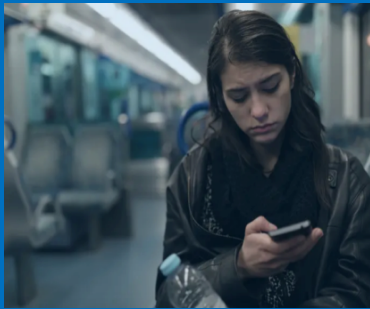


RECLAIMING THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING IN A DIGITAL AGE

Our Goal Today

In a digital age of diminishing humanity,
revisit and reclaim relational fundraising
perspectives, strategies, and skills
that make us distinctly human while inspiring
abundant, sustainable, and *meaningful* philanthropy.

MORE CONNECTED – YET, LONELIER – THAN EVER



Digital Age: Our current time marked by the prolific use of technology in almost all aspects of life such that digital interaction is a DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC of human activity.

Diminishing Humanity: Life in the pandemic has ‘pulled back the curtain’ on technology’s limitations...and consequences.

- Loneliness is epidemic [*Bowling Alone*, Putnam, 2000]
- Empathy is on the decline
- We’re more distracted with less time – and patience – for self-reflection, and
- Less ‘authenticity’ as we project more of who we want to be with less being – or even liking – our authentic self.

MORE CONNECTED – YET, LONELIER – THAN EVER

“What is the value of an interaction that contains no shared experience of life and contributes nothing to a shared store of human meaning – and indeed may devalue it?”

Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age,
Sherry Turkle



RECLAIMING THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING IN A DIGITAL AGE

The Relational Work of Fundraising

A personal process for providing meaning to
donors searching for significance through
their philanthropy

THE PURSUIT OF MEANING & THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING

1. Every gift is part of someone's story about the search for meaning
2. Donors need help finding meaning in their philanthropy
3. The relational work of fundraising is how we help them find it.

THE NEED WE SHARE: MEANING



“Man’s search for meaning is the primary motivation in his life.” – Viktor Frankl

“We don’t create meaning, we find it. And we can’t find it if we don’t search for it.” – Prisoners of Our Thoughts, Alex Pattakos & Elaine Dundon

THE NEED WE SHARE: MEANING



“Artificial intelligence can tell us your schedule, the literal content of your email, your preferences in film, TV, and food. It can know what emotionally activates you because it may infer this from physiological markers. But it won't understand what any of these things mean to you.”

- Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in the Digital Age

A PROPER PERSPECTIVE ON THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING IN A DIGITAL AGE

donors
“Ask not what your ~~country~~ can do for you,
ask what you can do for your ~~country~~.”
donors

MAKING THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING STRATEGIC

Create a Culture of Philanthropy

A sustainable organizational culture of philanthropy only exists when:

- Fundraising isn't always about the money,
- Fundraising is everyone's job,
- Curiosity, questions, & storytelling are honored, not 'selling',
- Leaders cultivate a 'spirit of inquiry' where it's safe to:
 - not settle for easy answers
 - raise questions,
 - challenge traditional and existing practices, and
 - seek multiple perspectives.

MAKING THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING STRATEGIC

Create a Culture of Philanthropy

- Know your ‘Why’ (your authentic self)
 - Be conversant regarding a compelling reason to give
- Move from ‘problem solving’ to leadership
 - Encourage, then lead from, uncertainty
- Make sense of your information, data, knowledge
 - Generate possibilities from what you know
- Engage everyone in relational work
 - Don’t think meaning & purpose are only for donors

MASTERING THE RELATIONAL MEETING



1. Other-focused conversation
2. Open agenda
3. Experience-based
4. Honors personal storytelling
5. Curiosity/Power of questions
6. Affirming
7. Exploratory
8. Part of a comprehensive program
9. GOAL-ORIENTED

YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS...TODAY

- ✓ Guard your culture
- ✓ Honor your culture (values)
- ✓ PRACTICE
 - Consultants
 - Online resources
 - Independent study
 - Provide opportunities



YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS...WITH YOU

1. If there was one thing you could change about the world, it would be...
2. If there was one thing you could change about yourself, it would be...

why?



RECLAIMING THE RELATIONAL WORK OF FUNDRAISING IN A DIGITAL AGE

“This is our nick of time: to acknowledge the unintended consequences of technologies to which we are vulnerable, to respect the resilience that always has been ours. We have time to make the corrections. And to remember who we are – creatures of history, of deep psychology, of complex relationships. Of conversations artless, risky, and face-to-face.”

Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age, Sherry Turkle

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Thank you!

otto@whywegive.net

Articles, studies, publications, and online
resources cited in today's presentation
are available at

<https://www.whywegive.net/resources>