

A New Walters Family Foundation Mantra for 2021

You say, "It's too soon to look forward to 2021!" Yet, many have posted in social media how disappointing 2020 has been with a pandemic during an election year with all the pontifications of those who desire your vote. Wearing of masks, social distancing (which by the way – I experienced while attending a co-ed boarding academy in the 60's) and washing of hands is driving many crazy.



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Being a surgeon, I had experienced these weekly – wore a mask and washed my hands and arms up to my elbows! We even had to wear masks while delivering babies. But later in my career that policy was changed to no masks required. Delivering a baby is certainly not germ free! But the damning thing about 2020 was the inconsistency in reports about the disease and what one should do about it. You could go to Costco – first without a mask and later it was required but keep your distance. Only a few could go in at a time. Later, you just had to wear a mask. Yet, you couldn't do the distance and mask thing and go to church. What? Then our governor kept hairdressers out of work until two days after Nancy Pelosi was seen in a San Francisco salon without a mask. Like you, I spoke to several barbers who were put out of work and found frustration because they couldn't earn a living. After my last haircut, I gave a significant tip that brought tears to her eyes. I said, "We're in this all together and we have to help each other!" So many folks are ready to leave 2020!



Help each other . . . those words stuck in my head. Isn't that what a Foundation is supposed



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to do? Our 2020 mantra was "Join our Family." We were on a mission to raise capital funds to grow the giving capacity of the Walters Family Foundation. But giving in this area was not successful. The virus had escaped, jobs were lost, expendable cash was depleted, and giving was down at least



in our area. We attempted to raise funds for two other worthy nonprofits

and giving even for them was down. The economy was tanking along with the stock market. Wow!



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In my coaching world via Zoom I heard from several leaders in nonprofits or schools the challenges they were facing. I often asked, “What are you thinking about his when you sit in your office with an empty school?” “I don’t know what to do. My kids are hurting – they can’t see their friends and miss their face-to-face contact with teachers. I need to fundraise for new buildings to improve our infrastructure. But I can’t do any of it!”

Yet, when faced with challenges, downturns, being laid off, divorce, and many other life



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changes, an opportunity often exists that those in such situations will tell you later that this challenge was the best thing to happen to them! The new job pays twice what the old did! I found the love of my life! I moved to a new area and have never been happier! How did this happen? How can we learn from this – especially in the nonprofit world?

Perhaps . . . (thinking) . . . we need something different . . . (thinking) . . . unusual stuff . . . (thinking) . . . ah! We need to start to THINK DIFFERENTLY! I have applied this question to my coaching clients, “What will THINKING DIFFERENTLY look like in your organization?” Most stopped the conversation and simply thought . . . what WOULD that look like? To think differently! Might some of the following be put on the proverbial table for consideration?

1. Instead of focusing on fundraising for my school or my nonprofit, what if I focused on people?
2. What if I focused on how to do things better?
3. What if I focused on things that didn’t require money?



4. Do I have excess “fat” in my organization?
5. Is it time for a long-standing overpaid employee to be shown to a new job elsewhere?
6. Are my organization’s investments in the best places?
7. How I can I improve myself as a leader?
8. What will my organization look like in 1 year? In 5 years?
9. What will my organization look like if I’m not here?
10. Where will I go? What will I do? Should I move?

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THINKING DIFFERENTLY! How powerful is that? What kind of journey will thinking differently present to you? As for the Walters Family Foundation, the new focus for 2021 will be simply to THINK DIFFERENTLY! How will that make you awesomely better? We will also do what we suggest to you, to our nonprofit partners, and to our coaching clients!