



Tim Sarrantonio:

Welcome to the Untapped Philanthropy Podcast. We're your hosts, Fluxx's co-founder Kerrin Mitchell and Neon One's Tim Sarrantonio. We've spent our careers learning how to leverage technology and data in the social sector to better connect and serve our collective causes, constituents, and communities.

Kerrin Mitchell:

In this podcast series, we profile leaders, public figures, philanthropists, and industry experts to explore the fascinating intersection of funding, technology, and policy. We're here to analyze the most formative topics and trends that shape the present and future of philanthropy.

Tim Sarrantonio:

By the time you're hearing this episode, the latest Giving USA report will have just dropped. And while we're still digging into the full data, there is one thing that I can already tell you. The trend lines aren't shifting fast enough. We're still seeing a disconnect between institutional funding and individual giving, and it's clear that we do need a new model or at least some inspiration from other ways to solve these big problems. And that's where today's conversation is going to come in. Giving circles are one of the most promising examples of what this hybrid model could look like, where everyday givers pool their resources, align on values and direct funding with real intention. They bridge the gap between top-down and grassroots structure, and spontaneity. And no one understands this better than our guest, Emily Rasmussen. Emily is the founder and CEO of Grapevine, A platform that is reimagining how people give together and how communities can take the lead. So in a moment where data confirms what many of us already feel in our bones, that we need better ways to connect and collaborate and give. This conversation could not come at a better time. I'm so excited to welcome Emily to the Untapped Philanthropy Podcast.

Emily Rasmussen: Thank you for having me, Tim.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Welcome. Hi. I'm so excited too. It's funny, I literally just got off a call with my friend and he had brought up your name. I'm like, I am talking to her in half an hour.

Emily Rasmussen:

Oh, how fun.

Kerrin Mitchell:

So lovely to finally meet you, and I'm really excited to dig in.

Emily Rasmussen:

Well, thank you both for having me. Likewise. Excited to share more with your audience.

Tim Sarrantonio:

So maybe we can actually start with a little bit about you and your background and what inspired Grapevine and just tell us a bit of the origin story here.

Emily Rasmussen:

Absolutely. I used to work in microfinance and spent a couple of years living in India, helping to build a microfinance program there, and then joined a firm that was building microfinance programs in different countries around the world. And so had this really incredible opportunity to work in many different communities and really developed a belief in this hyperlocal financing model of getting small dollar donations or small dollar amounts often into the hands of local community members and letting them decide what to do with it, where to invest it. And so really a community led approach. And it was around that time when the early days of crowdfunding were really starting to pick up.

Kiva was taking off, and Kickstarter was launching, and I did not have a technology background, but I was excited about this opportunity to leverage technology to help unlock funds from and for communities globally.



So I had that belief in funding through local initiatives. And then I really was thinking about, how can we unlock more funding for this kind of work? So I spent some time in the crowdfunding sector. I had the opportunity to do some consulting for Kickstarter. I launched a crowdfunding platform and experimented with that a bit. And through that work, I felt that it was a very powerful model, but that it was also fairly transactional and there was something missing from it that I felt connection, collaboration and a more purposeful experience. And so that was really what got me thinking about, what could we do? Like to say in the tech sector, how might we build something that is more purposeful, more connected and collaborative? And ultimately, that led to what is now Grapevine.

Kerrin Mitchell:

And as you went through that path, as someone who's also a founder in technology, it's something where it's funny, because you look back at your career and you think like, oh, there's a thread to it that I never realized. I have a finance background. I never thought I'd use that again, but shockingly, it's very useful. So there's these funny threads where your path dictates obviously where you're at now. And so you did work at NYU, Lincoln Center and some of the other pieces that sort of helped to influence us. So we aren't just a tech entrepreneur coming to the sector, but rather informed by your experiences, you came and created a use case for something that you always wanted to have there. I mean, what are the things that you think are most the things that shaped the way that you built Grapevine that makes it different than say just a normal person coming and saying, "I have a tech solution for a human problem"?

