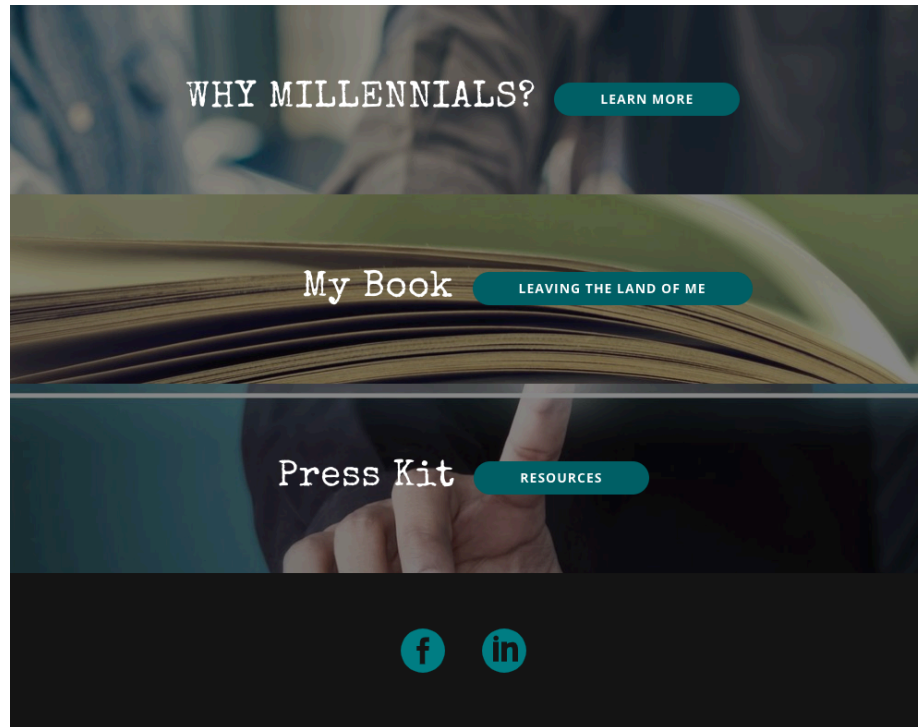
### Press Kit



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Request Kathryn as a speaker!

Inquiries -Speaker fees upon request

Name

Email\*

Message

How did you hear about Kathryn?

SEND

CHURCHES - CONFERENCES - EVENTS

## PRESENTATION #1

### SHORTER KEY-NOTE PRESENTATION

Millennials. They've been called everything from a lazy tribe of narcissists to a generation of cause-driven world changers.

This generation is like none other. And nonprofits need to understand what makes them tick and what makes them give.

Millennials want personal transformation and empathy is the key.

Not long ago I had an interesting conversation with my twenty-five-year-old son Coleton.

Over the years I've learned with my kids that if you feed them, they will come.

So over dinner, in addition to catching up on life, relationships and work we got into a conversation about spirituality. Coleton was raised in a Christian home. As a matter of fact he attended Christian school from pre-k through high. But Coleton hasn't gone to church for some time and, like many people his age he would probably tell you that he is spiritual but not religious.

Well over the next hour or so, with no agenda, I asked him what he thought the word "spiritual" meant and he asked me the same question. We talked about religiosity...who God is to him, and who God is to me. I asked him what he thinks happens when someone dies and he asked me the same.

He told me that he can't imagine that a "big" God would be interested in our little lives and I told him that I believe that God is love (literally) and he said that if that's true then he could see why God would want to hang out with us.

We talked for more than an hour and finally I asked him this. I said "Coleton if you wanted to create a meaningful, transformational way for nonprofits to engage with millennials, what would it look like?"

He was quiet for a minute and then he said:

"This."

"We sat together face to face. You asked me questions without an agenda and you listened to what I said without judging me. I asked you questions and did the same. I got a sense of how you feel and we learned from each other."

Wow! Simple yet profound.

You know I've worked in the Christian nonprofit world for 25 years and my doctoral dissertation was on millennial philanthropy.

I started thinking about everything I've learned about this generation and the multitude of good reasons they don't trust organizations.

They want to have a real conversation.

They want to hear and be heard.

As I listened to Coleton, I found myself empathizing with his thoughts, feelings, and the things he wrestles with. And he shared that although many of our beliefs and opinions differ, he was experiencing empathy for me as well.

**(ON SCREEN "Empathy is the art of stepping imaginatively into the shoes of another person, understanding their feelings and perspectives, and using that understanding to guide your actions.")**

(Read the definition on the screen)

So, empathy must end in action. We don't feel empathy just for the sake of feeling it, we must respond.

Scientists have different opinions about the origin of empathy. Some say we are born empathetic and some say it can be learned. But for the sake of this discussion we will use this definition which most social scientists agree on.

With more than 90 million millennials on the planet and more than \$300 billion in discretionary spending, nonprofits would be wise to solidify the act of giving by eliciting empathy.

This so-called 'me' generation has been called lethargic and uninspired. My dad often used the same adjectives to describe me during many summer breaks.

The truth is that millennials have gotten a bad rap.

This is the tiny house generation!

Did you know that they will live on less so that they can give more? Data shows that members of this generation will even take a pay cut to work at a company that they feel is doing something to make the world a better place. And while they say that they are spiritual but not religious, when surveyed, they say that they want to know and understand God and they want frank and open conversations with religious leaders.

As a matter of fact, in a recent study funded by the Lily foundation, researchers discovered that churches where the lead pastor engages directly with young adults, are seeing increases in attendance by this generation versus a decline. The same holds true with Christian nonprofit leaders.

Millennials want to hear and be heard. And they want direct contact with those in power. They want to check them out – see if they are the real deal.

Let's face it, this is the most-informed generation in history. **(PULL OUT MY CELL PHONE AND HOLD IT UP)**. And THIS has changed everything.

With just a few taps, young people from around the world can donate to nonprofits more easily than ever. And with the same power, they can smell a charity's inflated statistics or photo-shopped images from a mile away.

The good news for charities is that technology now allows communications to be nimble and inventive. That means more interactions catered to the individual. We can make giving easy.

But although this generation is tech savvy, they are also social. So how do nonprofits tap into this?

Did you know that scientists have found that pro-social activities, in other words activities that involve personal one on one relationships or engagement for the purposes of good, increases empathy? And scientists have proven that when empathy goes up, charitable giving goes up.

Well that might sound obvious – make people feel something and they will give.

But millennials don't trust organizations. They will give to people and causes but not organizations. And millennials say that they feel a disconnect between their financial gift and the people we serve.

Millennials want to know where their money really going.

So as nonprofits, how can we build trust, create meaningful social opportunities and connect millennials with our beneficiaries?

Volunteerism might come to mind.

But most nonprofits, like World Vision, where I work for example, don't really have these kinds of volunteer opportunities.

For World Vision, it goes against our community development model. We equip the community to do the work themselves: they own it, it is theirs. So, I can't take in a millennial to dig a well or build a school.

Other nonprofits either don't have the staff to offer hands-on opportunities to work alongside beneficiaries or they offer serving opportunities but there really isn't any thought that goes into the volunteer experience and next steps on their transformational journey. They are simply doing a task.

Multiple studies conducted by people like Kurt Alan Ver Beek, and Robert J. Priest and others have concluded that although short-term mission trip participants did have a positive experience and intended that their experience would translate into action, when surveyed a few months later, most often it did not.

Volunteering for the sake of volunteering does not transform people's lives.

As churches and nonprofits, we don't strategically build intentional space within the volunteer opportunity for conversation and relationship. It is transactional.

What if the focus shifted from transaction to transformation? What if, rather than clocking in for a hands-on activity, the purpose (the goal) was personal transformation?

Social scientist Mary Miller's research shows that empathy not only leads to action (giving) it also leads to personal transformation for the millennial. This highlights a direct correlation between empathy and the spectrum of behaviors that enable personal transformation.

How can nonprofits step outside the box of traditional donor engagement and fundraising, to elicit empathetic responses which will facilitate transformation in the life of the millennial, and ALSO secure consistent funding going forward for their critical work?

**(ON SCREEN: EMPATHY = ENGAGEMENT)**

Notice that the screen doesn't say Engagement = Empathy. Simply setting up a volunteer opportunity is not going to elicit empathy.

Actually, the reverse is true. Research conducted by Drs Kim and Kou shows that people who *feel* empathy engage. And that engagement includes increased giving.

Meryl Streep says,

**(ON SCREEN: "The great gift of human beings is that we have the power of empathy. We can all sense a mysterious connection to one another.")**

Has anyone here ever had that experience where you are talking with someone you've never met before, yet you begin to feel connected to them in some way? As humans we can feel it – that mysterious connection.

And if you are talking about a generation that doesn't trust organizations, charities shouldn't be mysterious at all. They should be unapologetically transparent.

Millennials want to see the warts. They will trust you MORE because of it!

I was discussing millennials with a lead pastor friend of mine recently and he was frustrated with the decline of this age-group in his church. He said "Don't millennials know how hard it is to be a lead pastor and how many hats we have to wear?" I said, "No and they probably never will. But that's the point. They want you to say "Hey this is really hard and here's why!"

Now I know this can be tough to do – to admit the areas where we struggle.

But Millennials can be very forgiving.

My daughter told me the other day that she has chosen to forgive me (a boomer) for creating a recession for her generation to deal with when they got out of college.

How charitable of her – giving that we paid almost \$200,000 for her education!

But seriously, millennials are forgiving.

They forgave Mark Zuckerberg for stealing their data.

They forgave lululemon for accidentally making see through leggings.

And they even forgave Mike Tyson for that horrible face tattoo.

**(TYSON PICTURE ON SCREEN)**

Millennials just want us to be real.

If nonprofit leaders want to break down the walls between perceptions and reality, they need to give millennials access to people. This includes other philanthropists who give to that charity, and the nonprofit leaders themselves. Millennials want to ask questions, share their ideas and learn.

For example, charities could create a millennial board of directors, connecting each millennial board member with a senior board member for a two-year mentoring and reverse mentoring relationship. Because, according to a 2016 article in Forbes magazine, millennials overwhelmingly report that they want to be mentored, both at work and in their personal lives.

But mostly, millennials want to meet your beneficiaries without being filtered by the charity.

Ideally these conversations can happen in person. Unlikely and unfiltered conversations increase empathy and increased empathy increases giving.

And increased empathy changes us! We start to see that we are more alike than unlike in our humanity -that mysterious connection.

So as nonprofits we need to work backwards.

Instead of focusing on selling a product, we need to focus on millennial transformation through empathy.

**(ON SCREEN: Two graphics: Old School: Goal = \$ - New School: Goal = Empathy)**

Historically, churches and nonprofits simply shared a need, asked people to give and they did. Our goal was to raise money for the need.

This might work as a one-off for millennials but not for long-term sustainable giving. Millennials give sporadically and impulsively unless they are empathetically engaged.

With millennials the goal needs to be transformation through empathy. When empathy increases not only does giving go up, but so does spiritual transformation.

There are several organizations that understand the value of empathy.

**(ON SCREEN Human Library)**

The Human Library is a program where libraries all over the US let you check out human library books. Someone volunteers to be a book. It might be a refugee, a domestic violence victim, a recovering alcoholic or a transgender person.

You check them out, go sit down and have an unfiltered conversation. You can ask them questions, learn about each other.

StoryCorp also provides a platform for conversations. They have a mobile van and also an app for the smart phone. This gives people an opportunity to have a conversation, build connections, learn to listen, and hopefully create a more compassionate world.

Nonprofits could easily create opportunities like this with our beneficiaries.

**(ON SCREEN: Picture of a food distribution in Turkana)**

And lastly, with all the new advancements in augmented and virtual reality, there is no better time to use technology for good. Something like HoloLens technology has the ability to take a millennial in the US and have them fetch water with someone in Honduras or Zambia – live – while they have a conversation doing it. Or, they can attend

a live food distribution in famine-plagued Turkana. Another simple option is to set up a Skype platform conversation between donors and beneficiaries.

Consider this, “If every millennial donated just one percent of his or her income to a charitable organization each year, \$16,000,000,000 will be raised.”

According to economist Jeffrey Sachs, it would take \$175 billion dollars to end extreme poverty worldwide. That means that millennials, by donating one percent of their income each year, could end extreme poverty in 10.9 years. Millennials have the power to change the world for good. Nonprofits need to harness that power.

This generation has the skills, passion, and capacity to completely end extreme poverty during their lifetimes. I don’t know about you, but that is kind of mind-blowing to me.

But to do this we need to fully engage them. Engaging millennials means not only pursuing the dollar, but also maximizing the person.

**(ON SCREEN: Text to Give Image)**

Now remember, that there needs to be an outlet for their empathetic experience. Empathy equals action, so make sure there is a mobile or online giving opportunity as part of (built into) the process. Just remember that the goal is transformation if you want consistent, committed, millennial givers.

We need to be strategic.

Let’s be honest. If we don’t figure out how to engage this generation financially, twenty years from now we may not exist, and the people we serve will suffer because of it.

We need to leverage the millennials’ digital and social prowess.

By the 2020 election, there will be 90 million eligible millennial voters.

How will churches and non-profits respond? What could we be doing ahead of time so that millennials care enough to engage in advocacy?

**(ON SCREEN: Social Media Icons)**

Give the millennial an experience with your beneficiary. And then afterward, encourage them to talk about it. Every millennial has a circle of influence and letting others in their circle know about the work a charity is doing is a great first step.

Ask them to use their talents and time in the form of a social media post or a blog post describing how their experience impacted their view and how they have a newfound empathy for individuals with different challenges and backgrounds. Provide them with hash tags and the links to give.



This is a generation that casts a wary eye on human nature. They've been marketed to since they were toddlers. They have access to more information than any generation history and they've watched as previously respected church leaders and CEOs and heads of financial institutions have publicly fallen from grace.

They know that we aren't perfect AND they are curious about our work. Why not let them get to know us.

Millennials:

Lazy, entitled, self-absorbed? Like most of us, maybe a little.

But don't forget informed and savvy with a passion for social justice.

Millennials want to make a life, not a living. Learning their habits, being transparent, and engaging with them at a deeper level is an investment that takes patience.

If you can work to solidify their relationship with your church or nonprofit through empathy, it will change everything – including the millennial.

90 million millennials...

Over \$300 billion in discretionary spending...

There's an old saying in the nonprofit world, "No money, no mission."

Without money, advocacy, support, and programs go away. A charity's mission is their way of telling the world, "This is what we believe in."

And it's also that charity's mission to find as many of those 90 million informed, savvy, social-justice driven millennials as possible. Meet them where they are and use all the tools at your disposal to facilitate an empathetic response and to develop an engaged donor base.

Do you want to meet this generation where they are? Are you willing to do what it takes?

Then stop selling a product and start focusing on millennial transformation through empathy.

Millennials want the same things we do. Let's do it together.

Thank you.

## **PRESENTATION #2**

### **LONGER KEY-NOTE PRESENTATION**

Millennials. They've been called everything from a lazy tribe of narcissists to a generation of cause-driven world changers.

This generation is like none other. And nonprofits must understand what makes them tick and what makes them give.

My research has demonstrated that millennials want personal transformation and that empathy is the key.

Not long ago I had an interesting conversation with my twenty-five-year-old son Coleton.

Over the years I've learned with my kids that if you feed them, they will come.

So over dinner, in addition to catching up on life, relationships, and work we got into a conversation about spirituality. Coleton was raised in a Christian home. As a matter of fact, he attended Christian school from pre-k through high school and he even attended a Jesuit college. But Coleton hasn't gone to church for some time and, like many people his age, he would tell you that he is spiritual but not religious.

Well over the next hour or so, with no agenda, I asked him what he thought the word "spiritual" meant and he asked me the same question. We talked about religiosity...who God is to him, and who God is to me. I asked him what he thinks happens when someone dies, and he asked me the same.

He told me that he can't imagine that a "big" God would be interested in our little lives and I told him that I believe that God is love (literally) and he said that if that's true then maybe God would want to hang out with us.

We talked for more than an hour and finally I asked him this. I said "Coleton if you wanted to create a meaningful, transformational way for nonprofits to engage with millennials, what would it look like?"

