



Your Capital And the Power of Generosity

An excerpt from
Wealth with a Why
Part 1: The Purposeful Investor

Presented by Stephanie & Stuart Mills and Partners

"We offer you our story of how we reignited our love of land and sea when we asked ourselves, 'Can we do better with our money?' This question spearheaded our deep dive into the world of sustainable finance."

The Small Print

The views represented here are those of Stuart and Stephanie Mills. The guide resonates with their practice, but they recognise that your needs may differ and that there will be other resources available to you, specific to your interests, location, or needs. It aims to help you identify the types of services and financial vehicles to seek in order to meet your financial needs and values whilst serving the planet.

Your Capital And the Power of Generosity

Our first guiding principle is we believe that **each of us has much to offer beyond our wealth**. In fact, we do ourselves and the planet a disservice by ignoring the whole picture of who we are, what values we hold close, and what we offer that's unique to us as individuals.

We began with a simple realisation that understanding our values was crucial to making meaningful decisions about our finances and our lives. By recognising, and leaning into our core beliefs, we found clarity in our path forward. This process of self-discovery was invaluable, as it helped us understand that we had much to offer beyond just our financial resources.

As we aligned our actions with our values, we experienced a ripple effect that extended far beyond the initial act of giving. This alignment not only benefited others but also enriched our own lives in unexpected ways:

- Giving our time made us more invested in people and causes.
- Sharing our skills improved our expertise.
- Connecting friends with colleagues spurred greater results for all involved.

We also discovered a deep connection between generosity and nature: exposure to the natural world made us more trusting, helpful, and generous.¹ This beautiful benefit of nature only strengthened our resolve to protect our environment.

To discover our personal combination of values, we've used tools like Brene Brown's list of values and the GenAI tool TIGG. Narrowing the list down to 3 words that resonated with us was a powerful exercise. Reflecting on how we saw ourselves in each word, and how it made us feel, helped us apply these values to our actions with greater intention.



Try out Infectious Generosity's [TIGG](#) or Giving Tuesday's [Generosity Toolkit](#) to find actions that match your interests and values!

Stuart values Courage, Equality, Honesty, and Trust.
Stephanie values Stewardship, Kindness, and Creativity.
Together, we value Ingenuity, Community, Empathy, and Enthusiasm.

¹ Dose of Nature. (n.d.). A selection of studies demonstrating some of the benefits of exposure to nature. Retrieved from <https://www.doseofnature.org.uk/studies1>

All Your Capital

In economic terms, an individual's financial capital represents their money and assets, while their human capital embodies skills and knowledge, both of which are crucial for securing economic well-being and future opportunities. Beyond our financial resources, **we can all leverage our skills, time, stories, and networks** to build a sustainable and thriving future. We can dedicate our time to meaningful work as well as consciously direct our financial resources, unlocking our potential as agents of change.

Philanthropy Together describes human capital in a more, well, human way. They name an individual's capacity for giving of themselves in the 5 Ts: treasure, time, talent, ties, and testimony.²

And focusing on our "5 Ts" helped us identify how we could translate our values into actions:

Treasure: Making purposeful investments and donations, even small ones, to causes we care about.

Time: Volunteering or getting involved in community projects.

Talent: Sharing our skills and knowledge with those in need.

Ties: Using our networks to raise awareness and connect resources.

Testimony: Sharing our experiences to motivate others and foster a shared sense of purpose.

Aligning Our Finances with Our Values

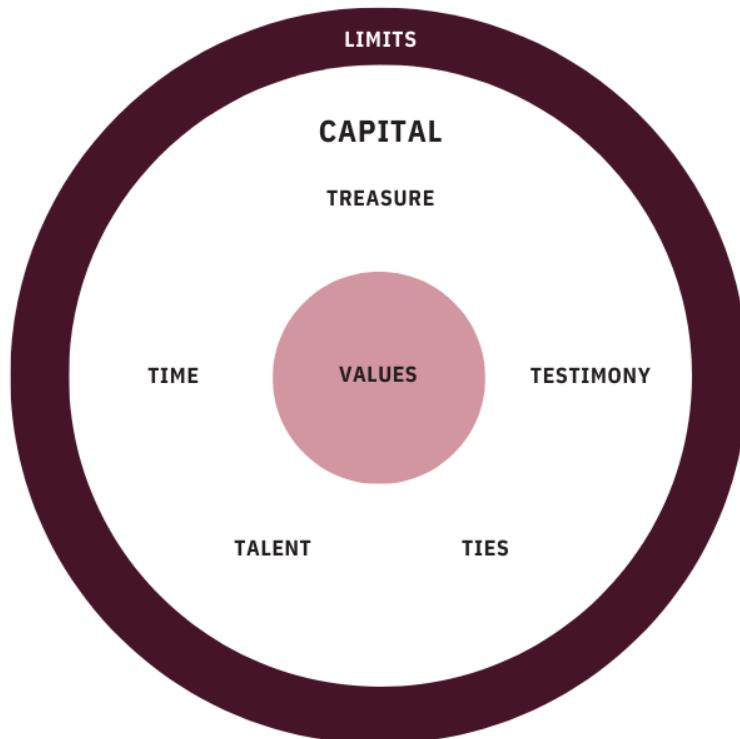
As we've become more aware of our values, we've found ourselves making more confident financial decisions. This alignment created a natural framework for decision-making, helping us navigate complex financial choices with greater clarity and conviction.

