

MORE THAN MONEY

Timeless themes & personal stories | Exploring the impact of money in our lives

Archive Edition

Embracing Our Power

More than Money

Exploring the personal, political, and spiritual impact of wealth in our lives

Issue Number 11

EMBRACING OUR POWER

Summer 1996

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Wealthy people in the movies are often villains—vicious, power-hungry, even willing to hurt poor little farm girls like Dorothy in their compulsive quests for control. As with most stereotypes, the image of the rich bad guy has seeds of truth. Unscrupulous rich people dominate and exploit others through the four corners of the earth. Even well-meaning people with wealth at times have unwittingly trampled on the needs and dignity of those with less.

What guidance does this stereotype (and its underlying reality) offer us and our wealthier friends about constructively using the power of our wealth? Not much: it only points out the most blatant forms of what not to be, what not to do. And so many of us recoil from our money, hoping we will never, ever, turn into a Ms. Gultch.

But we often remain immobilized because we do not have clear models of how to use our money and power for good.

In this issue of *More than Money*, we set out to explore the terrain of positive power. We sought to define power that grows out of self-loving confidence rather than the need to prove oneself important; power that respects the wisdom of all people rather than controls out of arrogance; power that creates closeness rather than distance; power that tries to build security for all rather than opulence for a few.

How do people with wealth navigate this barely-mapped terrain? We began, as always, by interviewing people with financial abundance (inherited and earned) about their experience exercising power. Through a variety of arenas—work, philanthropy, relationships, business, politics—we found forward thinking people grappling with tough questions:

- Can our life's work be not only a way to make money, but a way to share power?
- How can our philanthropy build bridges instead of resentments between those with more and those with less?
- Is it possible to cut through the power differences that money too often brings to relationships?

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Issue 11, Summer 1996

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GIVING**
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Welcome

Welcome to More than Money Journal

More Than Money Journal, published quarterly from 1993-2006, was one of the first public forums where people shared personal stories about the impact of wealth on their lives. Groundbreaking for its time, each issue is filled with examples of ordinary people struggling to align their money and values in their spending, investing, giving, legacy, and relationships. The themes and stories in these journals are timeless and ring as true today as when they were first published.

More than Money Journal was a project of More Than Money Institute, a nonprofit peer educational network that touched thousands of people through its publications, presentations, gatherings, journal discussion groups and individual coaching. When More than Money Institute closed in 2006, its founders Anne and Christopher Ellinger (whom you'll see in More Than Money as Anne Slepian and Christopher Mogil) went on to launch another initiative called Bolder Giving. Individual articles from the journal were archived online with the Project on Civic Reflection.

Today, Bolder Giving is thrilled to be able to offer full back issues of More than Money Journal as a resource for families with wealth, philanthropic advisors, and all those exploring the impact of money in their lives. On the Bolder Giving website you can download issues individually.

Online, you can also order beautiful bound copies where 6-10 issues of the journal are compiled by theme:

- Giving
- Lifestyle, Spending & Investing
- Money and Values
- Children and Inheritance
- Money and Identity

(See full listing on back page of this journal)

We hope that More than Money Journal brings you fresh ideas for aligning your money and values, and that you use the stories to start conversations with your own clients, family members, and friends. (Note: We have removed many last names from the personal stories in the journals, to protect the privacy of those who gave us permission before the days of internet).

About



More Than Money Journal roams the full territory of money and values. Bolder Giving has a more pointed mission: to inspire and support people to give at their full lifetime potential. A national, non-profit educational initiative, Bolder Giving invites you to help create a culture of greater generosity and to take your next step in becoming a bold giver.

At www.boldergiving.org you will find interactive tools and resources to help you explore three ways of being bold:

Give More: explore your lifetime giving capacity.

Risk More: step beyond your giving habits.

Inspire More: spark conversations about bold giving.

Bolder Giving's resources include:

Stories of Inspiration- The Bolder Giving website features stories of over 100 remarkable givers who have given at least 20% of their income, assets, or business profits. We host monthly teleconferences and web chats for informal conversations with these bold givers. Bolder Giving's stories have been featured widely in the press - on CBS and ABC evening news, in People and Inc. Magazines, The Chronicle of Philanthropy and elsewhere - and speakers are available for presentations and media interviews.

Support for Donors- Bolder Giving provides giving tools such as personal coaching, referrals to donor networks, workshops, the Bolder Giving Workbook and other publications, and a content-rich website. Please see the list of publications in the back of this magazine.

Resources for Advisors- Bolder Giving offers presentations, workshops, and publications for fundraisers, financial professionals and philanthropic advisors.

We invite your participation and support.

Thanks to the financial support of a few foundations and many individuals, Bolder Giving is able to offer free downloads of More Than Money Journal on our site. If you receive value from this publication, we invite you to donate online or contact us to explore ways of being involved as a donor, partner, or volunteer. Bolder Giving is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, so all contribution are fully tax-deductible.

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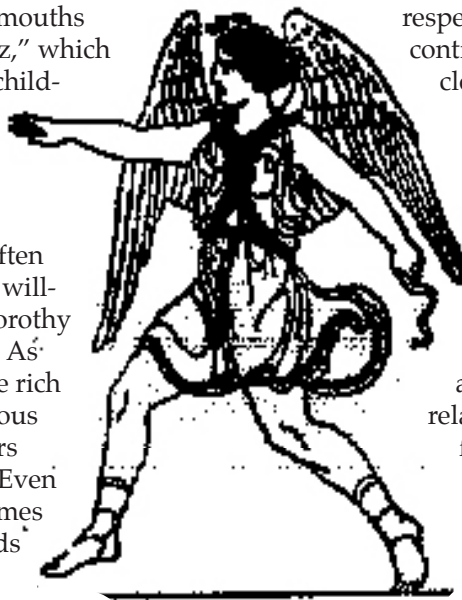
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More than Money

is a quarterly publication written for people questioning society's assumptions about money, and particularly for those with inherited or earned wealth seeking a more just and sustainable world.



Subscription to *More than Money* is a benefit of membership in the Impact Project, a non-profit organization assisting people with financial surplus to take charge of their money and their lives.