He was quiet for a minute and then he said:

"This."

"We sat together face to face. You asked me questions without an agenda and you listened to what I said without judging me. I asked you questions and did the same. And we learned from each other."

Wow! Simple yet profound.

You know, I've worked in the Christian nonprofit world for 25 years and my doctoral dissertation was on millennial philanthropy.

I started thinking about everything I've learned about this generation and the multitude of good reasons they don't trust organizations.

They want to have a real conversation.

They want to hear and be heard.

As I listened to Coleton, I found myself empathizing with his thoughts, feelings and the things he wrestles with. And he shared that although many of our beliefs and opinions differ, he was experiencing empathy for me as well.

**(ON SCREEN "Empathy is the art of stepping imaginatively into the shoes of another person, understanding their feelings and perspectives, and using that understanding to guide your actions.")**

(Read the definition on the screen)

So, empathy must end in action. We don't feel empathy just for the sake of feeling it, we must respond.

Scientists have different opinions about the origin of empathy. Some say we are born empathetic and some say it can be learned. But for the sake of this discussion we will use this definition which most social scientists agree on.

With more than 90 million millennials on the planet and more than \$300 billion in discretionary spending, nonprofits would be wise to solidify the act of giving by eliciting empathy.

This so-called 'me' generation has been called lethargic and uninspired. My dad often used the same adjectives to describe me during many summer breaks.

The truth is that millennials have gotten a bad rap.

This is the tiny house generation!

Did you know that they will live on less so that they can give more? Data shows that members of this generation will even take a pay cut to work at a company that they feel is doing something to make the world a better place. And while they say that they are spiritual but not religious, when surveyed, they say that they want to know and understand God and they want frank and open conversations with religious leaders.

As a matter of fact, in a recent study funded by the Lily foundation, researchers discovered that churches where the lead pastor engages directly with young adults, churches are seeing increases in attendance by this generation versus a decline. The same holds true with Christian nonprofit leaders.

Millennials want to hear and be heard. And they want direct contact with those in power. They want to check them out – see if they are the real deal.

Let's face it, this is the most-informed generation in history. **(PULL OUT MY CELL PHONE AND HOLD IT UP)**. And THIS has changed everything.

With just a few taps of their finger, young people from around the world can donate to nonprofits easier than ever. And with the same power, they can smell a charity's inflated statistics or photo-shopped images from a mile away.

The good news for charities is that technology now allows communications to be nimble and inventive. That means more interactions catered to the individual. We can make giving easy.

But although this generation is tech savvy, they are also social. So how do nonprofits tap into this?

Did you know that scientists have found that pro-social activities, in other words activities that involve personal one on one relationships or engagement for the purposes of good, increases empathy? And scientists have proven that when empathy goes up, charitable giving goes up.

Well that might sound obvious – make people feel something and they will give.

But millennials don't trust organizations. They will give to people and causes but not organizations. And millennials say that they feel a disconnect between their financial gift and the people we serve.

Millennials want to know where their money really going.

So as nonprofits, how can we build trust, create meaningful social opportunities and connect millennials with our beneficiaries?

Volunteerism might come to mind.

But most nonprofits, like World Vision, where I work for example, don't really have volunteer opportunities.

For World Vision, it goes against our community development model. We equip the community to do the work themselves: they own it, it is theirs. So, I can't take a millennial to dig a well or build a school.

Other nonprofits either don't have the staff to offer hands-on opportunities to work alongside beneficiaries or they offer serving opportunities but there really isn't any thought that goes into the volunteer experience and next steps on their transformational journey. They are simply doing a task.

Multiple studies conducted by people like Kurt Alan Ver Beek, and Robert J. Priest and others have concluded that although short-term mission trip participants did have a positive experience and intended that their experience would translate into action, when surveyed a few months later, most often it did not.

Volunteering for the sake of volunteering does not transform people's lives.

As churches and nonprofits, we don't strategically build intentional space within the volunteer opportunity for conversation and relationship. It is transactional.

What if the focus shifted from transaction to transformation? What if, rather than clocking in for a hands-on activity the purpose (the goal) was personal transformation?

Social scientist Mary Miller's research shows that empathy not only leads to action (giving) it also leads to personal transformation for the millennial. This highlights a direct correlation between empathy and the spectrum of behaviors that enable personal transformation.

How can nonprofits step outside the box of traditional donor engagement and fundraising, to elicit empathetic responses which will facilitate transformation in the life of the millennial, and ALSO secure consistent funding going forward for their critical work?

**(ON SCREEN: EMPATHY = ENGAGEMENT)**

Notice that the screen doesn't say Engagement = Empathy. Simply setting up a volunteer opportunity is not going to elicit empathy.

Actually, the reverse is true. Research conducted by Drs Kim and Kou shows that people who feel empathy engage. And that engagement includes increased giving.

**(ON SCREEN: Slide of old man and apples)**

Let me give you an example.

I don't know about you, but I am a big list maker. Can anyone relate to that? Well a while back I was chatting with a friend who is equally obsessed with to-do lists, and I am embarrassed to tell you that we both admitted that we even add things to the list after we have completed them, just so that we can make that little check mark.

I do realize this is just wrong on so many levels.

But this list-making got me to thinking that sometimes we become so focused on our list, that we stop noticing and engaging with those around us.

Now this can apply to nonprofits. We get so focused on the tasks and activities themselves that we aren't really thinking of the human beings that are our donors. And this behavior can bleed out into our daily lives. We are all so busy.

We don't make eye contact on the street because frankly, we are busy, and someone might start a conversation with us. We are in a hurry at Starbucks, so we don't say hello to the elderly man sitting alone at a table drinking his coffee. Maybe he went there that morning looking for a little human contact – but how would we know as we rush in and out with our list in our hands.

I got into a conversation about this with the women in my Bible study and we decided, for one month, to try looking up from our lists and see what would happen.

Not long after, my friend Dawn had a pretty amazing experience.

Monday morning, she was out the door, shopping list in one hand, daughter Hannah in the other, headed for the grocery store. Hannah needed to be at school in thirty minutes, so she had just enough time to dash in and grab what she needed. Dawn flew through the produce section, barely noticing the old man standing alone in the apple section, staring at the Fujis. "He's probably trying to make up his mind," she told herself. "We do live in Washington, the apple capital of the universe," she thought as she scooted off to the bakery department. But as she reached for the last item on her list, she felt compelled to peek around the corner and see if he was still there. There he stood, unmoved. Partly because of what we'd been talking about, and partly (in my opinion) a nudge from God, Dawn walked over and gently placed her hand on the man's shoulder.

"Excuse me sir, can I help you choose an apple?" she asked. There was no response. It was then that Dawn leaned in to make eye contact with the man, and as she did, she saw tears rolling down his face. "What's wrong?" she asked. "Why are you crying?" It took a while for him to answer, and then quietly the man said, "I miss my wife. I wanted to bake a pie," he said, as the tears continued to flow. Apparently, he thought he'd reached the point where he could do this – go out into the world without his best friend – but it was just too much. He found himself stuck there, unable to move. Dawn put her arm around the man and listened (now with Dawn crying also) as he told her how his beautiful wife of many years had died recently. He told Dawn how his heart ached for her beyond comprehension.

And there, in the produce section of the grocery store, something incredible happened – a human connection. Dawn could have just gone on about her day. The old man could have remained there unnoticed, unloved. Instead, she was love to him that day. Love incarnate.

The Bible tells us that God “Is” love, and it also says that we were made in his likeness. Aren’t we then called to “be love” in the world?

Dawn and Mr. Jacobs talked for a while that day. Tears dried. She asked if he had family around and he did. “Just a bad day,” he said and thanked her for seeing him through that moment. She helped him select the apples for his pie and gave him a hug. But mostly, she noticed an old man standing in the apple section of the grocery store crying and she did something about it.

As nonprofits, we have the ability to fight human suffering through tenderness, kindness, and compassion. Not only for those we serve, but for our donors as well. I have found that when we reach out to someone who is hurting, hungry, or needs a hand up ... or someone who might look different than we do ... we begin to identify ourselves with that person. We see a part of ourselves in them if we are brave enough to do that. This leads us to recognize that even if someone looks different than we do, speaks a different language, or is in a different socio-economic group, even then, we are more alike in our humanity, than we are unlike. This realization not only elicits empathy, but also leads to spiritual formation. This is something we can facilitate for millennial donors.

