



Every Gift Matters: How Your Passion Can Change the World

Carrie Morgridge , John R. Perry

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Charitable giving is on the rise in America. Despite the lingering effects of the economic downturn, Americans continue to give generously of their time, talent, and money – more than \$335 billion in 2013, a 4.4% increase from 2011. What’s more, the bulk of that charitable giving – 72% – came not from large foundations or corporations, but from individuals making small gifts. For those with passion for a cause and a generous spirit, it’s vitally important that they leverage their gift in the right way in order to have the greatest impact possible.

In her first book *Every Gift Matters* Carrie Morgridge shares inspiring stories of powerful gifts in action showing readers how to turn the act of giving into a vehicle for positive change. Drawing on 15 years of experience supporting causes that align with her passions through gifts, Morgridge demonstrates how a smart strategy, high expectations, a deep network, and hands-on personal involvement will ensure that one’s gift is compounded over time to have the biggest impact possible.

“Each person and every gift can make a difference,” writes Morgridge. “Whoever you are, no matter how much or how little you have, your gift matters. The smallest, seemingly unimportant, donation can transform a life. And the best news is that giving transforms two lives: the one who receives and the one who gives.”

Through her role as Vice President of The Morgridge Family Foundation, Morgridge has learned what works – and what doesn’t – when it comes to giving. She argues that in order to ensure meaningful and lasting change, a gift must be more than simply a grant of money. The giver must assess whether the program is the right fit, work hand-in-hand with the key leaders on strategy, develop a plan for making the endeavor sustainable, and ensure that their gift can be leveraged to have a bigger impact on the community. By sharing real-life stories of how this hands-on approach to giving has transformed lives – including her own – Morgridge inspires others to believe that they can also make a difference in their community, no matter the size of their gift.

Every Gift Matters: How Your Passion Can Change the World Details

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Claire says

I enjoyed this book. Great perspective from the foundation side for me to take into account on the nonprofit side.

Barbara says

This was a necessary book for me to read. While I don't have a foundation (and large sums of money to donate) I found her advice on how to evaluate and decide which causes merit your support worthwhile. I have a couple of minor quibbles for instance in one chapter she was applauding the efforts of a young boy who had done a commendable job in raising funds for a cause based in Africa (I forget which country) and she said something along the lines of he could be responsible for changing all of Africa. Fortunately she doesn't express that kind of patronizing hyperbole elsewhere. As a volunteer and supporter of several non-profits it is valuable to get a funder's perspective. The author alludes to making mistakes even with ample preliminary research. The reader could benefit from some of those case studies too in learning what to avoid.

Susan Walker says

This is a great book topic. It tells you how a little giving can make so many changes. It makes you stop and think about what you can do for others. The book also gives you tips and examples on what you can do.

Marjorie says

Given To Me For An Honest Review

Every Gift Matters by Cassie Morgridge is her debut novel. It is a book about giving back to those in need. It will help you to set up and believe in how the power of donations and giving in any amount might be to help those who need it. What you find inside will help you find and follow your passions. Make this a gift to yourself if you are interested in personal charitable giving. I recommend this book to all. I look for more from Garrie Morgridge.

Badass Lioness says

This is not the typical book that I would read and review. What got me interested was the way that the author approached giving. Her focus was on the organization, the people running it and the volunteers, as well as the often unique way of offering a benefit to others.

Different chapters cover the people she has met, charities she has considered and those that she assisted. I enjoyed reading about the variety of charities from educational to foster care. She wanted to do more than write a check or donate money. This book is about how donating is investing in others. She interviews and finds out about each organization to see if there is a fit or interest to fund projects and/or programs.

There is a focus on technology and the good it can accomplish, such as bringing technology to classrooms that otherwise would not be able to afford it. She shows how "leveraging your resources and working as a team you'll be amazed at what you can achieve."

Chapter 10 covers 'outside the box' thinking from you and grantees/organizations. But I think the theme of the book can be summed up by "Philanthropy can be an adventure." The book includes real life situations, which makes it more powerful. This is not a theory or academic approach, but real world application with the Morgridge Family Foundation.

This book is a wonderful way to see charity and giving as not a remote, distant giving of just money, but an opportunity to touch lives, your own and others, in expected and unexpected ways.

It has changed my view of donating time and money. It has given me new awareness of innovative organizations doing amazing things. Of course, the author writes about just a few organizations, which gives it a more narrow focus. So, this book is not comprehensive, but a great place to start if you'd like to give in a way that can maximize the gift.

I received a free copy from NetGalley on behalf of the publisher of the book in exchange for an honest review. If not for NetGalley, I would not have read this book, and thus, I would have missed out on a chance to see charitable giving in a whole new light.

Ellen says

Another great perspective on giving to charities. Focuses mostly on finding the right fit between your gift and how the charity will use it. Interesting to hear how some non-profits can double and triple each inbound dollar. Also was interesting to see how one gift can lead others to pay it forward. Well worth reading if you are trying to find your passion for charitable work or giving.