Emily Rasmussen:

Yeah, I mean, I think all of these experiences, it is so interesting how in hindsight, everything seems like it fit perfectly together, but in the moment, you are never quite clear on how one thing will lead to the next. But after exploring the crowdfunding piece and thinking about how we might do something in this space that was connected, and I still wasn't really sure what that meant. I wasn't sure what that looked like. And so it was very theoretical for me at that point. And so I went to work at Lincoln Center. I wanted to get more experience working directly in the nonprofit sector, to better understand how nonprofit organizations engage with their donors and better understand how, and even if they were engaging with technology, were they using crowdfunding tools.

So that's where those experiences really helped me better understand where the challenges were with organizations connecting with donors digitally, how a lot of them didn't want to do that. They wanted to build more of those direct connections with those donors. Both of these organizations, NYU and Lincoln Center, I think are excellent at organizing gatherings and bringing people together in community through in-person events, but also just helping to develop a sense of belonging and connection that people feel when they're connected to those organizations. So I think all of that was very influential to me. And further, when I was at NYU, a lot of our work at the center that I was running there at the time was focused on bringing a smaller community together to collaborate and be productive together. We were bringing scholars together with artists to collaborate around at that time. Well, and still the center still exists, the NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts. So we were bringing together dancers, choreographers, composers, historians, all sorts of different scholars who wanted to explore creative concepts together and expand their thinking and ultimately come up with something productive together. And I think all of that also formed how I think about the value of having a shared experience and the value of creating something meaningful as a way to build connection across differences, which is a big part of the Giving Circle model.

Tim Sarrantonio:

So yeah, I want to tease that out actually because, and this is where I go off script slightly because I did, early on in Kickstarter's career, I worked with a nonprofit that ran the most successful comic book on Kickstarter at the time, and it was maybe around 2011, 2012, because I started working at Neon One. And I said, oh, let's take that data and we could start to cultivate something with these folks. What I learned very quickly, Emily, is everybody just wanted their book. They just wanted the thing that they had paid the Kickstarter for. They weren't interested in developing a relationship. So leading in, how is the Giving Circle model in particular, the idea of collaborative giving, really charting a new path here, because I think we know about even Groupon, I was around when Groupon came alive. It was started as The Point which was supposed to be, there's a tipping point where people come together and then they give something. But those are all very transactional, as you said. What makes this psychologically different?

Emily Rasmussen:

Such a great question. And I think this is where you start to see a little bit of the distinction between different forms of collective giving. I do consider crowdfunding to be a form of collective giving, just like giving circles are. But I like this term



collaborative giving because I think it's a little more nuanced as a type of collective giving where I'm not just pitching into someone else's crowdfunding campaign to support the nonprofit they care about, which is very transactional, I didn't have any say in where this money's going and the cause that we're supporting, but someone asked me to give, I'm going to pitch in. That's all that's asked of me. That's all that I contribute.

In this case, I'm actually getting to pool my money with other people, and then I get to collaborate to help decide where that money is going. So there is a transaction. I think that's important to note. There is money in this process often with giving circles, so there are some giving circles or what some people would call care circles where people are coming together to collaborate to donate their time and support as well. So it doesn't always have to have a financial element. Certainly this form, this form of collective giving and this giving circle movement has that donation as a key element, but it goes beyond that. So I get to not only pool my money, but then I get to collaborate to help decide where that goes. I get to leverage my knowledge, my networks, what I care about, and bring that to the table, share that with others, and then ultimately, whether it's I get to vote or I can be on the grantmaking committee, whatever the decision making process is, I get to help inform where these resources go.