This generation is not afraid to reach out to someone they don’t know. They are less judgmental than previous generations. They have the extraordinary capacity to enter into potentially uncomfortable conversations and join in the part of that person that is most hidden. When we do this, it opens us up to empathy.

As nonprofits we may fear opening up opportunities for our donors to connect directly with our beneficiaries in a deep way because it might expose our deficiencies. But millennials seek transparency. They are not interested in superficial experiences. They respect openness.

Meryl Streep says,

**(ON SCREEN: “The great gift of human beings is that we have the power of empathy. We can all sense a mysterious connection to one another.”)**

Has anyone here ever had that experience where you are talking with someone you’ve never met before, yet you feel connected to them in some way? As humans we can feel it: that mysterious connection.

Imagine talking one-on-one to a refugee from Syria. There’s a good chance it might be a little uncomfortable at first. Your world and theirs might seem totally different. But research shows that when we step into the world of someone with a difference race, religion, or background, we begin to feel our connectedness as human beings and we begin to experience empathy for that person.

Or imagine talking to a transgender person (with an open heart and mind) and hearing what their average day is like. Listening to their struggles and putting ourselves in their shoes would probably open up our worlds to challenges that never entered our minds.

Placing ourselves in uncomfortable situations, one on one, with someone different from us, changes us. And I believe it changes us for the better.

One example of this is Crossing Points Art in New York, which offers local artists an opportunity to teach art classes to survivors of human trafficking. They spend time together, painting, talking, and sharing their lives each week.

Volunteers with Crossing Point feel connected to the beneficiaries. They understand what their financial gifts are funding at a much deeper level. After serving, they empathize with survivor's personal stories and their struggles rather than having simply read their story in a blog or newsletter.

Millennials want us to lift the hood ... let them see inside. They will trust you MORE because of it!

I was discussing millennials with a lead pastor friend of mine recently and he was frustrated with the decline of this age-group in his church. He said "Don't millennials know how hard it is to be a lead pastor and how many hats we have to wear?" I said, "No and they probably never will. But that's the point. They want you to say, 'Hey this is really hard and here's why!'"

Now I know this can be tough to do – to admit the areas where we struggle.

But Millennials can be very forgiving.

My daughter told me the other day that she has chosen to forgive me (a boomer) for creating a recession for her generation to deal with when they got out of college.

How charitable of her – considering that we paid almost \$200,000 for her college education!

But seriously, millennials are forgiving.

They forgave Mark Zuckerberg for stealing their data.

They forgave lululemon for accidentally making see through leggings.

And they even forgave Mike Tyson for that horrible face tattoo.

**(TYSON PICTURE ON SCREEN)**

And they will forgive us for not being perfect, as long as we are transparent about it.



If nonprofit leaders want to break down the walls between perceptions and reality, they need to give millennials access to people. This includes other philanthropists who give to that charity, and the nonprofit leaders themselves. Millennials want to ask questions, share their ideas and learn.

For example, charities could create a millennial board of directors, connecting each millennial board member with a senior board member for a two-year mentoring and reverse mentoring relationship. Because, according to a 2016 article in Forbes magazine, millennials overwhelmingly report that they want to be mentored, both at work and in their personal lives.

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Ideally these conversations can happen in person. Unlikely and unfiltered conversations increase empathy and increased empathy increases giving. And increased empathy changes us! We start to see that we are more alike than unlike in our humanity -that mysterious connection.

So, if you are the head of a nonprofit, a fundraiser, or even someone who just wants to find a passionate cause. I encourage you to bring the word “un” into your vocabulary.

- It starts with **un**expected transparency between nonprofits and donors.
- Then **un**likely opportunities to meet with and understand who your financial gifts are benefiting.
- And **un**filtered conversations with those individuals.

We need to UN-DO what we have been doing and work backwards.

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How will churches and non-profits respond? What could we be doing ahead of time so that millennials care enough to engage in advocacy?

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Give the millennial an experience with your beneficiary. And then afterward, encourage them to talk about it. Every millennial has a circle of influence and letting others in their circle know about the work a charity is doing is a great first step.

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Millennials want to make a life, not a living. Learning their habits, being transparent, and engaging with them at a deeper level is an investment that takes patience.

But if you solidify their relationship with your church or nonprofit through empathy, it will change everything – including the millennial.

This generation matters.

They are part of our legacy and that includes the legacy of our ministry.

Let me leave you with this:

Someone once told me that ministry is the wake we leave behind when we follow Jesus. I've never forgotten that.

My husband and I are water people so this image is a powerful one for me. I thought about it for months, remembering so many early mornings on the lake with our children. Even now I can close my eyes and I am transported. I love to rise early for a kayak ride across the lake. Cool summer mornings, the sun is coming up and there's a low sleepy mist just waking and beginning to rise softly. Eyes on the horizon, I head out into the stillness of the morning, not a word, as it feels too holy to speak with only the sounds of paddle brushing water. And here's the interesting part. Long before I'd ever heard that expression "Ministry is the wake we leave behind when we follow Jesus" I had a habit of pausing when I reached the center of the lake, turning back and contemplating the wake I'd left behind. To me it seemed like a little legacy of sorts. My wake starts off small of course, I am only one kayaker on a large lake. But I am moving and shifting things as I paddle. A little family of ducks slides gently to the right, an old log is dislodged from its resting place and my wake begins to carry it off toward the Boy Scout camp at the end of the lake. And like music, it expands as it ripples out, more sticks, more ducks and now some lily pads shift and a fish jumps far off, just at the edge of my wake. And then I think it's over, but as I begin to turn back, I catch a glimpse of those ripples having made it all the way to the edge of the lake and I watch as they begin to bounce back to me, crossing over one another like a folding telescope.

I go out into the world, eyes on Jesus, my small paddle moving living water as it ripples out into the world and returns again to me as joy. Had I not turned back, I wouldn't know that my presence there had left a little legacy. And so it is with life.

What joy to do the little and big things that we can, eyes on our Lord, living into the knowledge that with every stroke and every kindness, a glimmer of faith in humanity is restored – ripples of salve to hurting souls.

I am only one kayaker. I sometimes wonder if I can change the world. My God tells me that the answer is a resounding YES.

I believe that we are called to boldly rally up an army of warriors who will one day be unafraid to stand before the throne of the Lamb in the knowledge that they, in faith, gave generously of what they had to comfort and provide for the vulnerable and oppressed. We must fight for every last one.

We are ill-equipped. Yet God has called us – as NGO's and churches – to stand in that gap and build a bridge between those living in the margins and those who can do something about it ... and that includes millennials.

We need to love them where they are and be open-handed and generous ourselves as we invite the next generation to do the same. I believe that one day we will look back in awe as God, through the work of our churches and nonprofits, leaves a massive wake of compassion, wider and deeper and farther than the mind can comprehend.

90 million millennials...

Over \$300 billion in discretionary spending...

There's an old saying in the nonprofit world, "No money, no mission."

Without money, advocacy, support, and programs go away. A charity's mission is their way of telling the world, "This is what we believe in."

It's also that charity's mission to find as many of those 90 million informed, savvy, social-justice driven millennials as possible. Meet them where they are and use all the tools at your disposal to facilitate an empathetic response and to develop an engaged donor base.

Do you want to meet this generation where they are? Are you willing to do what it takes?