Lauren says

I received a free copy of this book through the Goodreads program.

A great read with lots of insight and practical tips on giving. I liked how clear the book was and how the authors brought an often abstract topic of philanthropy and "changing the world" down to earth.

Denise says

This was interesting and insightful. However, it was also written for a very specific audience...those who have money to spare. I wish I was one of those people.

Paiman Chen says

This a great example. Very inspiring.

Julie Dawson says

I have a great interest in philanthropy. Through my publishing company, I do a lot of cause-based marketing; from a charity cookbook that we put together to an annual writing competition to benefit different charities each year. I'm not donating tens of thousands of dollars a year, but I do try to make sure that what I am donating is getting where it needs to get and doing what it needs to do. Because of this, I was very interested in reading Every Gift Matters: How Your Passion Can Change the World.

Every Gift Matters by Carrie Morgridge is a well-written, thoughtful, but ultimately low-information book for the average person interested in doing more in their community. The fundamental problem with the book is that, despite Morgridge's attempts to present the concepts in a blanket of "everyman" can-do, the work is really written for affluent donors who have the time and resources to engage in significant philanthropy. For those interested in setting up trust funds or donating thousands of dollars to causes they care about, the book provides a nice guide of pitfalls and advice. But most of the book will mean little to less affluent donors.

Advice like going on site visits and studying financials all makes perfect sense if you are establishing a trust fund or engaged in largescale philanthropic efforts. But it seems terribly impractical for the person writing a \$20 check to the local food bank. There is a lot of emphasis placed on getting to know the leaders of charitable organizations personally before investing in them, which makes perfect sense if you are about to write a check for \$250,000 but not so much for people writing checks for \$50. While certainly all donors should learn more about a charity before donating, I'm not sure the advice on scheduling dozens of meetings with local leaders is actually practical for the majority of average donors.

Morgridge also includes some anecdotes about "average" people doing extraordinary things, but even these narratives are rose-tinted and don't really provide any insight on HOW to get things going. For example, she tells the story of Kylan, a young boy who became pen pals with a child in Uganda that his parents sponsored through WorldVison. In Morgridge's telling of the story, Kylan, at five, decided on his own to try and raise money to help others in Uganda; first with a lemonade stand, and then by collecting scrap metal. It is a sweet story of how an average kid took the initiative and changed lives.

But the version of events in the book is disingenuous. A quick Google search was enough to understand that it was actually the boy's parents that "encouraged" him to do these things and eventually establish Metal Mission, a charity that collects scrap metal to raise money to help families in Uganda. This doesn't take away from the wonderful work Metal Mission does, nor does it diminish Kylan's efforts at such a young age. But Morgridge's example of how anyone can change the world falls flat when the example is actually about affluent parents with time and resources to spare encouraging their son to follow in their footsteps.

I had hoped that Every Gift Matters would provide me with some practical insight. But there is little in the book that has any bearing on what is within my capabilities to do based on the level of donations I can do. If I hit the lottery and was looking to establish a philanthropic organization to maximize my donations, I would call Morgridge personally to pick her brain (she is Vice President of the Morgridge Family Foundation and does wonderful work with charities like DonorsChoose.org). I have enormous respect for the work she does,

but unfortunately Every Gift Matters doesn't live up to the stated premise of demonstrating how small gifts can make a difference.

Disclosure: I was given a comp copy of this book for review.

Belinda says

Every Gift Matters, is a great book to read if you are planning on charitable giving whether through time or money. I enjoyed it because it had a good bit of instruction on how to approach giving which I feel is important. I think it can help provide readers with a structure to create their own charitable giving. I like stuff like that. It makes it a good reference book with lists of questions to think about to help formulate your giving plan. So if you are like me and like to have pre-defined lists to help you get started this book does share some of that. I found myself highlighting to put in my own plan.

One very important thing that the author tries to convey throughout the book is that you should align your charitable giving with your passions. Her passion is with education particularly with disadvantaged children. She provides a look at her journey to charity and then through a large list of opportunities that she has invested in with her foundation. A large portion of the book focuses on examples of her giving and the results from them. Towards the end, I did think that for some that don't share the her passion for educational charitable giving and say for example maybe they have a passion for the environment, might wish they could see more variety. But the author is sharing her experience which can be applied to others' passions (environment, animal right, etc.).

What I loved is the many programs and resources that she has included in her examples. I found myself keeping a list of all these organizations to look into after I completed the book.

I really enjoyed hearing her stories and the connections she has had with all the people rather than just giving and walking away, she has connected with so many people in so many special ways that it is refreshing. It's a good counter to all the cynicism surrounding giving.

An important point that she makes and reiterates is that you don't have to have a foundation and donate large sums of money. Every gift matters. That it's all the small gifts that make the difference. As long as you find your passion, make the connection to charities that share your values, do the research, talk with the people who work there then you will make profound differences in the world.

Chris says

Great description of an individual's philanthropic journey! Amazed by her generosity and commitment to others! Learned the importance of tailoring my philanthropy to meet my passions.