So I think that's one key part around this. I think the other thing that we see with giving circles is people join because they want to connect with the other people. And I think there is something around the framing there, Tim. In your description of Kickstarter there, that's very much... It's almost like a pre-purchase campaign, right? I'm contributing to this thing not because of everyone else who's contributing or anything, but really because I personally want that thing. And that's a powerful form of collective funding essentially, to enable that comic book maker to create that comic book. But in this case, it's a different concept and I would say a different value proposition to those who are considering joining, which is, Hey, I'm going to join a community. I'm going to make my membership contribution essentially to this community. And as part of this, I'm getting this shared sense of connection and belonging to a group.

We see this in the research. It's very powerful as far as how people feel that sense of belonging with the community and now through this community and through the learning that they get by being a part of this, how they significantly increase their confidence and being able to make a difference. Which I think is especially important these days where we see a lot of people feeling like it's impossible to do anything. To make a difference whether it's locally or otherwise. So I think there is just a different framing around it. And then I think the experience itself really does put community at the core, and that transaction is almost more of a facilitation of that collaborative experience. So that's how I would think about it.

Kerrin Mitchell:

It's so interesting because actually one of the things I did notice, I live out here in Hawaii and do work with the Women's Fund of Hawaii, which is one of the nonprofits you guys support. It made me super happy to see those. And I think people are constantly, I'm on a couple boards too here, and they are constantly asking, "How do I get my name out there"? "How do I start to do this in a way that isn't just updating my candidate profile", which is about as far as they've taken it in some cases. It's truly just not understanding how these come together. And I guess as someone that might be coming from that perspective, how do they go in and set up their profile, or how would they sort of get involved? What does that part look like? So you get both sides of the coin.

Tim Sarrantonio:

I think it's more than both sides of the coin. I think there's a platform element that has... I absolutely do not want to call it a marketplace because it's not that.

Kerrin Mitchell:

I agree.

Tim Sarrantonio:

But there's an element of platform economics that I'm fascinated to hear about here because there's a governance, I'm interested to hear about the governance of how circles manage themselves, how they interact with financial entities.

Kerrin Mitchell:

How they segment themselves.



Tim Sarrantonio:

Explain it like we're just... like painting the picture of the world that exists.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Right, so in a world that's typically tops down to get back to that sort of structure. And now we have this ability to call people to action on all sides and to be able to find like-minds and then select into the segments that are part of their world. I mean, take us... yeah.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Explain the infrastructural barriers that you have put up around generosity.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Long question wrapped into about 18 questions. Go for it.

Emily Rasmussen:

Wow. Okay. Well, I'll try. So you're absolutely right that this is a grassroots movement. This is a bottoms up approach that is counter to the top-down approach that we're typically used to. And what that means is that people in their local communities are coming together and saying, "Hey, I'd love to make a difference in my community, but I don't have that much money". And "I don't know that much about all the causes and issues, but maybe if we collaborate, maybe if we come together, like so-and-so here knows a lot about this issue area, and these people over here have networks that they could probably bring in. We could pool our money, we could get to something sizable and we could probably learn a lot and figure out where our dollars could be most productive and we'd meet some really amazing people in the process". I think that's at the heart of this, right around connecting and collaborating, learning together in this process, when you're in a community like that, inevitably in your giving circle, you get nonprofit people as well. Because they care about their community. That's why they're working in the nonprofit space in their community. So I think there's, from the beginning in these giving circles, you have just a broad range of perspectives and insights that can be shared, and it really creates this learning environment for people. And when I talk about community, I'm not just saying that you're in community with other donors. I'm saying you're in community with those nonprofits too, and that's a powerful voice in terms of where those funds are going and the learning that you have around where they can be most effective.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Maybe what I'd love to hear from you is maybe an example that's inspired you on how people are taking the digital elements that you've provided them and doing surprising things, maybe in person with it, to take it and connect with each other, learn more about each other. Do these people know each other sometimes? Are they new to each other? Talk about how the circle gets closer to each other, perhaps.

