



The Everyday Philanthropist

A Better Way to Make a Better World

DAN PALLOTTA

WILEY

The Everyday Philanthropist

Other Books by Dan Pallotta

When Your Moment Comes: A Guide to Fulfilling Your Dreams, by a Man Who Has Led Thousands to Greatness, Jodere Group, 2001

Uncharitable: How Restraints on Nonprofits Undermine Their Potential, Tufts University Press, 2008

Uncharitable: How Restraints on Nonprofits Undermine Their Potential, Brandeis University Press, 2022 (reissue)

Charity Case: How the Nonprofit Community Can Stand Up for Itself and Really Change the World, Jossey-Bass, 2012

Sky Problems: A Frequent Flyer's Encounter with the Astral Plane, CThings, 2019

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**To everyday philanthropists of every kind,
everywhere, who want to make a better world.**

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Introduction

What if everything we've been taught about charitable giving is wrong? And how much more could we do if we got it right? Those are the questions we'll address in this little but powerful guide.

The way we've been taught to think about charity and giving is remarkably counterproductive. The philosophical restrictions we place on the charities we love actually undermine them. The way we've been taught to think about our roles as charitable givers and active citizens is also remarkably misguided.

The purpose of this guide is to help you, no matter how high or low your income bracket, to see the potential of your role in civil society in a bright new light. It's to help you see how you could be a force for change in a more powerful way than you may ever have been led to believe, and, even more important, to help you see how you could be a force for changing the very way we think about change.

The economics of charitable giving can be God-awful confusing and dull. The dynamics that turn (or sometimes don't turn) the donations of millions of people into real change for millions of others can be intimidating. So, this is a clear and simple guide for people who don't have the time to think about all this, written by an expert who does. It's purposely concise and to the point. Its explanations are plainspoken. They'll demystify the mechanics of change for you. This enlightenment will leave you with a new desire to actively participate in changing the world around you—and with the confidence that you truly can.



A Sobering Opening Thought:

Ever wonder why charities aren't changing the world the way we had hoped? It's because that's not what we asked them to do. We asked them to keep their overhead and salaries low.

So guess what they did?

Part One

The Good Citizen



Philanthropy and You

Why Charity?

When we think about change, we think about politics, especially now. When people like former President Obama talk about creating the next generation of change-makers, they often point to politics, and create new grassroots training programs to help train and interest young people in running for elected office.

When we think of our civic duty, we think about voting or getting involved in a political campaign. We think of politics as the vehicle for change, and charity as a vehicle for being kind and generous.

This is a mistake.

Charity and the nonprofit sector are powerful vehicles for creating big change too, and sometimes even more quickly than politics can create change. And they are vehicles the average citizen can use. They are critical options for civic engagement and for any citizen interested in making a better world.

There are many examples of this:

- No Kid Hungry is actively ending child hunger in America by revolutionizing school breakfast and lunch programs.
- FoodCorps is transforming the nutritional value of those programs.
- Sightsavers is ending trachoma—one of the world’s most ancient and painful diseases.
- Last Mile Health is revolutionizing basic medical services for the poor in the developing world.
- The Environmental Defense Fund is launching a satellite that can detect methane leaks at very high resolution. Methane’s greenhouse gas effect



School
Breakfast Programs



A Satellites
that Detects
Methane