



Cross Cultural Giving Discussion
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Presenting:

The 10 Principles of Cross-Cultural Philanthropy©

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By 2050, the US will be a “majority minority nation.” And, as the current economic crisis and the increasing migration of people to the US from throughout the world emphasize, the global village is now firmly planted in our own backyards. The future of US philanthropy will be driven by the giving traditions of the diverse communities connected in a global world. These 10 Principles of Culturally Competent Giving are a tool to help you navigate philanthropy across diverse, globally connected communities. Drawn from years of research on diversity and philanthropy, as well as the experiences of many practitioners in the field, the Principles will help you move beyond your personal assumptions about giving and connect with others to build stronger communities for all. The reading list at the end of these principles will help you learn more about African/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American and Asian/Asian American philanthropy. Use these resources to uncover your personal or community philanthropy and expand participation in giving. Remember that no matter what you call it, or even if you don’t realize it, “you too are a philanthropist. ”

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Principle 1: Philanthropy is universal

Giving whether it is “time, talent or treasure,” is as old as humanity itself. While most people don’t use the word “philanthropy,” every culture and community has a tradition of giving. From a cross-cultural perspective, philanthropy is the voluntary means that any culture, social group or individual uses to redistribute financial and other resources for the purposes of promoting some collective good. The institutional and social mechanisms that surround these voluntary practices will vary across societies and their constituent communities and may not be explicitly defined as philanthropic from a conventional mainstream perspective.

Principle 2: While philanthropy is universal, because all communities and cultures have giving traditions and practices, it’s also, by definition diverse.

There are variations on the common human practice of giving—called philanthropy by some. Just focusing on the US, every group, African American, Mexican-American, Cuban-Americans, Native-Americans, Irish-Americans have a particular way of doing philanthropy rooted in their history, culture and experiences. Variations on a common American theme.

Principle 3: Practices are based on often ancient traditions but, at the same, also change with the times.

For example, drawing on ancient practices from West and Central Africa, African American churches during the colonial period used churches to create community funds like giving circles to support each other and the broader community. While the church is still the focus of most African American giving, churches now have endowments at community foundations, nonprofits designed to provide social services

and a variety of other giving forms that build on longstanding traditions but update them for new times.

Principle 4: There is diversity within diversity

No ethnic group or community is monolithic. For example, Hispanics are comprised of at least 20 different national groups each of which has ethnicities within them. People and institutions apply cultural principles in creative ways and cannot be reduced to just their cultural parts. People also have multiple social roles and cultural experiences that they mix and match into a personal, family or institutional giving style. So, get to know your prospective donor personally. Use cultural principles as one guide but avoid the pitfalls of stereotyping.

Principle 5: Philanthropy not just about giving money

At its most basic level, philanthropy—good philanthropy-- is an act of caring; it is a way of recognizing another person's or community's human, faith in the future that hurt can be healed. People can give in many ways—time, talent, ideas and money—intellectual, social, and financial capital

Principle 6: Philanthropy is not even just about wealthy or more affluent people or foundations giving to poor people or those with less financial means.

Most people think that “big grants” change society. Sometimes big money grants from thoughtful foundations or other social investors really change society such as Carnegie's early grants to establish free libraries or Rosenwald's construction of schools for black children living in the segregated south.

But in most cases, the most impactful giving happens at a grassroots community level—the giving by everyday people with average financial means. Our country's most transformative social movements-- abolitionist, Underground Railroad, women's suffrage, civil rights movements--were created by "micro-philanthropists," who gave small but consistent amount of money over a large number of people for a long-term period. This giving combined with strategic volunteerism, creative ideas, passion with protest where necessary, changed our nation and the world. In most cases, mainstream philanthropy and foundations only supported these movements' causes after they were successful. Real change often starts with grassroots, interactive philanthropy.

Principle 7: Support the Women

The adage, "educate a woman and you educate a nation" is true. The same holds for philanthropy. It is almost a cultural universal that most of the philanthropy done at the grassroots level is lead by women. The neighborhood grandmother who is watching neighborhood children or volunteering at the local foodshelves are critical, fundamental building blocks of neighborhoods and the "communities of caring" so basic to our strength as a nation. Find ways to support women's caregiving of women. If you do, you will strengthen your community and change the world.

Principle 8: The Morality, Money, and Market Imperative

Most people would agree that including the diversity of philanthropy in our community institutions is the right thing today. But it's not just the right thing to do, it's the necessary thing to do for nonprofit institutions that want to survive or grow with our country's demographic changes. We all know that in a few decades, most of the

country's population will be people of color. The future donor market will be the most diverse in our history. Building authentic relationships with diverse communities is essential for the sector's future.

Principle 9: Walking the Talk of Philanthropy

Just don't play lip service to diversity. Know your markets and include them in every possible way. You need their social networks to access philanthropy from their constituencies. After all why would anyone want to give to an institution that does not represent its priorities or community? Boards staffs that don't represent donor markets, historical baggage such as exclusion of women or other traditionally marginalized groups, culturally insensitive programming, or a narrow notion of philanthropy are among the common structural barriers that can impede your organization's ability to "walk the talk" of diversity. This is a not politically correct imperative to diversity for diversity's sake—even though there is a moral imperative to be inclusive. But if you want the resources of these diverse communities, your institution would be wise to find a way to credibly include them in every sphere of its work.

Principle: 10: Cross-Cultural Competence

There are as many different varieties of giving as there are communities, cultures and people on the planet. It's impossible to know all the practices. And considering that there is always diversity within diversity no one person can possibly anticipate all the different practices and preferences an individual donor might hold.

But knowing that philanthropy can take on different guises in various communities is a start. The 10 Principles of Culturally Competent Giving are a guide for continuous

learning. If you don't already know, recognize and learn the history of philanthropy of your own as well as other communities.

The different approaches to philanthropy are equal and all effective in their own way. So, institutional, mainstream philanthropy has at least as much to learn as to teach diverse communities about giving. In fact, many of the key concepts now discovered by foundations and philanthropic institutions in recent years-- from microfinance and giving circles to interactive or venture philanthropy—have existed for centuries under different names. Learning diverse giving traditions will enrich your own giving practices and strengthen philanthropy for all.

Diversity and Philanthropy Reading List

Council on Foundations. *Cultures of Caring: Philanthropy in Diverse American Communities* <http://www.cof.org/Content/General/Display.cfm?contentID=235>

Charles Hamilton and Warren F. Hamilton, eds. *Cultures of Giving: How Heritage, Gender, Wealth and Values Influence Philanthropy*. Indiana: Indiana University, Center for Philanthropy.

Emmett D. Carson 2000. "The New Rules for Engaging Donors of Color: Giving in the Twenty-First Century." [New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising](#) Volume 2000, Issue 29 , Pages 69 – 80. Available free of charge at <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/abstract/104543593/ABSTRACT?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=>

Emmett D. Carson, "Understanding Cultural Difference in Fundraising," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, no. 10, Winter 1995, pp. 99–112.

G. Kasper *et. al.* "[Making the Case for Diversity in Philanthropy.](#)" *Foundation News & Commentary*. November/December 2005, Vol. 46, No. 6. See Web CT or <http://www.foundationnews.org/cme/searchResults.cfm>

Harvard University Diaspora Philanthropy Series. Available online through the Global Equity Initiative's website. <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~acgei/diaspora.htm>

Jacqueline Copeland-Carson 2005. "Embracing Diversity in Contemporary Black Philanthropy: Toward a New Conceptual Model." In Patrick Rooney (editor). *Black Philanthropy: New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, Number 48.

Jacqueline Copeland-Carson 2007. "Kenyan Diaspora Philanthropy: Key Practices, Trends and Issues." Boston: The Philanthropic Initiative and Harvard's Global Equity Initiative.

Janice Gow Pettey 2002. *Cultivating Diversity in Fundraising*. New York: John Wiley and Sons

Mary Ellen S. Capek and Molly Mead, *Effective Philanthropy: Organizational Success through Deep Diversity and Gender Equality*. 2006, pages 51-74.

S. Ostrander and P.G. Schervish "Giving and Getting: Philanthropy as a Social Relation" in *Critical Issues in American Philanthropy: Strengthening Theory and Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass 1990. Available free of charge at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/swri/meta-elements/pdf/giving&gettingphilanth1.pdf>

Warren F. Ilchman, Stanley Katz, and Edward L. Queen II 1998. *Philanthropy in the World's Traditions*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.