Emily Rasmussen:

Sure. Yeah. I mean, I think often what we see with these groups is that it's a handful of people who come together, right? They know each other or they've known each other for a while or they recently met and they're talking about these issues. And so it often starts with a couple, or a handful of people. And then they think about, "oh yeah, I know some other people", or "I'm connected to this community". And so they pull in some other people who all want to align around making a difference in this local community. Or we also have a lot of groups now where they're not just focused locally, but they're focused on a cause area across geographies. So I think especially during COVID, we saw groups launching like Black Trans Lives Thrive and Healthy Oceans and Early Childhood Education, things like that that could cross different geographic boundaries and people were building community online.

When you think about how you build community, it can happen in person or online. Often, ideally some of both. And so what we'll see with these local giving circles is even if you're all there locally and you want to connect in person, it's a lot of work to invite everyone in to communicate with everyone, to organize an event, to get everyone there. And so using Grapevine, we see people will organize events and they're coming together for a coffee chat. They're coming together to discuss and decide and vote on which nonprofits to support. They're also coming together to organize volunteer events to then go and support those nonprofits beyond that initial grant. So there's a lot of the organizing stuff of the in-person experience that happens virtually on the platform. And then online, they're able to continue to stay in touch in the meantime. Right, so they



can be in touch and they can nominate nonprofits through the platform and vote on the platform and things like that, that just having a virtual touchpoint is really, really helpful.

I'd say the other thing that we really try to inspire in these groups is, especially now because people are so busy, everyone wants to connect, but everyone struggles with it because we just don't have as much time. Right? We're all so overscheduled, and it's hard to get across town and all of those things. So the other piece of community building that we really try to lean into is that idea that beyond an event where everyone's invited, how can we facilitate one-to-one connections? How can we facilitate some of those smaller group connections? We know those connections lead to stickier overall communities. Right? So you want to show up to an event where you know a few people and you are meeting a few new people. And so we encourage our leaders. We have lots of, I would say just guidance for them around different types of events that other leaders have organized and what can be helpful with building that community.

But then we also facilitate one-to-one connections for members through the platform. So leaders don't have to broker that, members don't have to reach out directly. And now here are two members put in touch that now they're going to get together in person for a coffee, and that's going to build their own community and overall strengthen the network. What we see is there's a broad range of giving circles. The core concept is about a group of people that come together to connect, pool their donations and collaborate to make a larger collective gift to nonprofits. We see a large variation in terms of the size of groups. We see small book clubs with a handful of people coming together. We see large groups with hundreds of people in a community or virtual groups with a thousand people or more in their community coming together around a cause, right?

We see groups focused on local communities or causes or communities. So you can define where you want to give and the type of impact you want to have. We see giving circles that are pooling a certain amount of money every quarter or once or twice a year, and others that will ask their members to just contribute what is a meaningful amount for them. So they make it more inclusive and broad and people are contributing different amounts at different cadences. So all of that being said, the most popular model that we see in the movement is this model where a hundred people come together, everyone pitches in a hundred dollars. So now they have a \$10,000 check to give away. Members in the group get to nominate nonprofits for the group to consider. So if you're a donating member, you get to nominate a nonprofit if you'd like. If you don't know one and you're there to learn, totally fine, that's great too.

And then typically, if there are more than three nominations, which happens often. Then often the group will reduce those nominations down to three finalists. How they do that also varies. Most often they will randomly select three. I'll try and just keep it very fair and just randomly select three. In other groups, they'll do a vote to narrow the total nomination list down to the final three. And then those members that nominated those nonprofits will typically present each of those nonprofits that they nominated to the group, share more about them, why they care about them, why they think they would be a good fit. Some groups will also invite the nonprofit to come in and present, which is wonderful when that works out. But we typically in the giving circle space, encourage giving circles to not ask the nonprofit to do any work upfront, right? They're very busy.

