**HOW TRULY GENEROUS PEOPLE GIVE MORE THAN MONEY**

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Last night, I was at a charitable event on Wall Street. I watched as the people who create money from their brains gave incredibly generous amounts for a great cause. The charity event was for [Matt's Promise](http://www.mattspromise.org/), a 10-year-old nonprofit determined to wipe out [Duchenne's muscular dystrophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duchenne_muscular_dystrophy%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), a disease which kills young boys before they reach the age of 20.

In 10 short years, this dedicated organization of volunteers together with their partners at [Charley's Fund](http://www.charleysfund.org/) has directed over $25 million into scientific research resulting in promising new therapies that may save the lives of those living with this disease. Sure the auction items and amounts paid were impressive, but what really [inspired](https://mail.mvpub.com/owa/redir.aspx?C=f7d18ad8873c4475835e4f6d0b468349&URL=http%3a%2f%2fbit.ly%2fKDSpring) me during the evening were the stories of how people had given so much more beyond money.

This [motivated team](https://mail.mvpub.com/owa/redir.aspx?C=f7d18ad8873c4475835e4f6d0b468349&URL=http%3a%2f%2fbit.ly%2f13XVGmE) through this partnership has been using their combined time, influence, talents and smarts to help launch the Race To Yes campaign, a critical effort to accelerate the FDA drug approval process. Such a task is herculean and can not be accomplished with money alone. With the right help they may even wipe out this disease in their next decade.

We're used to charitable organizations asking us to "[give and give generously](http://www.inc.com/kevin-daum/18-inspirational-quotes-for-spring.html)." Most people think they are referring to money--and no doubt that any nonprofit can make use of cash donations. But not everyone has the extra cash available to give until it hurts. Many people want to be charitable, but with the costs of starting a business or raising a family, not everyone can spare the money to help make a difference. Fortunately, there are plenty of opportunities to give value in other ways.

**1. Give time.**

Even people driving a startup company can [find an hour](http://bit.ly/KDTime) or two to dedicate to a cause. I know companies that pool committed hours from employees so they can offer blocks of time to a worthy cause. In one year, a team of 20 people offering two hours a month can add up to 480 hours of energetic time for a need. It might be just enough to make the difference.

**2. Give in-kind.**

You might not have money, but you have supplies, skills, and products people want. Reach out to the director of a nonprofit you like and find out what the organization can use to carry out its mission. Often it can be something simple you can offer. If you are a catering company, you might offer food or serving ware. If you do custom printing, you might help with napkins or bookmarks. Get creative. Matt's Promise has benefited from filmmakers who [create awareness](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOD78-Ph0LE#t=13) for Duchenne's M.D. through art. Many nonprofits thrive on these in-kind exchanges.

**3. Give space.**

Young underfunded nonprofits often need a home. Your business could be a headquarters, or at least a regular meeting place, for their worthwhile activity. It could be the use of your parking lot, conference room, or even just a cubicle in your office. You can even provide nonphysical space. It could be space on your blog or newsletter [to promote](http://bit.ly/13py6MZ) the organization or upcoming event. Take stock of the space you have that could easily be valuable to others and share.

**4. Give expertise.**

As a successful businessperson, you have great experience to share. Many of the folks working at charities are smart and capable, but they are juggling their volunteer work with all of their other responsibilities, and trying to [educate themselves](http://bit.ly/QGSFUr) in fields that may be completely new. They can benefit from a fresh perspective and new insights. So if you have a solid grasp of finance, marketing, graphics, management, design, or any other professional subject that they can put to use, offer to make yourself available for questions or consultation. Feel free to set reasonable limits on time.

**5. Give access**.

If you are gifted, educated, curious, and interesting, you probably have a strong network of people who share those characteristics. Offer to introduce your network to the organization and its good works. Most decent, able people are looking for giving opportunities, but they get lost and confused when trying to sort through a sea of volunteer opportunities. You can help both parties: Give a good cause open access to a world of skills and abilities by validating the worth of the organization, and introduce a worthwhile charity to a volunteer army. Ask the director of the charity whom the organization most needs to meet; maybe they are only a [LinkedIn connection](http://bit.ly/1c4Xo8L) away with your help.

**6. Give an ear.**

Nonprofit and charity work is frequently difficult, exhausting, and thankless. Even if what the organization is doing is fascinating, necessary, and world-changing, the volunteers will often feel worn-out and unappreciated. Sometimes, they just need someone willing to listen to the frustrations and difficulties they encounter. A little sympathy goes a long way. At the very least, you can afford to buy them a beer and listen when they talk. When they're done, tell them you understand and you [admire and appreciate](http://bit.ly/KDGracious) their efforts.