Membership Rates

Individuals	\$35-\$150/year
Organization	\$75-\$300/year
Low-income	Contribution
Back issues	\$5 for members

For membership outside the U.S., please add \$10.



To subscribe, send letters to the editor, or to receive information about this publication, contact:

Our mailing lists are strictly confidential.

continued from front cover

In addition to nine of their stories we have included articles, interviews and resources that amplify the vignette's themes and distill their lessons.

Certainly there are many other sources of power besides money, as Gandhi and other mighty but voluntarily "poor" people vividly demonstrate. Nor does wealth automatically bestow influence. Money alone is neutral, simply a tool for whatever intention we bring to it.

Yet financial surplus is undeniably a source of potential power. The question is, will those of us seeking a more just and sustainable world harness that power for what we believe in? Or will we run from it, afraid and overwhelmed? We hope this issue illuminates some of the questions and pitfalls, and brings us all inspiration to use our money with greater power, humility and respect.

– Anne Slepian and Christopher Mogil, editors

Gathering Stories

Because people rarely share their personal money stories, it can be quite an adventure to gather the vignettes for this newsletter. We often interview several dozen people for each issue, as we don't know in advance whose stories will be most potent. A 30-60 minute discussion will be synthesized into a few paragraphs, which we then review word-by-word with each interviewee, revising until he or she gives approval. We do the same for submissions.

Even with this careful process, many people feel keenly vulnerable sharing their stories. Compared to the fluid process of living, words are stark and static; a vignette is like cutting out a single frame from a motion picture. "Is this really me? Will others judge me? Can I change my mind and feelings even if this is in print?"

Even under complete anonymity, some people cannot shake these feelings and they decide not to print their story. Those who go ahead often feel strengthened by making their personal struggles and insights useful to others, and by the very act of breaking the silence about money.

You may feel uncomfortable or even angry reading some people's perspectives—we deliberately include a range of stories to show how differently people approach the issues. Still, we ask you to honor each story as a gift from the heart, offered sometimes with trepidation, and always with courage.

Identity and Purpose

Despite the undeniable connection between money and power, many of us find that personal power does not come easily at all. This is especially true if we are following in the large footsteps of much-touted ancestors, or if our money is tightly bound by parental control. To find a path that is right for who we are, we sometimes need to separate from our families' expectations and from other societal pressures attempting to mold us. Below are a few stories of individuals who are forging their own identities amidst the sometimes overwhelming influence of wealth.

One Small Canvas

If I wanted to get started as an artist in oil paints, what would I need? A few canvasses, a dozen small tubes of colors, two or three brushes, right? What if, instead, huge trucks each carrying thousands of gallons of paint came roaring down my street and stopped in front of my house—three truck loads of sunflower yellow, nine truck loads of cobalt blue... do I have more power to become a painter, or less?

Dealing with my inheritance has been like spending a decade directing trucks of paint, showing them where to park, figuring out how to unload them. When all I've ever wanted is to paint the one small canvas of my true self, my real life.

— Sally B.

Forest Green

Throughout two decades of dealing with wealth, my experience has been this: whenever my money has felt larger than my own sense of self and purpose, it has undermined my power; when my self-esteem and life purpose have been bigger than my money, then my wealth has been a most welcome tool.

I grew up in South Carolina where my family name was a household word. I hated being set apart by my wealth and in college I went to absurd lengths to avoid "revealing my pedigree." When I received my inheritance at age 21, it came with my parents' message of fear: "Watch out. There's power in this that can ruin your life." I ended up supporting myself with my money, yet felt furtive about it.

I spent most of the 70's pursuing spiritual goals, and eventually turned to face the heritage I had tried so hard to escape. I soon found my way to a heretofore obscure family investment—a forest land ownership in Maine. To my amazement, I discovered that the company's commitment to long-term financial growth had translated into long-term management of our forest

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Summer 1996

Why are we quick to
deify and worship
money? Perhaps
because it gives
us power to make
something appear
that was not there
before—to create,
to be God-like,
immortal.”

—from “Money and
Possibility” by Miven Booth



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holdings. (Previously, I had joked that the only thing “green” about my patriarchs is that green is the color of their favorite currency.)

I wanted to get involved in the company management to better understand this apparently happy marriage between business and the environment. Because my father is strongly opposed to nepotism, I had to fight hard to justify a role for myself in the company. I now see that joining our business was a personal turning point: I was embracing work that called to me and committing to it.

Another turning point was joining the Threshold Foundation, a community of peers where, for the first time in my life, having money was irrelevant because we all had it. Finally I could explore with others the questions “Who am I? What matters in life?” without unspoken judgments about my wealth getting in the way. Threshold was like a greenhouse where my trust in my identity and values apart from my money started to bloom. This gave me the courage to be myself in other parts of my life, building a reinforcing loop of experimentation and positive feedback.

My position within the family company enabled me to take part in statewide public policy debates around forestry issues. I worked with the environmental and forest land-owner communities to broker Maine’s first Forest Practices Act in 1989. This landmark legislation restricted land-owners’ ability to practice extensive clearcutting in the Maine woods.

I recently co-founded the Maine Forest Biodiversity Project, a non-profit effort that seeks to build public understanding around ecological and economic issues before they erupt. We have brought over a hundred people into constructive dialogue, including commercial forest landowners, scientists, conservationists—every sector that has an interest in these forests. By helping people build common ground instead of honing their latest attack rhetoric, we believe political and biological crises (like

those that characterized the spotted owl debates in the Pacific Northwest) can be avoided.

My relationships inside the timber industry and the environmental movement—as well as listening and leadership skills honed in Threshold—have been instrumental in these successes. Now in the fullness of middle age, I feel blessed to have cultivated my spiritual values and used my family heritage to express them in the world.

— Roger M.

Double-edged Sword

My father believed that you had to first make money by being a hard-ass businessman. Only then could you use your wealth to support good causes—even if that meant that you made your money from Philip Morris and then donated it to the American Cancer Society.

In college I was always trying to change my father and make him wrong for the way he earned his money. At the urging of my college mentors I decided to stop my criticism and instead try to let my father be persuaded by my own path to success. When I made over a million dollars from the sale of a socially responsible company I started, my father was indeed proud of me for succeeding without compromising my values. From that day on he has become more

accepting of socially responsible investments (albeit begrudgingly).