These tend to be smaller grants, \$5,000 to \$10,000, \$15,000. So we don't want to ask the nonprofit to do a lot of work for this if it's not necessary, but that really depends. A lot of nonprofits want to do that anyway, so who presents can vary. At the end of the day, the group discusses and they vote. Every member, every donating member gets one vote and whichever organization gets the most votes, gets that \$10,000 check. And then the group does it all again three months later. So in this model, each member is roughly donating the cost of one lunch per month, but collectively they're moving \$40,000 per year to four different nonprofits.

Kerrin Mitchell:

So when you look at the world we're living in and it's evolving and people, obviously the need for human connection is still there. And I think that's one of the beauties of what you guys are up and doing and rocking, but does anything change in this new AI-forward landscape? Is there something that in the landscape of even policy change and administration woes and things of that nature. Have you seen this kind of turning point change your model at all? Or has it only just concreted those pieces even more so for the role they play in that connection?

Emily Rasmussen:



It's a great question. And we're absolutely seeing continued growth of that traditional model and people starting giving circles, I would say, in response to the moment and wanting to lean in even more. So I think that's been interesting as people are seeking ways to feel like they can really make a difference. And we're also seeing new use cases to your point. And so one, for example, is we are seeing companies working with their teams to launch employee led giving circles. And so that's been really interesting for us to see where we are a grassroots movement, but now in collaboration with companies and corporate foundations able to unlock some of those larger pools of capital to help amplify the impact of everyday donors and their decisions. So that's one thing that I'm seeing more and more of and we're excited to continue to expand in that area.

The other one is we're seeing nonprofits now really reaching out more, I would say, and wanting to learn more about this movement. I think in part because the movements continue to grow and they're seeing it as part of the overall fundraising landscape that they need to understand and figure out if there's an opportunity for them to raise funds from giving circles and learn how they can do that. And also I think in this particular moment where so many of them are seeking alternative fundraising strategies and sources, they're looking at this model and saying, how might we start our own giving circle? What might that look like? And so there are more nonprofits leveraging this concept of a community led donor circle or fundraising circle, some people would call it, that picks up on these kind of community dynamics and the sense of belonging and connection. And I'm especially excited about this because what we see in the broader philanthropic landscape is that roughly 2%, and this is a stat from Giving Tuesday that came out recently, roughly 2% of new donations to nonprofits are recurring. However, on the Grapevine platform, more than 50% of new donations are recurring. And so there's something here in the presentation, the opportunity, the engagement that I think nonprofits can learn from and bring back to their own funding models.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Where are you finding resistance to the model?

Emily Rasmussen:

I would say that the general resistance that we feel and resistance, and I would expand that to say friction, is that it's more complicated, right? You think about a crowdfunding campaign, you put up a page and you send it out to a bunch of people and you ask them to go here and click donate. And that transactional experience you mentioned earlier, Tim, is part of the beauty of it because it's very simple. And that people go along their way. This is more complicated and there's more value here, but it's experiential as well. And so I think where we see hesitation with adopting the model is around that experience piece. There's more to deliver there, but there's more value in that as well for people if you are willing to take that extra time and lean into it. So I would say that, I mean both from people joining giving circles, wanting to check out different groups and better understand how groups operate and who's in them to see if it's a good fit for them. To nonprofits, considering whether or not they can start their own giving circle, and if they will be able to effectively build a community and how much work will be required there.

And I think that's a big part of where we try to come in here at Grapevine is how can we make this as simple for people as possible and for organizations as possible. From those one-to-one coffee chat matches I mentioned earlier, to help facilitate more of those connections and community, to setting up those recurring donations and automating different pieces. And I think this is also where, to the question earlier, AI can come in too to just help with some of this, the admin overhead pieces.