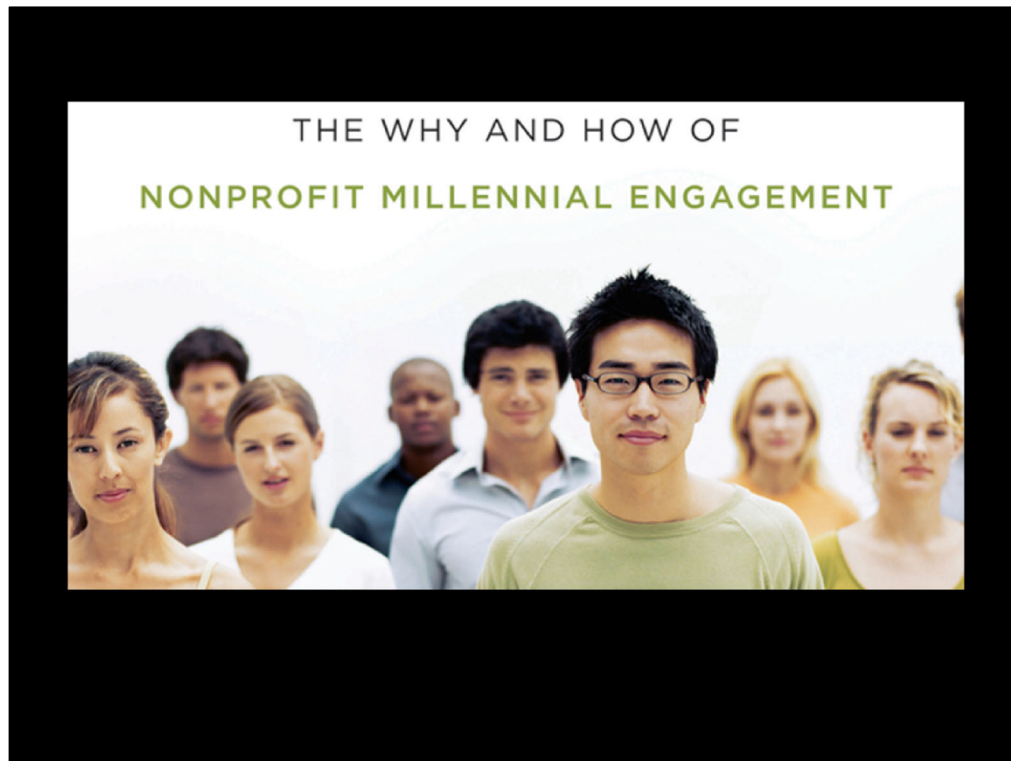
Then stop selling a product and start focusing on millennial transformation through empathy.

Millennials want the same things we do. Let's do it together.

Thank you.

## ***UNLIKELY AND UNFILTERED CONVERSATION***

### **WORKSHOP BREAKOUT SLIDE DECK**



“What will happen, if 10 years from now your church or nonprofit hasn’t figured out how to engage the millennial generation?”

By then, this generation will be the prime working, income earners in the US and in the case of World Vision (where I work), this loss of revenue could actually result in the deaths of those we serve, especially children under the age of 5 due to diseases and malnutrition.”

Today we are going to talk about how nonprofits can engage the next generation of donors (millennials) in philanthropy.

I’ve spent the last three years studying millennial behavior as it relates to nonprofit giving.

Spoiler Alert! The place we want to get to is empathy, and in a few minutes we are going to do an activity that will help us understand one way to get there pretty quickly.

But we can’t truly understand why empathy matters unless we understand millennials, and the importance of engaging them in nonprofit work.



Why do we need to engage millennials?

Well here is one reason.

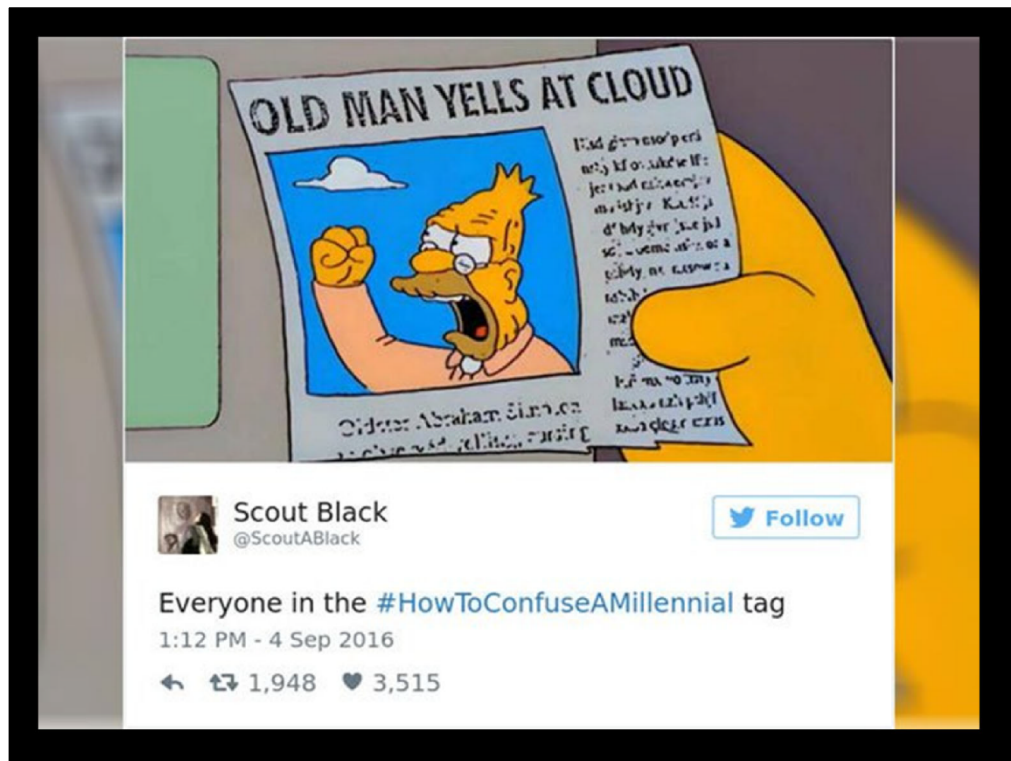
Today – Right now, 25 million people face a hunger crisis in East Africa. 8000 children will die today from curable health related issues like diarrhea. 1 in 10 people in the world do not have access to clean water.

But God has given us the tools to do something about this.



“For I was hungry and you fed me,  
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,  
I was homeless and you gave me a room” We find Jesus with the poor.  
And the poor are hungry, thirsty, and need a place to lay their heads at night.





Churches and nonprofits need financial gifts to meet the needs of the poor.

The boomer generation is aging-out and generation x is not engaging in helping the poor at the same level that boomers were.

Now some churches and nonprofits are failing to engage potential millennial donors, which poses a huge challenge in serving people in need going forward.



Data shows that if nonprofits don't figure out how to engage millennials consistently, the death rate of children in developing countries under the age of five will begin to rise again by the year 2030.

Each of our organizations will experience negative impact on those we serve.

So the question is, how can Christian organizations engage millennials in their mission and increase consistent giving by members of this important generation?



People love to talk about millennials.

Is this the lazy generation?

The entitled generation?

The self-absorbed generation?

The I want a hug for showing up to work generation?

The I plan on living with my parent's until I'm 40 generation?



No it isn't.

This is the tiny house generation (they are not superficial).

The Social Justice Generation – they want to change the world.

The Savvy Generation – They've been marketed to since they were 2 years old!

The Informed Generation – They are the most highly educated generation in history.



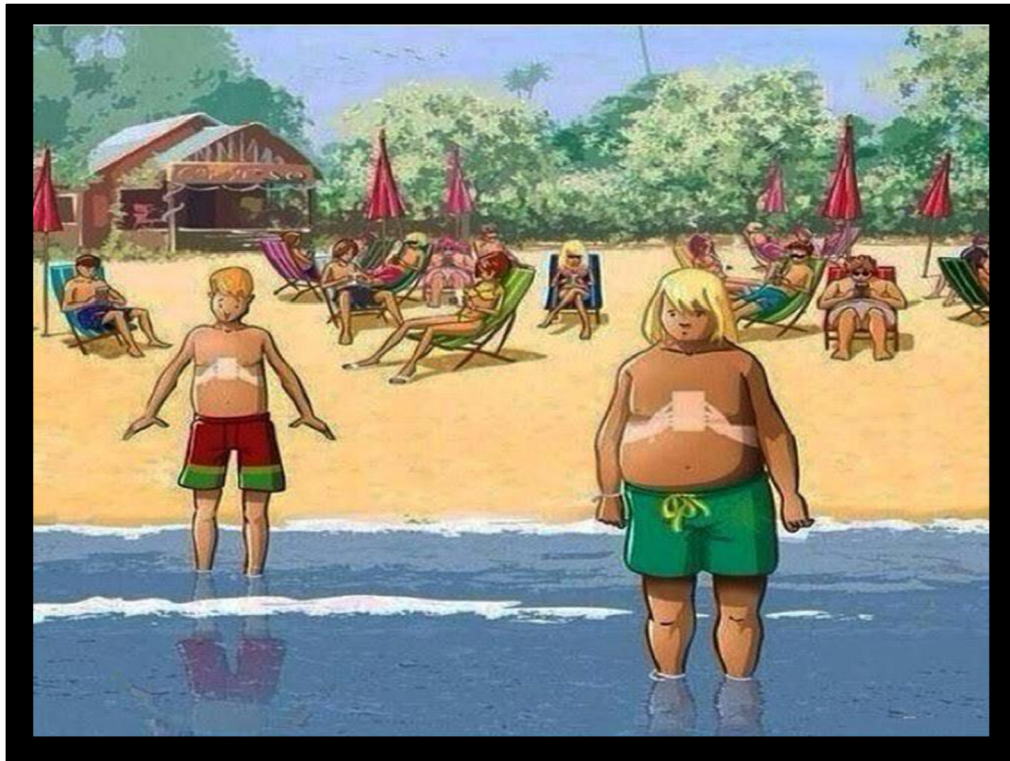
Some Facts:

Millennials are impulsive.

This impulsivity does bring in gifts to help the poor but it means that their giving is inconsistent....

which also means that any spiritual development that might come out of engaging and giving to the poor is limited.

Research shows, however that there are ways to increase consistent Millennial giving.



Millennials are connected.

Understanding their communication norms increases consistency in Millennial giving and...Affirming their identities as charitable does as well.

The good and bad news about millennials being connected?

You do something they perceive to be good in the world?  
They tell their friends.

You lie to them?  
They tell their friends.

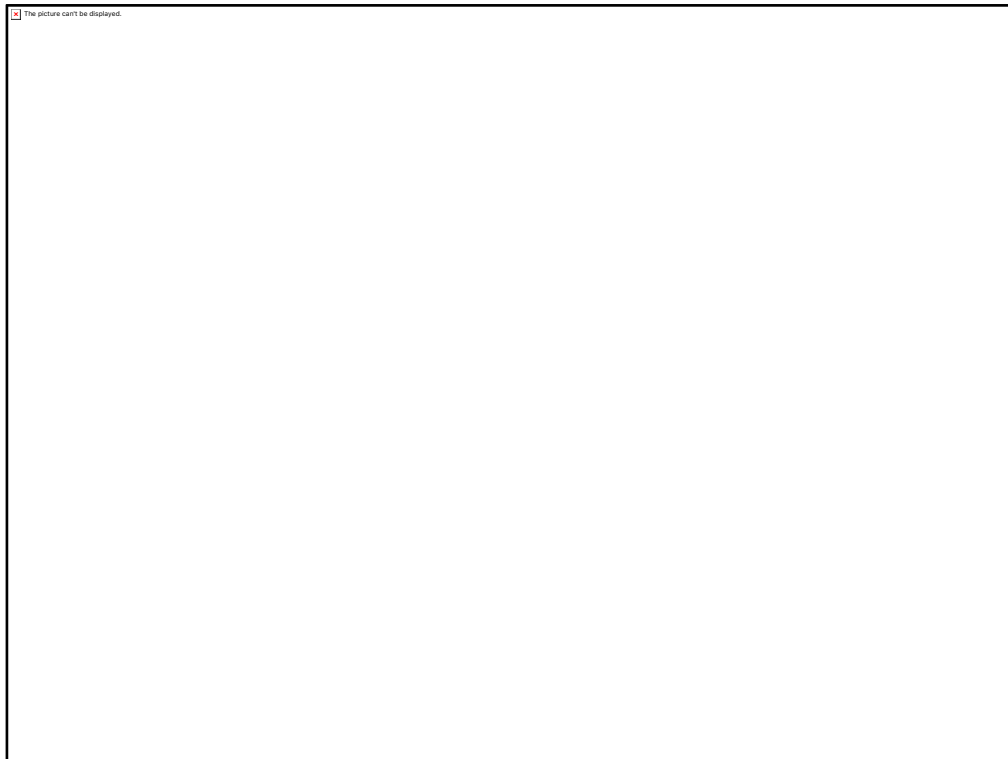




Because millennials are savvy and have access to instant information they want transparency and authenticity.

And they don't want to be Bible-thumped.

They've watched previously trusted leaders (including clergy) fall from grace. They won't just believe us because we say so!



Do millennials lack empathy?

Some studies say they do, citing digital versus in-person relationships.

But could it be that society in general is becoming more narcissistic and less empathetic?

Maybe Millennial empathy just looks different. And my research shows that in many cases, empathy can be learned.

Maybe this Social Justice generation will actually move us toward a more empathetic age.





So, what is the big idea?

What if, rather than trying to adjust millennials to fit our communication style, we adjusted theirs?

They care – it just looks different.

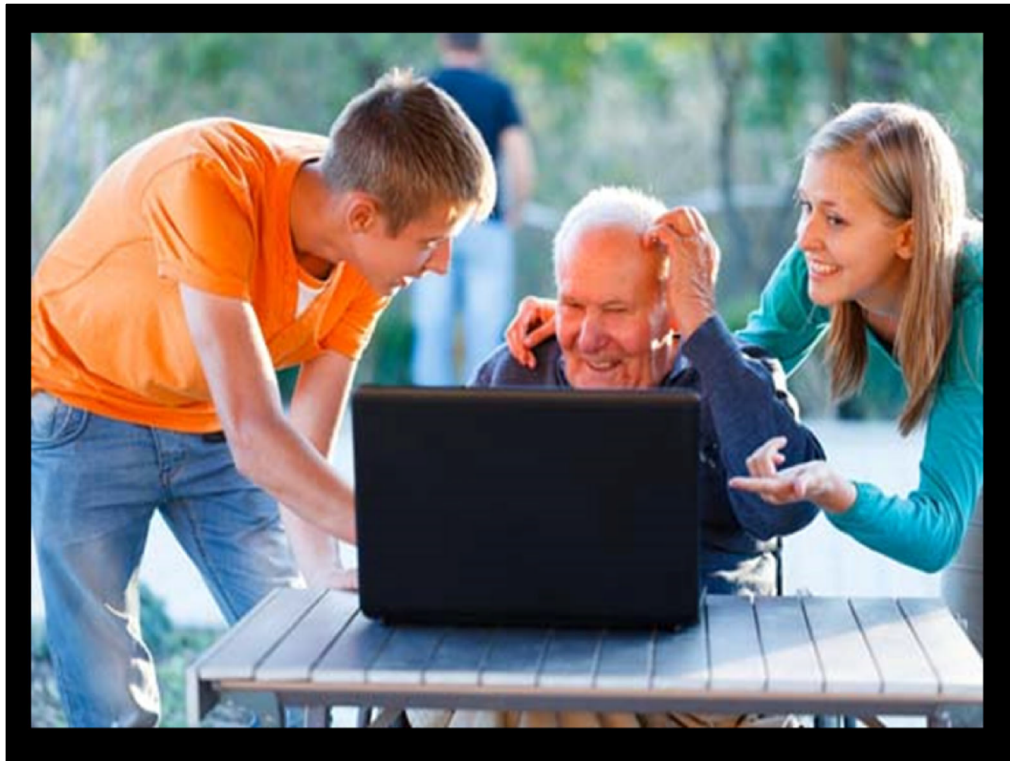
Millennials love stories for example, but they want to respond financially immediately, and preferably on their mobile phones.

And they want experiences. What might that look like?



Here is the idea.

Greater organizational transparency, combined with interactive human engagement, (both digitally and in person) will spark millennial interest in society's biggest human needs and increase committed giving by this generation.



There are things we need to understand about **how** millennials want to engage.

They want to learn from older generations (I have the data to prove it) and they want to share what they know with older generations.

They value sharing.

If you ask them, they will share online or in person and they want the organizations they partner with to do the same ...

even when the news is bad.

Millennials are ready to hear and discuss the whole story. And they want proof.