Today I feel fairly powerful in my chosen field, but I still feel controlled by my need for my father's approval, especially in situations where he is giving money to me. I am afraid that if I piss off either my father or my mother, they might stop letting me guide the family foundation's investments towards socially responsible companies. I also fear it could impact my inheritance. I've been working hard to change these dynamics and improve relationships in my family—and I'm humbled by how long changes take.

—Ned D.

Held Prisoner

People say money is power. Power can be used in all kinds of ways: to create, support, nurture,... or control and to hurt. For the past twenty-five years I have been struggling against the powerful legal and financial mechanisms my father put in place to control me—even after his death—until the day I die.

I was twenty-eight when the trust papers arrived in the mail. My father told me where to sign, and I did without even reading the text. (I was brought up not to ask questions!) Not until years later did I discover that I had no access to the principal and that I could never dissolve the trust. The trust officers, who march to my father's drummer even now that he is dead, won't invest my capital according to my wishes, and I can't fire them because legally they don't work for me (even though they take a big cut of my income).

This gift of wealth is like a bad dream. My money is not mine, except for the income I receive. I can never use the principal, and I have no voice in how it is invested. I will forever be treated like a child who is not capable of making her own financial decisions.

— Barbara B.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure... There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to manifest the glory of God within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone... As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

– Nelson Mandela, president, Republic of South Africa, from his 1994 inaugural speech.



Creating My Own Voice

John Robbins is the author of the international best-seller Diet for a New America and the founder of EarthSave, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting more healthful and environmentally-sound food choices.

From childhood on it was expected that I would someday take over and run what has become the world's largest ice cream company—Baskin-Robbins. The ice cream cone shaped swimming pool in the backyard of the house in which I lived was a symbol of the success awaiting me.

Some people are able to embrace their wealth and not lose themselves. But for me, it was essential that I turn down that entire life. I remember telling my dad that developing a 32nd flavor just didn't feel like an adequate goal for my life, especially given the critical state of the world! My wife and I went to homestead in British Colombia (on \$500/year), and later, through writing and activism, we created work that was both economically and spiritually sustaining.

Few children of the very wealthy people I have known are happy. The power of their money always seemed to become greater than the power they were able to summon within themselves. Those of us who are happy have had to calm down first and to disassociate from the dominant belief systems in our families and our culture. Only after giving up all expectation or hope to be involved with my family's wealth was I able to tune into that deeper language of my soul—into the poetry of my being, into the rhythm and cadence and purpose of my life.

— John Robbins

(Portions excerpted with permission from Diet for a New America, Stillpoint Publishing, 1987.)

Beyond Business as Usual

Once we have a strong sense of personal identity and a chosen niche for engaging in the world, how can we exercise power in a new way—a way in which a compassionate heart as well as a prudent mind are our guides, a way in which all people are recognized as equals with whom our lives are profoundly interconnected?

In the stories below, people seek to go beyond “business as usual” in their chosen fields. An investment manager works to increase global security (rather than just the security of his clients), a community development professional defines success in non-economic terms, and a foundation director views grantees not as recipients of largess but as the foundation’s “customers.”

The Power of Shared Security

Alan Slifka is founder/partner of Halcyon/Alan B. Slifka Management Co., an investment firm managing over half a billion dollars in client accounts.

As a small child, I remember my father crying over losing his money in the Crash. I felt very afraid about what would happen to my family. Perhaps that’s why the quest for security—both personal and global—has been such a persistent theme in my life.

Early in my investment work, I saw the truth behind the saying that every investor is wrestling with greed and fear. A man with a million thinks he’ll feel secure once he has five; a man with five thinks he’ll feel secure if he has ten, and so on. I vowed not to be that way.

In my 20s, 30s, and 40s I worked to become financially secure. In my 50’s, influenced by the Jewish concept of Tikkun Olam, “the repairing of the world,” I threw myself into supporting various nonprofits, viewing philanthropy as a kind of venture capital for social entrepreneurs. Then, in 1986, my life was changed by a trip to Israel. The Middle East felt like a powder keg, with tension streaming from two peoples struggling for whatever power they could muster to defend their survival. I felt powerfully drawn to focus my social entrepreneurship on building commitment to peaceful Arab-Jewish coexistence.

I started by hiring a team of researchers at Haifa University to study the need for coexistence work in

Israel. When I went back to Israel the next year, I met with Arab and Jewish leaders, government officials, project managers, and business leaders, and I discovered that hundreds of institutions and social entrepreneurs wanted to do coexistence work but that the missing link was funding. And so I started the Abraham Fund, to support and enhance peaceful Jewish-Arab coexistence.

Now the Abraham Fund is giving away about a million dollars a year—some my own money, but mostly I raise funds from others. We make it clear that the Fund is in no way about rich Americans coming in to direct the show: we only use Israeli consultants, and Israelis set the policies and run the programs. The Fund is probably reaching 10,000 people annually and impacting over 100,000 people. The Israeli government has co-funded many projects, which has enormously encouraged and legitimized friendly coexistence.

One of my biggest challenges has been raising funds. Everyone says, “After we take care of our own community, then we can support bridging projects.” I tell them that if we wait until each community has all it needs, we’ll wait forever. Educating for peaceful coexistence benefits everyone and cannot wait.

— Alan S.

Rooted in Spirit

I’m Cherokee. I attended predominantly non-Indian public schools, and by high school I realized that I saw things differently from others my age. Not only was I was never driven to “win” (because then someone had to lose), but the whole concept of hierarchical authority made no sense to me. My view of the world, like most indigenous people, emphasized balance and harmony, not dominance.

In 1984, I helped run a micro-lending fund on Pine Ridge reservation, making small loans to help people become financially self-sufficient. It was challenging to convince non-native lenders that our models were successful, because they were fixated on evaluating success by a growing profit line. Meanwhile, our borrowers’ ideas of success was to make enough money from their businesses to get good clothes for their kids and a reliable car, to improve their home life, and pay off the debt. They knew quality of life was paramount and sensed what was “enough.”

