

SPECIAL REPORT

Create Your Family's Philanthropic Plan:

6

**KEY
STEPS TO
CONSIDER**

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There are two types of people. The first group sees problems in their community and complains about them and blames others that these problems exist. The second group sees the problems and chooses to make a difference and be part of the solution. If you are reading this article, it is likely because you want to take action and make a BIG IMPACT by supporting organizations that are tackling those issues in your area.

How do you maximize that impact? Me and my team advise individuals and families to take their charitable giving to the next level by creating a strategic plan around charitable giving. Below are six key steps to do that.

1 Have Fun on This Journey.

We need to take advantage when opportunities for fun arise – and charitable giving should be a fun experience!! As you create your philanthropic plan, we encourage you to find ways to make it something you and your spouse and family look forward to – maybe over a glass of wine or a nice lunch!! And reward yourself and celebrate once it is completed.

Take that a step further by telling others or putting your good deeds on social media. I know we tend not to want to “brag,” but sharing can be contagious!! And everything is more fun if you share it with others.



2 Decide Which Charity to Support.

There are times when a family wants to support their community but are not sure what cause or charity to donate to or volunteer with. Here are some questions you can ask yourself to help you decide:

- What region do I want my BIG impact to be in?
 - My community, my city, my province or country, or maybe an international organization?
- What cause matters to me?
 - Healthcare, helping the homeless, charities supporting children or animals?
 - These are all worthwhile, but what resonates with you?
- Once you have decided on a cause you need to decide what specific charity to support.
 - There are a lot of charities and many focus on similar problems or issues. Do some research and see if there is a charity that you connect with and would want to engage with.
- Do you want to support a large charity or a smaller or grass roots organization?

If you have supported a charity for many years going through this exercise can still be extremely worthwhile to understand why that charity matters to you.



3 Connect With a Charity You Want to Support.

This is a step many donors don't do and I believe it is a missed opportunity. Building a relationship with an organization you are going to give your hard-earned money to is worthwhile, but where do you begin?

- Call and speak to a charity professional and let them know you want to donate and potentially do so regularly.
- Ask them questions about who they support and what they do for that group.
- Is there an open house or an event they host that you could attend?
- Can they provide some information on initiatives they are putting forward?
- Are there volunteer opportunities with that charity that would allow you to connect more deeply with them and their mission?

Donating money is important but understanding and volunteering with your charity takes your support to a much deeper level.

4 Decide on the Amount You Want to Donate.

Set a donation goal that makes you a little uncomfortable. Remember, you can change it any time.

- Will you donate monthly or annually?
- Set goals for the next 5 years.
 - Try to increase your donation amount every year.
 - What is the total amount you can donate during that 5-year period?



Just like a fitness goal thinking about where you are going can be very exciting and motivating.

Like all goals your charitable giving goal should be reviewed regularly. Do not worry if you have to revise or reduce your goal down the road. Do the very best you can and celebrate what you do. And in our experience, because giving feels good, often goals get revised upwards!!

5 Take advantage of the tax incentives available to Canadians (*considered the best incentives in the world*).

The government has the best matching program for donations to registered charities – through federal and provincial tax credits. Decide how much you will donate, and then work with an advisor specializing in charitable giving to help you super size your donation using tax savings.

- If you were thinking of donating \$5000 you can make it \$10,000.
 - Your donation tax receipt from the charity will save you \$5000 in reduced taxes.
- Do you have stocks with unrealized capital gains?
 - Donating stocks directly to the charity turns your capital gains tax to \$0.
- Is it better to donate personally or through your corporation?
- If you have a high tax year (because of the sale of a business or real estate or another investment) consider making a donation to charity to offset some of those taxes.
 - You can look at a Donor Advised Fund to get tax savings now for money that will be disbursed to charity in future years.

The secret to living is Giving

- Tony Robbins

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Make a Gift to Charity in Your Will.

Many Canadians have seen their net worth grow substantially as real estate and other investments have grown in value. If you are in a position where you will have a significant estate value, you can leave a gift to charity in your will.

Know your number!! Look at your estate value after taxes. Then add a gift to charity and see what the difference is. Many families are surprised how a large gift to charity has a minimal impact on overall estate value. The result is your favourite charity receives a donation that makes a BIG IMPACT in your community and your children and grandchildren still receive substantial inheritances.

BONUS

Involve Your Family in Your Charitable Giving.

We all agree that giving feels great!! And if you want to amplify that feeling get your family involved. Share this Philanthropic Plan with them and ask them to get involved. Introduce them to the charities you support.

- Do a family volunteer morning or day – and then plan a fun family activity for afterwards.
- Bring them to your favourite charity's next event.
- Ask for family member's input into what causes or charities they would want to support.
 - Match their donation to their chosen charity.

The main thing is to share your values with your family. Tell them why you believe it is important to give back and why you have chosen to support this charity. Families tell us these are often some of the deepest and most meaningful conversations they have with their children and grandchildren.



Give with your heart and let us assist you with the rest

It has been scientifically proven that donating to charity produces neurological activity in our brain that promotes the feeling of pleasure and joy. Investing time to work on your Strategic Philanthropy Plan will boost your mood and highlight your belief in being part of the greater good.

We want to express our gratitude to you for reading this article. We sincerely appreciate any feedback or comments you have. And of course, if you have any questions or wish to discuss your Philanthropic Plan please reach out.

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