

Introducing

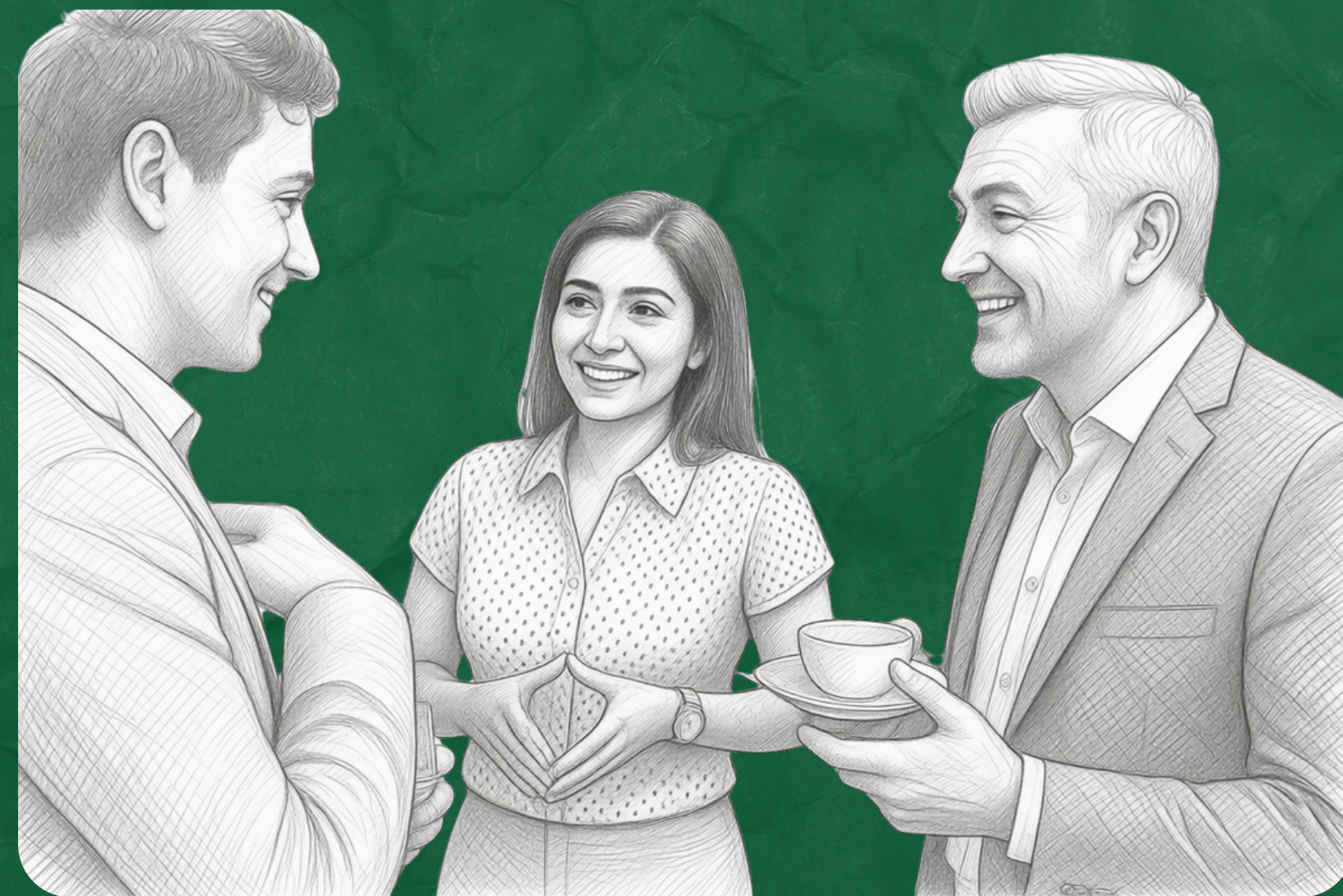
LeadingAge Michigan Philanthropy Network

The conversation starts today.

Join a statewide community of philanthropy and development leaders to:

- Share practical ideas
- Solve common challenges
- Exchange resources
- Strengthen philanthropy across Michigan

Scan to join the philanthropy network listserv:



LeadingAge™
Michigan

Presented by:
Aaron Bradford
Heritage Community of Kalamazoo Foundation



From Gratitude to Growth

Storytelling Tools for Leaders to
Strengthen Engagement



LeadingAge™
Michigan

Leaders Communicate All Day

- Reports
- Budgets
- Staffing
- Quality
- Strategy
- Fundraising
- Change



The Dashboard Was Not Wrong

Occupancy

Turnover

Resident satisfaction

Fundraising

Budget performance



The Translation Gap



INFORMATION



→ THE TRANSLATION GAP →

MEANING





Leadership is the Work of Creating Meaning



Data tells us what happened.
Leaders help people understand why it matters.





Why this Matters at the Executive Level

When leaders fail to create meaning:

Staff hear tasks instead of purpose.

Families hear uncertainty instead of trust.

Boards hear activity instead of strategy.

Donors hear need instead of impact.

Culture becomes assumed instead of reinforced.



Every Leader Asks People to Invest

Staff invest effort.

Families invest trust.

Residents invest confidence.

Board members invest leadership.

Donors invest resources.

Volunteers invest time.





INFORMATION

What happened.



becomes



MEANING

Why it matters.



creates



ENGAGEMENT

People care. People act.