Redefining Helping and Serving

“Helping is based on inequality. When we help people we may inadvertently diminish their self-esteem, their sense of worth, integrity and wholeness. Service is a relationship between equals. We don’t serve with only our strength: our limitations serve, our wounds serve, even our darkness can serve. We can only serve that to which we are profoundly connected. When I help I have a feeling of satisfaction. When I serve I have a feeling of gratitude.”

— adapted from “In the Service of Life” by Rachel Naomi Remen, in *Noetic Sciences Review*, Spring 1996, p.24.

When I started First Nations Development Institute in 1980, it was to help break native people's dependency on federal money and to rebuild our self-reliance. Last year I helped the Institute give out \$1.5 million in grants. Some people might say, "that's a lot of power" but to me money and power are not at all the same. Power comes solely from my connection to what's sacred. Keeping my spiritual center enables me to do the work with a sense of responsibility and gratitude. I pray a lot, burn sweetgrass, and take time throughout each day to express thanksgiving.

I work constantly with our funders who are wealthy and with our grant recipients who have very little. Because I recognize spiritual power as the foundation of who I am and the basis of all my connections, I can enter all kinds of relationships from a deeply centered place: not above or below anybody, because everyone has equal access to spiritual power whether they understand it or not. Nothing I do can take away that power nor give it to them.

You can't be in community development to please people. Even when I fund people's proposals, nine times out of ten they are still displeased with me for not doing it exactly their way. I know that both grantees and funders think all kinds of things about me: some think I'm hoarding or I'm trying to be manipulative; others think they can get funded by wearing me down or wooing me over. I've seen people be nice to my face and not so nice behind my back.

It hurts my feelings when people aren't genuine with me, but it no longer knocks me off center or makes me doubt my judgment. I've developed a lot of compassion for how wealthy people can become isolated. I've also developed clarity that people who give money to feel good about themselves are simply setting themselves up to be used.

I can't be used because my mind is not focused on me or my ego. Instead, I am looking at what the money is going to do, what difference it is going to make. I like having money to put to good use. I like it a lot! To recipients this may look like power, but the projects we support are built on each local community's definition of success—in their terms, not mine or any other funder's.

For example, we once worked with a tribe whose goal was to become one of the biggest economic enti-

ties in their state. The tribe bought several big businesses and made an enormous per capita return for their people. Two years later Harvard Business Review wrote them up as an economic success story. They had succeeded in their goal—but they also had developed the highest teenage suicide rate in the state!

Meanwhile we worked with another tribe whose goal was to increase the long-range well-being of the tribe. They had developed a scholarship program, a teen center, a well-baby clinic. By focusing their development efforts on programs that benefited the community, they achieved their goal with few costs—and of course, they were never written up as a success.

— Rebecca A.

“The fundamental endowment of wealth is the capacity to set one’s own agenda.”

– from “Hyperagency: The Worldly Empowerment of Wealth” by Paul Schervish and Andrew Herman, based on their interviews with 130 millionaires.



Visit The Impact Project
Web Site
<http://www.efn.org/~impact>

Interview: Power in Giving

All too often, philanthropy replicates the power dynamics that it is trying to undo in society. Those holding the purse strings are seen as all-powerful, and those requesting funds feel like beggars. We interviewed a leader in grantmaking who is working to turn these dynamics around: Rebecca Rimel, the president and chief executive officer of the Pew Charitable Trusts. Even though Pew ranks as one of the country’s largest private philanthropies (with an annual grantmaking budget of about \$180 million) many of Rebecca’s comments are applicable to individual funders.

More than Money: When I heard you speak at a conference last year, I was impressed by your passionate commitment to making Pew respectful of grantees. How did you get sensitized to this issue?

RR: From my personal experience applying to foundations for money. This was years ago, when I was in health research. I’ll never forget how intimidated I felt calling them up, and how I worried each and every day after I sent in the application.

MtM: Well, now that you’re in charge of 120 staff members, how do you imbue in them the same awareness and commitment?

RR: First, I urge staff members to throw out traditional notions about the “helpers and the helped.” Grant applicants are really our “customers”, and like any business, we want to serve our customers so they will come back. Grantees are bringing to us their life’s work, their best ideas. I want our staff to treat them with the caring, respect, and humility that this deserves.

MtM: It must be hard for staff to stay humble when they are in this obvious power position relative to grantseekers. How do you help your staff keep perspective on their service role?

RR: Yes, it’s a serious problem. Funders get treated with deference even if they do a bad job. I tell my program officers to notice the first time they’re standing in line at the bank or grocery store, and a small,

huffy voice wells up inside saying, “Why am I standing in line? I’m too important for this!” When that happens, go home, look yourself in the mirror and give yourself a good talking to! Arrogance is a subtle infection that will spread if you are not constantly attentive.

MtM: How do you help your staff have that kind of vigilance?

RR: “Commitment to service” is like a constant drumbeat here. We regularly give awards to staff members who have gone that extra mile. We also encourage all staff to volunteer: nothing counters arrogance like going canvassing and having the door slammed in your face! Senior staff are urged each year to take on the humbling challenge of raising money for a cause of their choice. Finally, we use humor, especially if we see people taking themselves too seriously.

MtM: How do you break through that wall of deference to get honest feedback and criticism from the folks you serve?

RR: We use many methods. We have an ombudsperson, a trustworthy and neutral person who actively goes into the nonprofit community to solicit their comments. We send out surveys with our publications that ask our constituents how we can serve them better, and on our Internet Home Page we encourage people to send us feedback about how we are doing.

And whenever we put out a request for proposals on specific topics—a funding initiative—we first get extensive community input to make sure we're on the mark.

Pew Charitable Trusts can be reached at:

*One Commerce Square,
2005 Market St., Suite 1700, Philadelphia
PA 19103.*



Grantees are bringing to us their life's work, their best ideas.

Resources for Respectful Philanthropy

The Funding Exchange

Some grantmakers seek to shift the power dynamics in philanthropy by having funding decisions made by representatives of the communities being served. A leader in this philosophy is the Funding Exchange, a network of fourteen alternative community foundations that support grassroots organizing efforts, both nationally and in twenty-four states. Community activists have a central role in the grant-making process.

Funding Exchange
666 Broadway, #500,
N.Y., N.Y. 10012
212/529-5300.

North Carolina Center for Nonprofits

"Tips for Effective Grantor-Grantee Relations" and "13 Tips for a Wise Grantmaker: What nonprofits say about how to get the most for each dollar you invest through them." by Jane Kendall, trustee of a family foundation and President of the North Carolina Center for Nonprofits. Both articles give concrete, easy-to-implement suggestions for building mutual respect and some pointedly honest reflections about power. The

tips come from Jane's interviews with more than 1,100 not-for-profit leaders. For copies, send a SASE with article titles to

NCCP,
4601 Forks. Rd. Suite 506,
Raleigh NC 27609
919/571-0811.

National Network of Grantmakers

Evaluation Guide: What is Good Grantmaking For Social Justice? Produced by the National Network of Grantmakers, this is a workbook-style guide that helps grantmakers assess their effectiveness. NNG is a network of over 400 grantmakers (donors, trustees, board and staff) who are working to create social, political, economic and environmental justice. Later this year NNG will publish a companion piece to the guide describing "exemplary practices" which make grant-makers more accessible, accountable, and inclusive of those traditionally disenfranchised. The Evaluation Guide is available for \$15 from:

NNG
1717 Kettner Blvd., Suite 110,
San Diego, CA 92101,
619/231-1348.

“I promise to use every advantage of the privileges I have enjoyed to work towards eliminating all forms of privilege and creating a world of equals.”

— from *Coming Home*, the Reevaluation Counseling “Owning Class” Journal

Rising Influence of Women

Traditionally, women have been denied economic power and financial skills. Slowly a change is taking place as women increasingly are learning to take charge of their finances and to create wealth.

As quoted in *Megatrends for Women*, “Millions of women the world over are taking economic and political power, building new institutions, infusing them with new more humanistic values. Women are the catalysts through whom the critical mass for change will be achieved.”

Stay tuned for More than Money’s issue on “Women and Money” next year.

Changing the Roles and Rules

If we were to take part in a game where someone inevitably wins and everyone else loses, most of us wouldn’t want to keep playing unless the rules were changed. That’s how many people feel about the current economic system in which wealth and power are becoming increasingly concentrated. This concentration is all too often at the expense of the vast majority’s immediate needs and the long-term interests of us all.

To dare to change the rules of the game, we need to step beyond the walls of isolation, deference and pretense that keep the “haves” and “have nots” on opposing sides. The pieces that follow suggest ways to move past the roles and rules that often keep us apart, to build respectful alliances, and to take action.

Growing into Honest Partnership

Growing up, my family had five houses and employed up to 45 people to run them. When my parents traveled I was left with one or two domestic workers in a house with 30 rooms. It was easy to be tremendously arrogant, a little princess.

As I grew, my parents prepared me to follow their tradition of philanthropy and community involvement. The messages I got from them were, “It’s important to work well with everybody” but (unspoken): “Always maintain your superiority.” Over the past twenty years, my life’s work has been to turn around that legacy of distance and to create respectful ways for people with wealth to work as real partners in social change.

After assisting over a thousand grassroots projects and hundreds of women with wealth, I clearly see that class patterns have tenacious momentum. Instead of relegating the responsibility for sharing power to each individual’s initiative and awareness, we need to create structures that support people of all classes in working across differences.

Last year, I participated in such a structure: a work group with ten women from widely different racial and financial backgrounds. Our job together was to research potential nominees for the “Resourceful Women” awards. We started by each telling our own personal story. This simple sharing helped us go beneath the assumptions we had about each other.

Next—so we wouldn’t slip uncon-

sciously into typical roles, where the verbal, assertive rich women facilitated while the working class women took notes—we explicitly assessed our own skills and stated our goals to the group. My goals were these: to arrive on time, to give 100% of my attention to each person who spoke, and to follow through on whatever commitments I made to the group.

These goals may sound basic, but they contradict obnoxious, unconscious behavior I have been trying to change in myself for years (and behavior I see repeatedly from other middle- and upper-class people.) We wander in late and make promises of assistance we don’t follow through on. We’re used to people tolerating us not returning their phone calls because we’re “important” and busy and our time is so precious. In meetings we’re either dominating the conversation or distracted, rarely listening closely to others when they speak. It’s embarrassing! Whether from early neglect or early spoon-feeding (or both) we tend to get very demanding and insulting to others about what we need and deserve.

At the end of our eight weeks working together, my nominations group had an evaluation where we asked each other, “How did I do on my goals?” I certainly didn’t do perfectly, but many of us felt it was one of the best experiences we ever had working across class difference—honest, and genuinely sharing of power.

Years ago I assumed I joined groups in order to offer my expertise

and help out. Over time I recognized that I'm coming to be part of a diverse community, and that I have as much to gain as to give. The self-awareness I gain through the process itself,

although sometimes uncomfortable, is one of the most precious gifts I receive.

—Tracy Gary

Using Privilege to Fight Privilege

So the decks are slanted, the playing field is not level. What can we do about it? Below are a few examples of people with wealth taking steps to fight unjust privilege.

70% of the world trade is controlled by just 500 corporations.

—**The Ecologist** July/Aug 1992

As a descendent of someone who started a multinational company, Marion Hunt-Badiner was sobered to learn about the increasing power and influence of large corporations. "I felt some connection and responsibility. I began to talk to other descendants whose families started multinationals, and we are beginning to explore how to leverage our wealth and influence to encourage these corporations to act with greater social responsibility."

In the past year a core group has formed and is developing strategies with a distinguished advisory board. "We aren't sure how we will exert our influence, but we are excited to take the power of our legacy and use it for the common good."



In 1994 the average cost of winning a seat in the U.S. Senate was \$4.4 million.

In 1992 a majority of funds for Congressional campaigns came from wealthy individuals representing less than one-tenth of one percent of the nation's voting population.

Contributions from individuals in a single wealthy Manhattan zip code exceeded the total amount of money donated by individuals in 22 separate states for all congressional races in 1992.

— Center for Responsive Politics, Washington DC.

“I feel conflicted when a candidate for public office calls for a contribution” says Charles Knight. “They are often people I’d like to see get elected, but the system is flawed that makes our leaders dependent on wealthy donors in order to win. This year I’m capping my direct contributions to candidates and putting more resources behind efforts to end the undue influence of money on elections.”

Charles is now active with Maine Voters for Clean Elections, a broad-based coalition organizing to sharply reduce the distorting power of private campaign contributions on the political process. Among other campaigns, MVCE is bringing to the ballot a referendum of national import.

If passed, it would provide a set amount of public financing for candidates willing to refuse all private

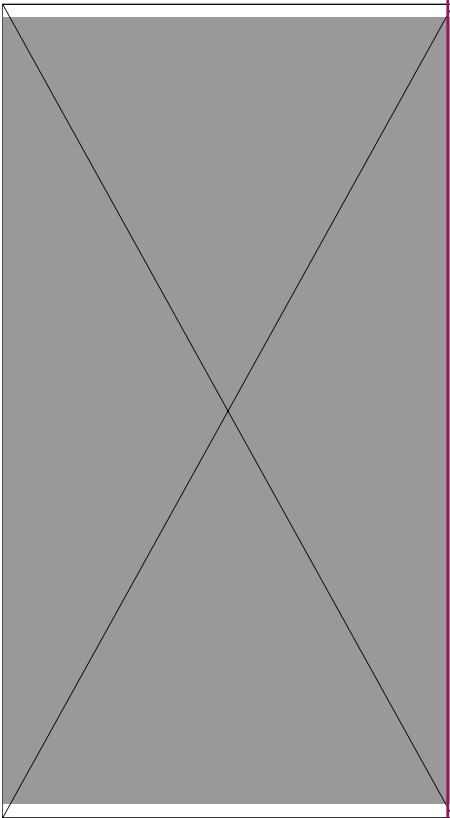
Class Privilege

Class privilege is the practice of protecting the economic, political, and social benefits of one class while systematically denying such benefits to other classes. Some of these protected benefits should clearly be enjoyed by all—control over home and work place, access to a good education, influence in the political process.

A number of these protected benefits, while commonly accepted in our society, perhaps should not be granted to anyone—for instance, the right to unlimited accumulation of wealth, and the right to own other people's homes or to control their working conditions. These privileges place a tiny minority's "right" to make money over the majority's right to a decent life.

Eliminating classism means working to abolish these unjust privileges, while finding ways to secure the essential privileges for all.

— from *We Gave Away a Fortune*, by Christopher Mogil and Anne Slepian (New Society Publishers, 1992).



For Further Information

Descendants of
Multinationals
PO Box 575
Big Sur, CA 93920

Maine Voters for
Clean Elections
PO Box 7692,
Portland, ME 04112
207/773-3274.

There are coalitions working on similar campaigns in over a dozen states, and a nation-wide group in formation.

"Responsible Wealth" via
United for a Fair Economy,
37 Temple Place, Fifth Floor,
Boston, MA, 02111
617/423-2148.

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the Responsible Wealth group is a way for high-asset people to say, 'Inequality is not in my interest! This growing polarization is creating a seriously insecure world for my children, and I won't stand passively by and allow it to continue in my name.' "

Fighting for Family Land

As a woman brought up in true Southern tradition, I was taught to be acquiescing and polite. I put everyone else's needs first, and felt anguished any time I needed to speak up.

Our family wealth included a 3,000 acre coastal tract of land with an unspoiled barrier island. Since my childhood, the sparkling water and fresh breezes of that place envelope me in a peace I feel no where else.

When my uncle died in '86, we found out this miraculous property was "worth" \$30 million dollars. Of course, some family members were more interested in money than in the land. When some of the property was sold without any conservation protection, I knew I had to speak up or be haunted for the rest of my life. But how? I knew nothing about standing up for myself. Could I stand up for the land I loved?

I started by supporting my mother. Her life-long wish was to preserve the land, so she set up a charitable foundation that would preserve her portion and avoid 5.5 million dollars in estate taxes. Within six months of establishing the foundation, Mother was dead. What I feared most came to pass: some family members sued to overturn her will and her foundation.

Our once extremely close-knit family was torn apart. Unfortunately, lawyers only worsened the situation by pitting us against each other. I gave up millions of dollars of personal revenue to protect the land, yet on the witness stand I was accused of being motivated by greed.

contributions (their own money as well), to limit their spending, and to shorten their campaign season. While a prior Supreme Court decision prevents requiring limits to candidates fundraising for office, this voluntary public funding is still a notable step towards helping level the playing field.

The wealthiest one percent of the U.S. population now owns more than the bottom 92% combined.

—Professor Edward Wolff, N.Y. University

"People talk about the widening gap between the rich and poor as if it is some natural phenomenon, like sunspots," says Chuck Collins, the great grandson of Oscar Mayer. "I was horrified to learn how deliberate and systematic the policies are that multiply the wealthy people's assets while the incomes of working people stagnate and decline."

Ignited by the unfairness of it all, in 1994 Chuck joined a diverse group to start "United for A Fair Economy." UFE educates the public about the past two decades of public policies and corporate practices designed to benefit the most affluent ten million people in the U.S. at the expense of the bottom two hundred million. These rule changes include: tax cuts on the wealthy, and tax and fee hikes on everyone else; trade policies that undercut U.S. workers and the natural environment; and winner-take-all corporate salaries. UFE's action arm, "Share the Wealth," builds campaigns to change these policies and practices.

A growing number of people with wealth are seeking an organized way to speak out against public policies which exclusively benefit the very wealthy. In response to requests, Chuck and others have begun a project called "Responsible Wealth." Over 30 people signed an initial statement and are beginning to discuss action ideas. Says Chuck, "Participating in



Now that my family is working with mediators (instead of through litigation) to divide the remaining property, my brother and I are speaking civilly to each other for the first time in ten years. I even feel hopeful about the healing of the family. •

– Oliva Boyce-Abel

Only through therapy and personal growth did I gain the strength to separate myself from my family's view of me. Previously, I thought power was only a negative trait. Breaking the rules of propriety and standing up for what I believed was like a rite of passage about what it takes to live in the world. I emerged from it a more mature woman who deeply values personal power, and who can assert herself while still acting on a vision of understanding and empathy for all. Taking charge of my life is the most important thing I have ever done.

