“Every great moral and spiritual tradition points to the truth that in the giving of self lies the discovery of a deeper self. When the happiness, security and well-being of others become real to us, we come into our own. Creativity, meaning, resilience, health and even longevity can be enhanced as a surprising byproduct of contributing to the lives of others. This is perennial wisdom, and science now says it is so.” - Dr. Stephen Post (Author of Why Good Things Happen To Good People)

“The Journal of Economic Psychology, found that donating to charity may actually improve a giver’s physical and emotional well being. The study also suggested a link between increases in charitable tax subsidies, which have been found to spur giving, and improvements in people’s perceptions of their own health. (Perception of health tends to be a good indicator of future health-care use and mortality rates.) - Wall Street Journal on the research of Baris K. Yörük, an associate professor of economics at the University at Albany-SUNY

For generations we’ve been trying to fill the holes inside of us and our society with money.

To tender the chasm between the haves and the have nots.

To balance the injustice teetering on the backs of our history.

To reach that ever so elusive number that will one day make everyone, won.

If equity had a price tag we would have paid it all ready, plus tip.
If humanity was currency there is more than enough capital in this room to cover the spread.

We give for a living, to people, places and things for whom opportunity might as well be a foreign language.

Philanthropy has been referred to by theologians and academicians alike as the moral likeness of G_d.

And I’m the wrong person to ask about all that, but I do know that there is a higher something that don’t speak in burning bushes no more but instead uses people to do its bidding and its blessing.

To make miracles of each other.
Cashed in our fortune for feathers
so we can be someone’s angel investor
when they’re at their most desperate.

And even though we give and give and give
in a world that seems to only measure our “commitment”
in dollars and cents
The size of our hearts
gift wrapped in year-end reports and 990s

When our theory of change is evidence-based, upon the number of smiles on the faces
of the most vulnerable members
of our most vulnerable families...

We measure success
By the diameter of hugs, handshakes and high fives
By the volume of laughter per capita
By the distance to our dreams
and by our honest assessment of
each and every human in our care’s ability
to reach them.

Because intergenerational prosperity
is a “thing” too.

The measure of a society
is how we care … and who we care for.

And who we don’t care for tells us
a lot about ourselves.
But remember that one time…?
We made a promise to stop caring so much about currency
and made care our currency.
made service our gold standard
because the ups and downs of our community
deserve our attention
more so than how much the market can bear the bull.

Where our accountability to each other
matches or exceeds our accountability to shareholders
so much so, that even the accountants count’em.

Where friend-raising is just as strategic
as fundraising for the fight.

Where “Phil”
Is short for Phillip,
philanthropy and “fill our cups.”

Where “w.ealth” and “h.ealth”
are nothing more than an initial
or letter
of inquiry apart.

Where the highway to heaven,
Is more of a staircase
to prosperity,
hewn by wingless angels
just trying to make a halo
out of fifteen cents.*

Where we are no longer just looking at the need
but looking, for the cause.

Where we may give a fraction
of our possessions, but we unequivocally give
all of ourselves.

Where the first thing that comes to mind
when we hear the word “compensation”
is Ralph Waldo Emerson.**

When we wake up every morning
to make a living,
for someone else,
someone who doesn’t share our home,
language, religion, gender, skin color, sexual orientation,
age, ability, nationality, opposable thumb, or last name ...

Where we actually make a life,
for one another … because the only life worth living
is one worth sharing.

Or as George Eliot said best...
“What do we live for,
if it is not to make life less difficult
for each other?”

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* “Every charitable act is a stepping stone towards heaven.” - Henry Ward Beecher
** “It is one of the beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely help another without helping himself.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson