



Dear Bill, Melinda, and Warren,

Walt Disney once said, “It’s kind of fun to do the impossible,” and like the three of you, I am in the fortunate position to help tackle some of life’s most challenging “impossibilities.”

Because I have a fervent belief that science is the answer to many of life’s “impossibilities,” I made the decision long ago to donate the entirety of my estate to philanthropy and scientific research. My more recent decision to sign The Giving Pledge should not come as a surprise to those who know me, but rather, should be viewed as a natural evolution of how I was raised. I’ve been around philanthropy all my life and have understood the importance of giving back since I was very young. Because my mother, beloved philanthropist Margaret Hunt Hill, insisted on taking me with her when she volunteered, I actually recall not being old enough to understand that voluntarism was, in fact, voluntary.

While varied, my career reflects a mix of entrepreneurial vigor and a commitment to balancing profit with purpose. I spent the early part of my career building a business; the middle part between venture capital investments and volunteering; and today, I devote nearly all of my time to philanthropy. This third stage of my professional life is dedicated to supporting game-changing advances in science and nature, and to improving the local communities of greatest importance to me, Dallas and Colorado Springs.

I know we share the view that good intentions aren’t enough. Philanthropy – in its most effective form – must yield measurable results expected of any well-run business. I believe that sometimes it is actually more difficult to give money away in a meaningful manner than it is to make money. But there are things about both that are quite similar. First, you have to figure out the right approach, and then you have to execute, maximize results, and measure the impact.

With this philosophy at the core of my philanthropic efforts, I decided long ago that I’m not looking for Band-Aids or incremental change. I’m looking for solutions. I want to invest in transformational initiatives that have the potential to impact global issues like food safety, ocean conservation, medical research, and related efforts.

And that is why I was so pleased to join The Giving Pledge. It gives me the opportunity to “think big” and to share ideas and learn from friends across the globe. In speaking with Warren, he reminded me that I “shouldn’t do what others can, and will, do with their giving,” but rather, he encouraged me to “do what they can’t, and won’t, do.” He reiterated the importance of taking risks and being bold. The Giving Pledge has fueled and shaped my ambition to achieve even more impact from my giving.

As I said, I want to do big things. I want to make a difference. The more I do for others, the happier I am. So to Mr. Disney’s comment about it being fun to do the impossible, I would simply add that it’s also good to have fun. I look forward to a long and productive dialogue with my fellow Giving Pledge signatories, and to collectively tackling many of life’s ‘impossibilities.’

With great hope for game-changing solutions,



Lyda