Tim Sarrantonio:

So, one of the things that also this conversation reminds me about is, because of this lovely podcast that we have, I was invited to the Aspen Institute's Trust and Practice Summit in Chicago. And Pew Research actually debuted a lot of research on trust. But one of the things that was a bummer to hear though, was that many Americans don't have a close friend. There's a lot of people who feel just disconnected in the current environment. Even me, as a remote worker since 2016, actually, the pandemic didn't make it easier for me to meet with, meet up with people, meet people on a personal basis. And on a work side, on just a community side, we keep hearing how people are finding it hard to connect. Have you seen anything when it comes to giving circles helping address that much larger cultural divide?

Emily Rasmussen:

Absolutely. I think that issue has been a big driver of a lot of people's interest in joining giving circles, frankly. And we've asked tens of thousands of people why they joined giving circles on Grapevine. And the thing we hear over and over again,



the most common answer is to connect with other like-minded people. And we see that also play out in the research. The Johnson Center for Philanthropy published a report last year on the giving circle landscape, and they asked members to share what value essentially they get from the experience of being in a giving circle. So beyond the money that we're moving and the impact that we're having, what is that personal value and why are you joining these groups? And a report showed that 82% of members who responded to the survey said that they joined to establish relationships with like-minded people, 82%, and 77% acknowledged that they had common affiliations or identity amongst the members. And so I think what we have seen is that people are looking for ways to connect and meaningfully connect and to find not just any connection, not just go to another networking event, but how can I meaningfully connect with others? And so I think it's been a big driver of people joining these groups and the experience they're getting from them.

Kerrin Mitchell:

That's awesome. I think what's so cool about what you were walking through is I hadn't thought of it in relation to the way that giving circles exists, and it's something that really, of course, it's, it illuminated that side of said emotional connection is so important and people, that's why you get into philanthropy is that you have a connection to humanity and you care about something and to find people that also care about it. That is something I think that we've all been craving and why we do gravitate towards each other in many places, especially in times of crisis or local issues or whatever it be. So it's so funny when you said that, I was like, "duh, Kerrin", but I hadn't actually ever connected that, so thank you for making my brain work the way that I think the humanity in it needed to.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Yeah, I think there's just something so inherently, I don't want to say pure, because humans are messy, and the motivations for even generosity can be messy, but there's something more natural around it. I was in a version of one in Chicago called The Fire This Time Fund, and so it was more of a collective of people, and we were just giving up a little bit of our money, and I was living in a crappy apartment in Chicago. I did not have a lot of money, but it was really cool to sit down and talk with this group of folks who had very similar views and approaches, but very different thoughts on how to solve the problem. And that led to good debates on where we might want to put things. So, to have a platform that can do it, I think is so cool, actually.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Yeah, it's like that bridging. We're in such a bonding environment right now, people, I'm going to bond with things that I like, but like you said, to the ability to come out and say, well, how do we solve this? And open out of it almost makes it academic again instead of tribal, and it's really nice in that sense of getting to learn from others. So Emily, this is awesome. Thank you for all that you brought Also, not just the podcast, but just in general. I think this is a really, it's what I think is oftentimes the kind of holy grail of what we're all trying to do is...

Tim Sarrantonio:

Oh, I've wanted to have Emily on for a while.

Kerrin Mitchell:

... build towards collective giving. Even at Fluxx, that's what we're trying to get towards is for all the people that are doing all this effort, how do we start to let them learn from each other and build on something bigger and connect to these things? So thank you, Emily.

Emily Rasmussen:

Yeah, thank you so much for the opportunity.

Tim Sarrantonio:

We're going to close things out. We have a little bit of a segment that we play, and so you don't know these because it's two truths and a lie. We're going to ask you to let us know two truths and a lie, and Kerrin and I are supposed to guess what's true and what's not.

Emily Rasmussen:

Okay. Let's see. Two truths and a lie. I hate pistachio ice cream. I was homeschooled and I grew up in a log cabin.



Tim Sarrantonio:

Two of those might be related. Obviously, the cabin and the pistachio ice cream are connected.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Obviously.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Geez, that's a hard one because you're kind of throwing me off here.

Emily Rasmussen:

I feel like "log cabin" is very specific, so I kind of like that.