Mother's and my share of the land (1,200 acres of coastal property) will be preserved forever. This may seem like a drop in the bucket, but I believe that every piece of land preserved matters. I am glad I could do my part to counteract our long history of the lack of concern that has consumed the earth. Every season that the loggerhead turtles nest on the island, I am filled with a peace that money could never buy.

How Might We Use Our Power?

Throughout this issue, we have been exploring how people who want to improve the world can embrace their power without taking power over others. This inquiry is motivated in part by our frustration with two existing models of social engagement for people with wealth:

"Kindly" Power

Over Others. Here we find the classic model of "noblesse oblige," which underlies many rich people's wellintentioned attempts to make a difference. The strength of this model is that over centuries it has motivated and engaged many people with wealth in acts that have been genuinely helpful. (We far prefer it to "blame the poor" which also has

its adherents!)

However, this model promotes a paternalistic view that people with wealth accurately know what others need. In addition, it proposes only

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Authentic Power

"In Chinese, the character for "power" has three elements. One part is forward motion; the second part is a heart; the third part is a goal. When you have all three elements, you are beginning to achieve authentic power.

If you do something without heart, without love, it lacks power. If you act without a goal, you act without power."

— The Power of One by Sharif M. Abdullah, New Society Publishers, 1995.

Credits and Correction

The Bizarro cartoon on p. 5 of the Spring issue of More than Money was reprinted courtesy of Chronicle Features, San Francisco, California and the Kudzu cartoon p. 16 was reprinted with permission of Doug Marlette and Creators Syndicate.

Class Awareness Trainings

Several agencies and trainers do consulting and workshops for individuals, nonprofits, universities, government and businesses, to increase their understanding and sensitivity to issues of class.

Class Action
245 Main St., #206,
Northampton, MA 01060;
413/585-9709

Equity Institute,
6400 Hollis St., Suite #15,
Emeryville, CA 94608;
510/228-568

National Coalition
Building Institute
1835 K St., N.W., Suite 715,
Washington, D.C. 20006;
202/785-9400

“helping the poor” rather than working to change the system that creates so much wealth for so few.

Giving Up Power. Some wealthy people feel strongly that they (and other rich people) should return control of their wealth to working people. Believing in democracy and repulsed by the way power is abused in the hands of relatively few, they are committed to a shift of power that goes far beyond benevolence.

While this model inspires and invigorates some individuals (for example, many in our book *We Gave Away a Fortune*), all too often the idea seems to induce guilt, and to immobilize people rather than energize them into action. Many wealthy people do not feel powerful to begin with. When they hear an implicit demand to give up power, they sometimes react defensively and stay away from social justice groups altogether.

A Third Choice: Respectful Partnership. We seek to promote another model, one that embodies the political clarity and commitment of “giving up power,” while still welcoming the leadership and engagement of people with wealth. In naming this model, we hope to make explicit what hundreds of people with wealth are already doing.

If you are drawn to the “respectful partnership” model but unsure how to put it into practice, we invite you to consider taking some of the actions below. We have distilled these elements from the experience of many people. If the steps sound daunting or uncomfortable from where you are now, remember that this is not a quick fix, but rather an ongoing process that evolves over a lifetime. Often taking one small step towards living your deepest values makes the appropriate next step easier to imagine.

Invest in your self-awareness. Do personal healing—therapy, spiritual practice, personal growth work, or whatever it takes—so you are neither seeking power nor refusing your power out of reaction to family, peer

and societal messages.

What if this soul searching leads you to decide that your life’s work is not about being a powerful steward of wealth? Then figure out the amount of money you need for personal security and give the rest to others you respect who will take action with it.

If you don’t want the job of harnessing wealth’s power to begin with, taking this action is not “giving up” your power. Rather, passing on the wealth is a potent way to act on your convictions and self-acceptance. Unlike sitting on wealth that is not doing much good for anyone, this path is a form of respectful partnership.

On the other hand, if you become clear that using your money and power for societal good is a part of your life’s mission, make a commitment to it. Notice what enables you to act on this vision.

For most people, the overwhelming nature of daily life—everything from dealing with the mail to the pressures of parenting—creates enormous inertia that acts against even the best of intentions. (Wealth, which tends to multiply even when left alone, is rarely the most “squeaky wheel” in life. Although the social costs of ignoring your money are great, the personal costs are usually minor.)

Build substantial, long-term support systems. Most people need vigorous and consistent support to counteract inertia. This support can come from a spouse who shares the same commitment,

a group of friends in a similar situation, a network of people with a common purpose, an advisory group, an evolving combination of the above, or some other structure. In whatever form, you need peers, mentors, and role models whose lives reflect your values, and relationships with people who will give you honest feedback, holding you to your ideals as you pursue your goals.

Expand your ability to treat others as equals. Learn about classism, and the ways oppression becomes internalized. Take part in organizations where you build cross-class relationships, and work to change the unconscious patterns of arrogance, control, and isolation that are deeply ingrained in all of us from socially dominant groups (e.g., men, white people, upper classes...).

Dig into your niche. Accept that even with wealth, you cannot right every wrong. Let some areas go, even though they express values you hold deeply. Out of a clear and accepting sense of self, find (or further invest in) a focused area of work that resonates with your core passions and identity. Stay with it for several years, decades, or a lifetime.

Play a part in changing the bigger system. Don't let your responsibility end at "doing good" with your wealth. Put your voice behind institutions that take a stand against inordinate power and privilege and that work towards increasing the power of all people. Even if you are using your money for something "nonpolitical"—to be a better parent, a poet, an entrepreneur—there are innumerable opportunities to support those with little power to develop more, and to be an advocate for your ideals on a systemic level.

Remember, your wealth is not your power. Money is like gas in the car: a useful fuel, but worthless by itself. You also depend on the spark plug: your commitment to a mission that ignites your soul, and an engine: your work with a team of kindred spirits. None of us creates significant change in the world alone. •

—from the editors

Why Wait?

How much power do we have in the world? Those of us with a million dollars or so, while incalculably more comfortable and protected than the remaining 97% of the population, are not part of the "upper class" or "the power elite."* In fact, like most people, we have little say in far-reaching corporate and government decisions that affect our lives.

