



# Strategies to Live *and* Give Generously

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**M**any of us are taught early in life that it is better to give than receive. It often becomes the foundation for our donations, which typically occur during the later stages of our lives when we feel a desire to give back to the communities and causes that have played important roles in our lives.

We all want to make a difference. We feel a responsibility to give—whether it’s time, items or money—to support organizations that are making our world a better place to live. And we want to contribute to that, too.

To be generous, you don’t need to have a bank account the size of Bill Gates or Warren Buffet.

You simply need to find what you are passionate about and start giving. Here are some ways to live and give generously:

### Consider Thoughts, Words, Influence and Attention

These are likely not the first ideas that come to mind when you begin to think about charitable giving—however, it’s a great place to start and build in your own life. You will realize through little adjustments that they make a big difference in living a generous life.



Think positively and give one another the benefit of the doubt. In turn, building others up with your words, employing civility and mentoring others through influence in your everyday life will demonstrate generosity.

Providing your full and undivided attention to others in every situation will ensure your presence, as well.

### Donate Time, Things and Money

These are the most outwardly forms of generosity. Donating your time is arguably the easiest way to give. Volunteering with an organization allows you to connect directly with a cause you are passionate about and usually benefits you as well. If you have things to give, this is also a great way to provide others in need with possessions you may not need anymore.

Oftentimes, monetary donations are the most direct way to support organizations that are making an impact on people’s lives. Consider setting up a recurring donation to an organization you care about.

If you want to continue giving later in life, you can use a strategy that pulls donations from your retirement account. Fund your giving plans through a qualified charitable distribution, which contributes directly from retirement accounts to nonprofits and philanthropic organizations.

Another way is to designate an organization(s) as the beneficiary of all or part of your retirement accounts. Because nearly all charities and philanthropic organizations are tax exempt, upon your death the organization(s) can withdraw those funds tax-free.

Generosity is a state of being, a condition of the soul and a way of life. A focused charitable giving strategy—whether it is time, things or money—can maximize what is shared with organizations that are making a difference, while also helping individuals, couples and families achieve their long-term life goals.



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