Tim Sarrantonio:

So is pistachio ice cream.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Pistachio ice cream, but I don't like pistachio ice cream, so I'm kind of like the person that would be like, "Yeah, screw that. That's gross". So I think you don't like pistachio is what you said, right? I'm kind of with you.

Tim Sarrantonio:

That's, that's not a lie. Who loves pistachio ice cream?

Kerrin Mitchell:

Dude, people are avid fans. They're rabid about that stuff.

Emily Rasmussen:

It's very controversial.

Kerrin Mitchell:

That's a very polarizing fact she gave us.

Tim Sarrantonio:

I'm slightly ambivalent about it, I suppose, but I'll eat it. Look, my personal favorite is an upstate New York chain that makes s'mores and graham cracker ice cream. So it's just like...

Kerrin Mitchell:

Okay, what do we think though?

Tim Sarrantonio:

I'm going to go with the, I'm gonna go with the....

Kerrin Mitchell:

What kind of log cabin is it? Maybe it is log cabin...

Tim Sarrantonio:

No, I'm going to go with homeschool.

Kerrin Mitchell:

I'm going to go homeschool too. I think I'm with Tim.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Yeah.



Emily Rasmussen:

The homeschooling part is the lie. Is that what we're agreeing? Okay.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Yeah. Yeah. You got it! We haven't been particularly great at these in the past, so anyway.

Emily Rasmussen:

Well, I think Pistachio ice cream is very polarizing, but I do actually love it. So I'm on the other side of that, but the other two are true. I think, Tim, to your first point, probably I should work on my Two Truths and Lie, because those are a little more aligned.

Tim Sarrantonio:

They were? Okay. You grew up in a log cabin and were homeschooled.

Emily Rasmussen:

That's, that's correct.

Tim Sarrantonio:

Okay. See, I didn't, you correct.

Kerrin Mitchell:

You were correct. I got it wrong.

Tim Sarrantonio:

I keep not going with my gut.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Your gut.

Tim Sarrantonio:

I keep looking at you, and listening to you, and I have to stop listening to you for so

Kerrin Mitchell:

For so many reasons, Tim, for so many reasons.

Tim Sarrantonio:

No, I'm kidding. I'm kidding. Emily. I mean, we could probably have a second podcast episode just on that background to get to the homeschool cabin-going person who created a movement of giving across the world.

Emily Rasmussen:

Well, I appreciate that, but I will just say that I cannot take credit for the movement by any means or the model. This all started before we launched. We launched five years ago to help bring this movement online and help continue to expand it, making it easier for anyone to get involved.

Tim Sarrantonio:

So where do you see it? Let's end with this then. Where do you see it? Where do you hope to see it go? Where's the dream?

Emily Rasmussen:

I want to see everyone in a giving circle, if not two or three, because you're in your local one, you're in the one connected to the cause you really care about, and maybe you're in the one that's connected to the nonprofit that you are particularly connected to. And so I just think that there are, as we talked about earlier, so many versions of these and that it makes



sense that people are in these, and we often are joining and supporting nonprofits because of the community anyway. And so, how can we create that experience and that sense of belonging people are looking for in an easier way?

Kerrin Mitchell:

Well, Emily, thank you so, so, so much for joining us today. Obviously, so thrilled and honored to have you come onto the call, share with us all the good stories that you have brought forward about giving circles, but also the call to action I think we all kind of need and have been looking for. So thank you for that. Tell us a bit more about where people can learn more. Where would you like them to go?

Emily Rasmussen:

To grapevine.org, and there you can search for giving circles, find one near you or one focused on a cause you care about that you might like to join or learn more about starting your own. In just a couple of minutes, you can have your own draft, circle up and running, and start giving back to the causes and communities you care about.

Kerrin Mitchell:

Awesome. Thank you so much again.

Emily Rasmussen:

Thank you.

Kerrin Mitchell:

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