However, this power elite depends on the compliance (whether willing, unconscious, or coerced) of the vast majority. Throughout history, sweeping political and social changes have occurred because multitudes of ordinary people organized to influence or overthrow the wishes of that elite.**

Due in part to the greater freedom and flexibility wealth brings to our lives, those of us with wealth have much to offer this organizing: everything from the ability to work at lower-paid jobs with high social impact, to greater confidence working within the existing power structures (e.g., legal, banking).

Yet many of us are waiting to be galvanized by just the right world-changing project or movement (which never seems to come along). Only then (we tell ourselves) will we risk a truly substantial commitment of money or time. This attitude creates a self-perpetuating circle: for lack of human and monetary resources, many potentially powerful ideas never take off. All big changes start small and depend on the support of people who have a vision of what they can become.

Throughout history, great gains in human rights and dignity—the end of slavery, women's right to vote, civil rights, the 40-hour work week—have been won with the support of individual people with wealth (usually behind the scene) who took the risk and put their passion and their funds behind these movements. Together we can release this same power for positive change into the 21st century.

continued on back cover

How to Get Involved in Nonprofits:

Impact Online (no relation to the Impact Project) is a service helping people use the Internet to connect to nonprofit public interest organizations:

<http://www.impactonline.org/>

Good Works: A Guide to Careers in Social Change. Colvin, Donna, editor. N.Y.: Barricade Books Inc., 1995. A directory of hundreds of public interest groups, with extra resource list.

*In *Who Rules America Now*, sociologist William Domhoff argues that about .5% of the population is “upper class,” but that only the leadership of this upper class (with the collaboration of less affluent upper-management executives in business and government) is the “power elite” or “ruling class.”

** This view of power is adapted from *Power and Struggle*, by Gene Sharp. This is the first of three volumes that examine how this view of power has played out historically through 198 forms of nonviolent action.

—from the editors

A Spiritual Model of Power

The author Starhawk maintains that how we exercise power will be profoundly different depending on our spiritual understandings and world views.

“Power-over comes from the consciousness I have termed estrangement: the view of the world as made up of atomized, nonliving parts, mechanically interacting, valued not for what they inherently are but only in relation to some outside standard. It is the consciousness modeled on the God who stands outside the world, outside nature, who must be appeased, placated, feared, and above all, obeyed....

This power is wielded in the work place, in the schools, in the courts, in the doctor’s office. It may rule with weapons that are physical or by controlling the resources we need to live: money, food, medical care; or by controlling more subtle resources: information, approval, love. We are so accustomed to power-over, so steeped in its language and its implicit threats, that we often become aware of its functioning only when we see

its extreme manifestations. For we have been shaped in its institutions, so that the insides of our minds resemble the battlefield and the jail.

Power-from-within stems from a different consciousness—one that sees the world itself as a living being... where there are no solid separations and no simple causes and effects. In such a world, all things have inherent value...and are interrelated in patterns too complex to ever be more than partially described. Immanent value cannot be rated or compared. No one, nothing, can have more of it than another. Nor can we lose it. For we are, ourselves, the living body of the sacred...”

From Truth or Dare: Encounters with Power, Authority and Mystery by Starhawk, Harper Collins, NY, 1987. The author goes on to offer exercises and rituals that enable individuals and groups to build more power-within. We highly recommend Starhawk’s novel The Fifth Sacred Thing (Bantam Books, 1993), which vividly portrays two societies embodying these different kinds of power.

The Aims of More than Money

People with wealth supposedly have it all. Targets of envy and resentment, we rarely have a safe forum for addressing the unique challenges that come with having surplus while deeply caring about others who have too little.

More than Money creates a network of kindred spirits across North America (and overseas) who don’t always share the same views, but who grapple with some of the same essential questions. By sharing a wide range of personal experiences, the

publication explores how money is linked to virtually every other aspect of our lives—from how we get along in our closest relationships, to how we feel about work, to how we define and pursue our purpose in life.

More than Money informs its readers about inspirational models of people and organizations using their financial resources with unusual integrity and power. It encourages all of us to pursue our dreams and to contribute our money, time, and talents towards creating a more just and sustainable world. •

BolderGiving Resources

Available at www.boldergiving.org

Story and Video Library

Over 100 brief vignettes of extraordinary givers from across the economic spectrum. These Bold Givers have committed at least 20% of their net worth, income, or business profits toward making a better world.

Bold Conversation Series

Monthly teleconferences and online chats offer an informal chance to interact and learn from Bold Givers.

Explore Your Giving Potential

An invitation to explore in the coming year ways to become more bold in your own giving, and to take the next step that's right for you.

Give Half Pledge

Bold Givers, be counted! This pledge is for people of all financial levels who commit to giving 50% -- of income for three years or more, of business profits, or of net worth.

Bolder Giving Workbook

Through articles, exercises, and stories from outstanding givers, this workbook offers step-by-step guidance for people exploring their lifetime giving potential.

We Gave Away a Fortune

This award-winning book features stories of sixteen people who gave 20% or more of their wealth and highlights common themes among them.

More Than Money Journals

Explorations of the impact of money in our lives. Each 16-32 page issue includes personal stories, articles, and resources. Available in three different formats: free pdfs of each issue, print-on-demand books that compile 5-7 issues by theme, or separate articles you can browse online. (*See list of 40 back issues in right column.*)

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- #26 Effective Giving
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- # 8 To Spend or Not to Spend
- #15 The Human Side of Investing
- #25 Working with Financial Professionals
- #27 Lifestyles of the Rich and Simple

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- # 9 Money and Children
- #24 What Are We Teaching our Children?
- #32 The Great Wealth Transfer
- #33 Embracing the Gift
- #39 Money and Children

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- #17 Cross-Class Relationships
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- # 7 Money and Spirit
- #14 Young and Wealthy
- #18 Art and Money
- #19 Women, Money, and Power
- #22 Money and Death
- #36 Money and Work

Money and Values

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- #11 Embracing our Power
- #28 Who Knows You're Rich?
- #29 Money Changes Everything
- #31 The Everyday Ethics of Wealth
- #35 Money and Leadership
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