The power of generosity is not just a concept, but a transformative force that has reshaped our lives and our understanding of the world. Chris Anderson, curator of TED, introduced the concept of "infectious generosity," arguing that acts of kindness and giving have the potential to create a positive cascade effect throughout society. For us, generosity isn't just about helping others; it also has a profound effect on us as givers. We've experienced the emotional rewards of giving firsthand, which can often surpass

² The 5Ts is a concept introduced by Sarah Lomelin, CEO of Philanthropy Together in her TED Talk. Retrieved from <https://philanthropytogether.org/ted>

those of receiving. By giving, we've enriched our own lives, enhancing our sense of happiness and contentment through consciously and intentionally investing with our financial and human capital. By embracing generosity and aligning our actions with our values, we've created a more fulfilling life for ourselves and, we hope, a more positive impact on the world around us.

ALIGNING CAPITAL WITH VALUES



Remember, generosity doesn't require grand gestures or significant wealth. It's about finding ways to align with your current financial situation and values.

Mapping Your Capital to Impact

The **spectrum of capital** is a framework used by the financial services industry to demonstrate different ways in which money can be used for impact based on financial return. There are many different iterations of the spectrum of capital, but for our purposes, we simplified the range of options to 3 approaches. Finance first, impact investment, and philanthropic giving represent distinct approaches to deploying financial capital, each with a different primary focus and set of objectives. To define the three areas in the simplest terms:

- **Finance First** focuses primarily on financial returns, irrespective of impact.

- **Impact Driven** blends financial returns with measurable positive impact.
- **Philanthropic Giving** prioritises positive impact, without the expectation of financial return to the donor.

These three approaches work together to make up our overarching financial strategy. As we considered how our capital could contribute to a better world, we discovered opportunities across the entire spectrum. The more we embraced this strategy, the more we realised that diversifying gave us greater agency, allowing us to support the causes we care about while still meeting our desired level of risk and return.

Our journey with the spectrum of capital began with wanting to align our investments with our values. We started with what we had. We planned for our future, factoring in desired returns, and bolstered aims with positive impact.

It's not just about allocating capital to different asset classes, it's about a mindset shift: we realised that all capital—whether we recognise it or not—shapes the world in some way, either positively or negatively. Instead of passively allowing our capital to fuel impacts we were unaware of, we began to see it as a powerful tool for positive change—one that could help build a better world while also achieving our financial goals. So far, we've experienced these benefits from embracing a spectrum of capital approaches in both our investments and giving:

- **Expanded our impact:** By engaging across the spectrum, we've been able to support a wider range of causes and organisations that are making a difference in the world.
- **Deepened our understanding:** The spectrum has provided us with a framework for understanding the different ways that capital can be used to create positive change.
- **Increased our agency:** By actively managing our capital across the spectrum, we've gained more control over how our money is used and the impact it has.
- **Aligned our investments with our values:** The spectrum has helped us to ensure that our investments are consistent with our values and contribute to a better world.

You can choose to spread risk and also diversify your investments or pensions to those that favour positive social and environmental change. Understanding these different roles can help you decide which asset class works best for you and your aims, while the spectrum helps you to see the overall impact of your decisions. For example, choosing an investment account (traditional) is very different to donating to a cause, but each has a ripple effect toward collective action. While philanthropic giving may not be

your sole focus due to a need for financial returns, it can still play a significant role in how you interact with the various forms of capital. When we see philanthropy as an investment on the spectrum of capital, its importance shifts from a 'nice to have' to a 'needs to happen' and can become an integral part of our investment strategy.

Taking stock of all your financial and human capital is a great way to ground yourself for your journey. At first, we looked at finances only, but now we plan ahead, including our time, skills, and connections. When we reviewed our actions over the course of the last few years, we surprised ourselves with how quickly our actions added up. Also, we saw decisions that were right for us at the time, but that now it was ok to change tack because 'our why' changed.



Think about your stage in life now. What, who, and where is important to you? Try to write down everything, no matter how small.



DID YOU KNOW?

Actions Help Drive Shifts to Demand

Public concern about plastic pollution, driven by thousands of ordinary people reducing plastic use and signing petitions, led to a major policy shift in 2015. By 2015, the collective actions—individuals choosing reusable bags and voicing demands — resulted in England introducing a 5p charge on single-use plastic bags, later increased to 10p, reducing usage by over 95% in major supermarkets.

Your engagement with financial institutions can drive where money is invested and demanding more sustainable investment options and stewardship, we can all push for a shift toward responsible investment. There's a growing expectation for financial institutions to not only report their financial performance but also to be transparent about their broader societal impacts and hold themselves accountable for delivering and increasing positive outcomes. This rising awareness presents a chance for each of us to align our investments with our values.