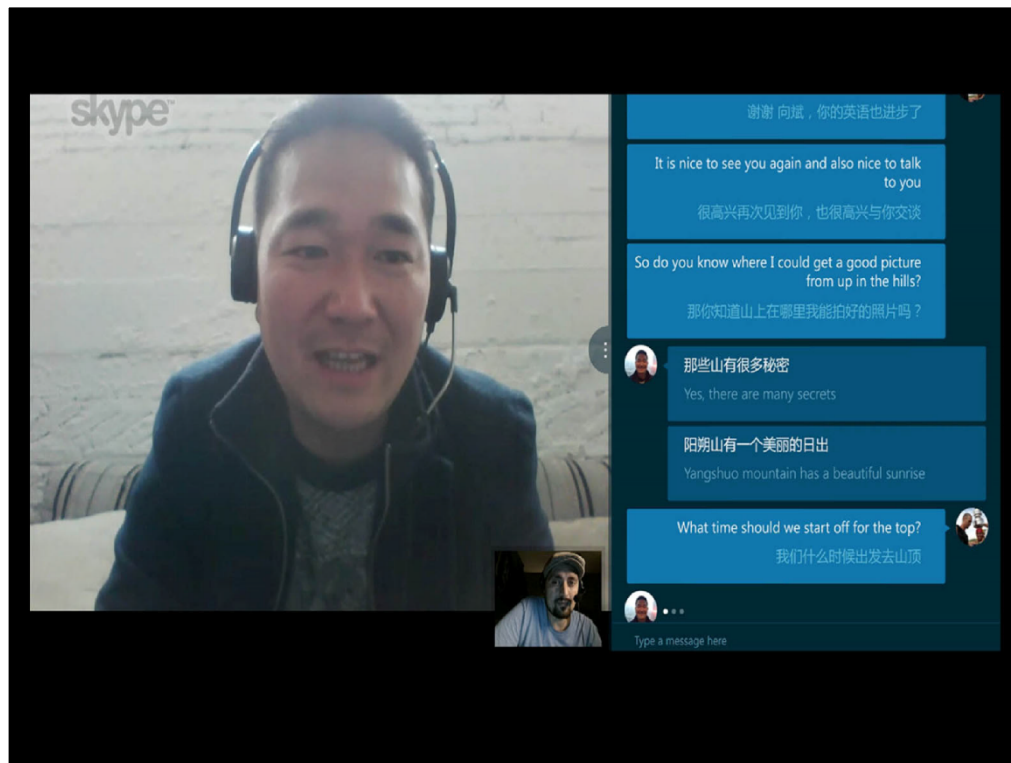
If they trust you, they will share with their friends.

Data shows that millennials tend to form groups of 4 – 5 people with one leading and the others following.

Researchers tried to market equally to all five. It didn't work.

Market to the leader – and they will tell their friends. Millennials are social.





And what if this transparent, interactive experience sparked spiritual formation? What would that look like?

What if we affirmed the millennial generation's social norms, such as their propensity for social justice?

Might they begin to see themselves as children of a God who loves the poor and those in need?

And might they begin to see their face in the faces of others?



Here are some things I've learned.

Nonprofits need to allow millennials to share what they know. We need to affirm their social norms.

We need to give them opportunities for live interaction with our beneficiaries. And we need to do it without hiding things.

No unrealistic standards – and no sugar coating.

Increased pro-social behavior = Increased empathy

Increased empathy = Increased giving

Sung-Ju Kim and Xiaonan Kou, "Not All Empathy Is Equal: How Dispositional Empathy Affects Charitable Giving," *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing* 26, no. 4, (2014): 316, SINGLE PAGE# <https://doi.org/10.1080/10495142.2014.965066>.

So, we know that millennials want authenticity. They want transparency.  
And they want hands-on experiences.

My research shows that pro-social behavior, which is behavior intended to benefit other people (or society as a whole) such as helping, sharing, giving, cooperating, volunteering ...

Pro-social behavior increases empathy.

And research by professors Kim and Kou (in addition to many other studies) shows that when empathy increases, giving goes up.



I believe that if we want to engage millennials, we need to facilitate unlikely conversations.

These human connections allow an opportunity for empathy, affirm our likeness as humans, created in the image of God ...

and remove the perceived filter of “church” or “non-profit” where we have historically controlled and at times rewritten the story to suit our own purposes.





There are organizations that facilitate unlikely conversations. Churches and nonprofits could use those resources or create their own.

StoryCorp, for example, creates opportunities for people to have a conversation, build connections, learn to listen and hopefully create a more compassionate world. Nonprofits and churches could create opportunities for conversations with our beneficiaries.

The Human Library is another great example. Did you know that you can check out a human library book at libraries all over the US today? Human beings volunteer their time to literally “be” a human library book. They might be a refugee, a domestic violence survivor, a person who was homeless or a recovering alcoholic. We can go into that library, ask to “check them out” and then sit down with them for a half an hour or so and simply ask them questions, have a conversation.

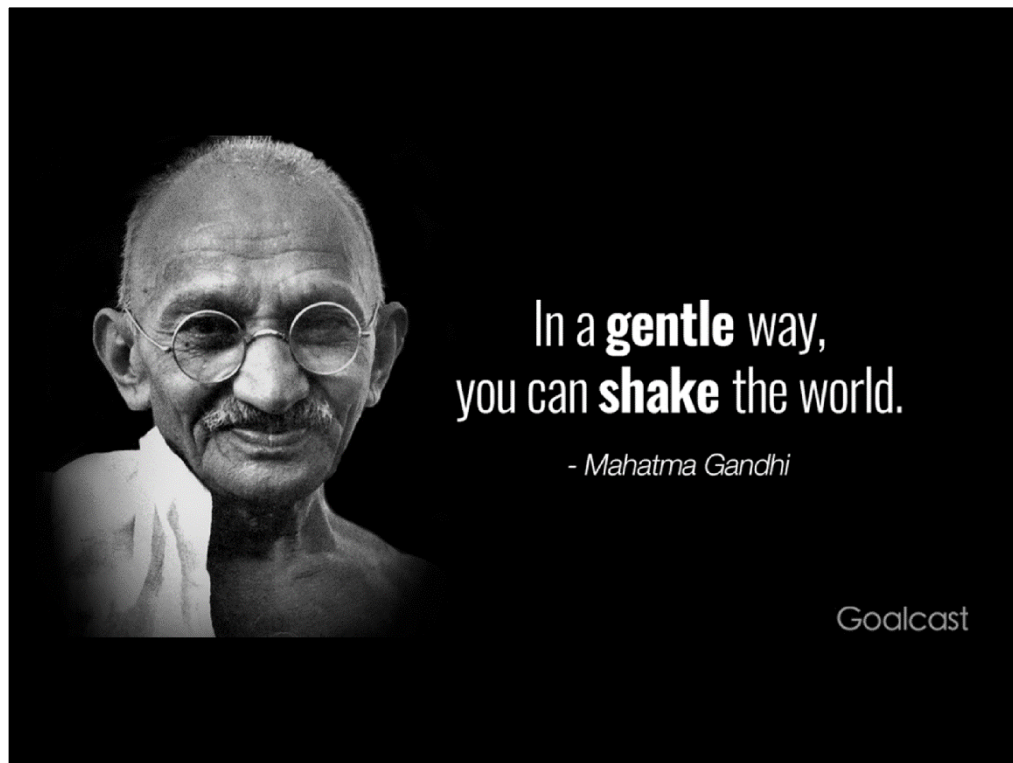
These types of activities increase empathy, increase spiritual formation and demonstrate our shared humanity.

And organizations that aren’t able to facilitate in-person conversations could facilitate these opportunities online by creating a sort of portal – where a US millennial could have a conversation with someone living in a third-world country for example.



One way to do this is through the use of Skype or something like HoloLens Technology, which was created by Microsoft.

What if a US millennial could go for a walk to fetch water with someone in Honduras, or Zambia – and have a conversation while they are doing it? Or experience a live food distribution as it's happening in Famine-plagued Turkana?



Mohatma Gandhi said, “In a gentle way, you can shake the world”.

I believe this “gentle shaking” can happen through simple human interaction.

If we can come up with platforms for millennials to meet someone who looks or sounds differently than they do, they will experience empathy toward that person, their world will become smaller and they will engage and respond.

## Unlikely Conversation Activity

**VIDEO LINK HERE**

*(This will be a link to watch a 2-minute unlikely conversation)*

Let's give this a try ourselves.

In a moment, a group of people will walk into the room. One person is going to sit down at each table and you will have the opportunity to have an unlikely conversation.

The person will begin by introducing themselves and sharing their story for about 5 minutes.

Then you can simply ask questions and have a conversation! If you get stuck I will put a few questions up on the screen.

This activity will take 15 - 20 minutes and then our guests will leave us.

At that point we will have a chance to debrief and get your thoughts on the experience.

### Feeling stuck?

1. Tell me about your family?
2. Tell me about some of the challenges you have encountered?
3. What lessons could I learn from you?
4. What do we have in common?
5. What is your favorite thing to do?

I'd like to welcome our guests.

Each of you come in, find a table to sit down at, and please take 5 minutes or so to share your story.

Then the people at your table will ask you questions and you can share as you wish!

## Debrief

- What did you think of the experience?
- Did you find it challenging? If so, in what way?
- What did you like about it?
- Did you learn anything new?
- Did you learn anything about yourself?

So sorry to interrupt you but time is up!

Please take a moment to thank our guests. (guests leave)

I'd like each table to talk amongst yourselves about this experience for 5 minutes.  
Here are some guiding questions but debrief as you wish.

At the end of 5 minutes I will ask that one representative from each table please share with the group.

If you need a nudge, here are some things you could discuss: What did you think of the experience?

Did you find it challenging? If so, in what way? What did you like about it?

Did you learn anything new? Did you learn anything about yourself?

## Marching off the Philanthropic Map Adventure Not Tradition



Facilitating unlikely conversations is just one way to engage the millennial generation deeply and consistently with your church or nonprofit.

We need to remember that millennials are relational, and although the world sometimes says otherwise, they are responsible.

They care deeply about the world.

Think about this:

By the year 2060, the millennial generation will inherit fifty-nine trillion dollars, almost half of which is projected to go to charitable causes. Organizations that invite millennials to work with, not for them will harness that power to change the world for good.

We believe in taking on the same causes – let's do it together.

Thank you.

## APPENDIX B:

### SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

As nonprofits consider engaging potential millennial donors, it is worth noting that there is a difference between Christian and non-Christian giving. People who regularly attend religious services (27 to 52 times per year) give three times more money to charity than those who never attend religious services.<sup>402</sup> According to IRS data on income and giving, those living in the Mormon West and the Bible belt give more to charity than those living in the wealthiest urban areas, such as San Francisco and Boston.<sup>403</sup> Since data demonstrates that those living in the wealthiest urban areas give less, it is important to note that according to a Nielsen report, millennials are moving to those urban areas because social activities are right outside their door.<sup>404</sup> However even in urban areas, US religious institutions and their members donate 4.5 times more money to those living in poverty overseas than secular institutions and non-religiously affiliated individuals.<sup>405</sup> This demonstrates that whether urban or rural, although millennials lack trust in the church and have concerns about how much money the church gives to help people in need, they still give to the church.

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<sup>402</sup> Zinsmeister, 1138.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid., 1146.

<sup>404</sup> “Millennials: Breaking the Myths,” *What People Watch, Listen To and Buy*, Last modified 2014, <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2014/millennials-breaking-the-myths.html>.

<sup>405</sup> Zinsmeister, 52.



As part of my research for this dissertation, 60 millennial participants were invited to voluntarily take part in a research survey about the millennial generation's unique beliefs and attitudes regarding people living in poverty and their responses to those needs. Participants (54 percent identified as Christian) were asked about whether they should give money to their home church, and how much.<sup>406</sup> They were also asked about what types of organizations (including the church) they give to when they want to give to charity. The following results demonstrate that the majority of participants felt they should give some amount of money to their church. The amount that they felt they should give varied. It was interesting to note that when asked whether congregants should give money to the church, over 60 percent of the respondents said yes. Another point of interest was how much they felt they should give, and how likely they were to support other types of charitable causes. The complete survey can be found at the following URL: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZTQJR6V>.

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<sup>406</sup> Ibid.

**Table 1.2: Should every member give some amount of money to their church?**<sup>407</sup>

| <b>Answer Choices</b>     | <b>Responses</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Strongly agree            | 33.3%            |
| Somewhat agree            | 29.17%           |
| Neither agree or disagree | 29.17%           |
| Somewhat disagree         | 4.17%            |
| Strongly disagree         | 4.17%            |

**Table 1.3: How much should Christians give to their home church?**<sup>408</sup>

| <b>Answer Choices</b>   | <b>Responses</b> |
|---|------------------|
| 10% of their income   | 12.50%           |
| As much as they are willing to give   | 37.50%           |
| As much as they are able, after expenses                                      | 8.33%            |
| There is no requirement for giving to one's home church                       | 4.17%            |
| More than 10%   | 4.17%            |
| Enough that it is sacrificial   | 25.00%           |
| It doesn't matter as long as total giving to all organizations adds up to 10% | 8.33%            |

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<sup>407</sup> Ibid.<sup>408</sup> Ibid.

**Table 1.4: How likely are you to support the following types of charitable organizations in the next 12 months?<sup>409</sup>**

| <b>Answer Choices</b>  | <b>Very Likely</b> | <b>Somewh at Likely</b> | <b>Not Too Likely</b> | <b>Not At All Likely</b> | <b>Not Sure / Don't Know</b> |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Religion<br>(giving to places of worship, or missionaries)   | 71.88%             | 12.50%                  | 2.12%                 | 6.25%                    | 6.25%                        |
| Education<br>(giving to schools, educational organizations)  | 40.63%             | 31.25%                  | 18.75%                | 0.00%                    | 9.38%                        |
| Human Services<br>(giving toward food and nutrition, legal services, housing and shelter, emergency assistance, families and children's services etc.) | 43.75%             | 31.25%                  | 6.25%                 | 9.38%                    | 9.38%                        |
| Foundations<br>(giving to private and family foundations)  | 20.00%             | 16.67%                  | 23.33%                | 30.00%                   | 10.00%                       |
| Health<br>(giving to health research and medical services)   | 20.00%             | 23.33%                  | 20.00%                | 20.00%                   | 16.67%                       |
| Public-society benefit<br>(giving to voter education, civil rights/liberties, consumer rights, public research, etc.)                                  | 13.33%             | 23.33%                  | 13.33%                | 36.67%                   | 13.33%                       |
| Arts, culture and humanities<br>(giving to museums, performing arts, public broadcasting, etc.)  | 16.13%             | 22.58%                  | 16.13%                | 6.45%                    | 9.68%                        |
| International affairs<br>(giving to international aids, development and relief organizations, etc.)  | 41.94%             | 25.81%                  | 16.13%                | 6.45%                    | 9.68%                        |
| Environment/animals<br>(giving to zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, wildlife, habitat preservation, environmental education)                         | 13.33%             | 20.00%                  | 30.00%                | 23.33%                   | 13.33%                       |
| Political campaigns<br>(giving to presidential candidates)   | 3.33%              | 10.00%                  | 10.00%                | 60.00%                   | 16.67%                       |
| Troops / veterans  | 0.00%              | 33.33%                  | 23.33%                | 33.33%                   | 10.00%                       |

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<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

This survey provided an understanding not only of the kinds of things that millennials feel moved to give to, but also the amount of money, or percentage of their income that they feel they should or would give. It was interesting to note that although just over half of the participants in the survey identified as Christians, over 60 percent felt that people should give to their local church.<sup>410</sup> One figure that appears to deviate from previous generations is the percentage they felt they should give. Almost 40 percent of participants in this survey felt that people should give as much as they are willing to give versus the traditional 10 percent of one's income.<sup>411</sup> Lastly, the large majority of participants in this survey claimed that they would give (in the next 12 months) primarily to religion, education, human services and international affairs.<sup>412</sup> This data provides a window into the kinds of causes that millennials are interested in giving to. This could help nonprofits target their messaging accordingly.

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<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

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