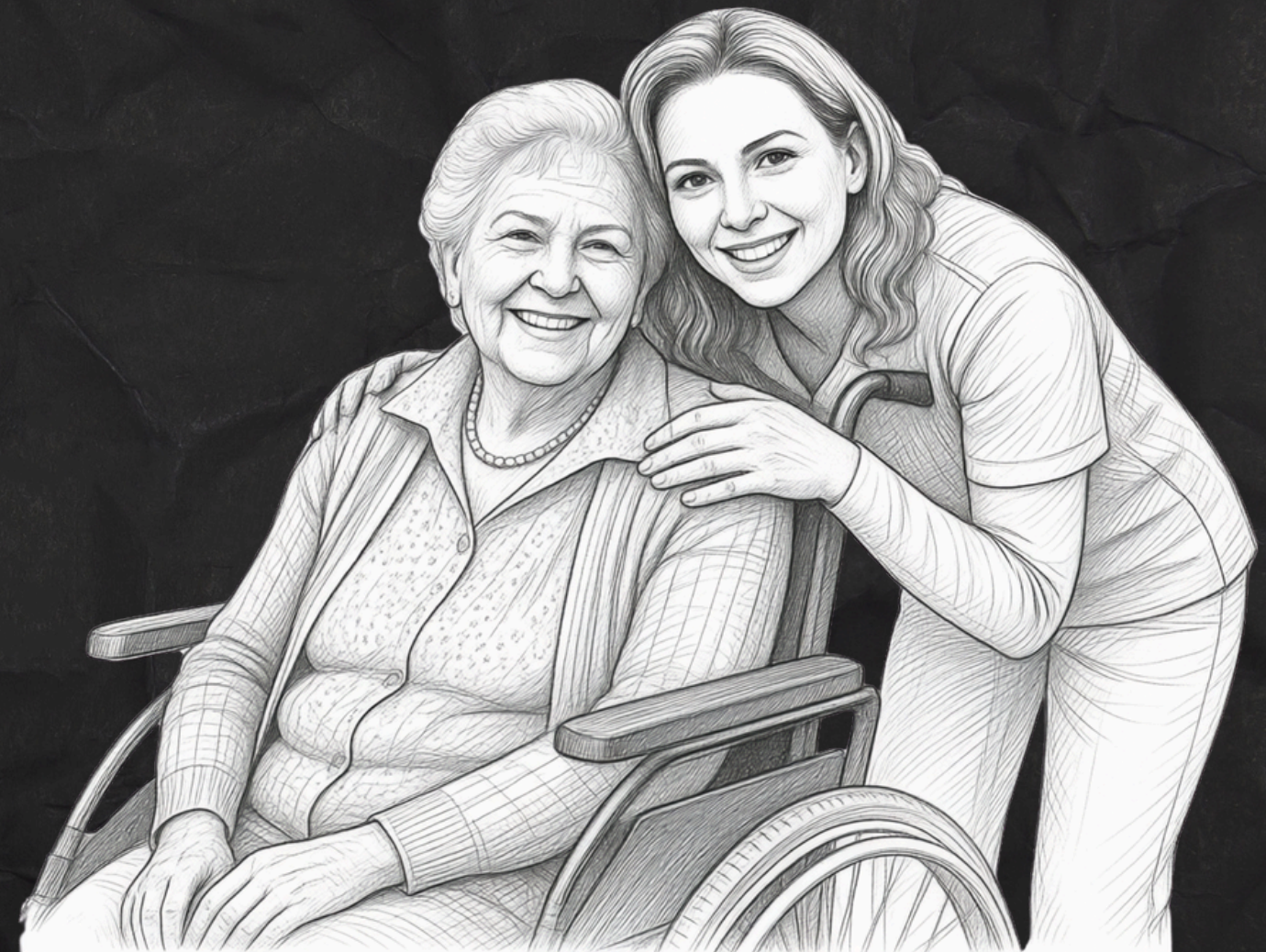


Donor-Centric Lens

Who is this story really about?

From: Look what we did.

To: Because of you, this became possible.



Find the Human

Every update has a person inside it.
Ask: Where is the person?





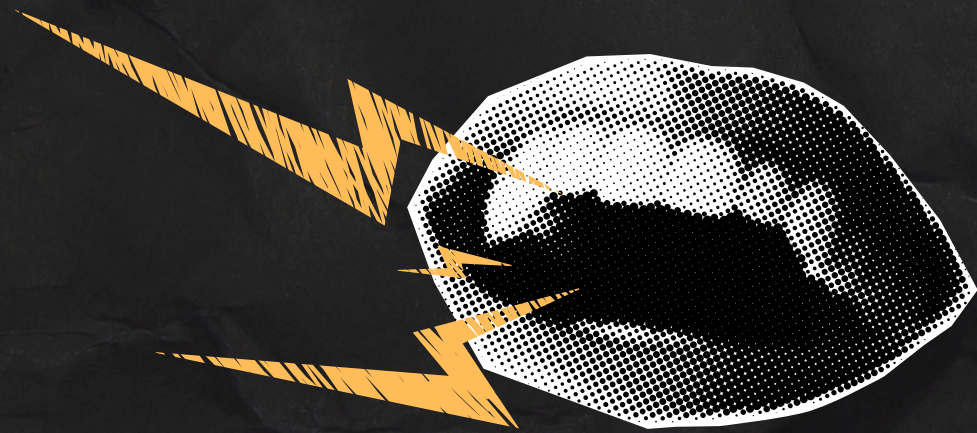
Facts Inform. Stories Move.

Facts tell us what happened.
Stories help us understand what mattered.





Story Reframe Framework



FACT

What happened.



reveals



HUMAN IMPACT

What changed for a person.



creates



MEANING

Why it matters.



leads to



GRATITUDE OR INVITATION

How people can be part of it.



We Bought a Bus

Fact: We bought a bus.

Human Impact: Residents have more transportation options.

Meaning: Residents stay connected to the community they love.

Gratitude: Generous support made it possible.





Projects Are Not the Outcome. People Are the Outcome.

The continuum of care is the update.

Peace of mind is the story.

Story: Ray & Kay Kretzschmer (Brio Living Services)



Supporting Lens: Hero vs. Guide

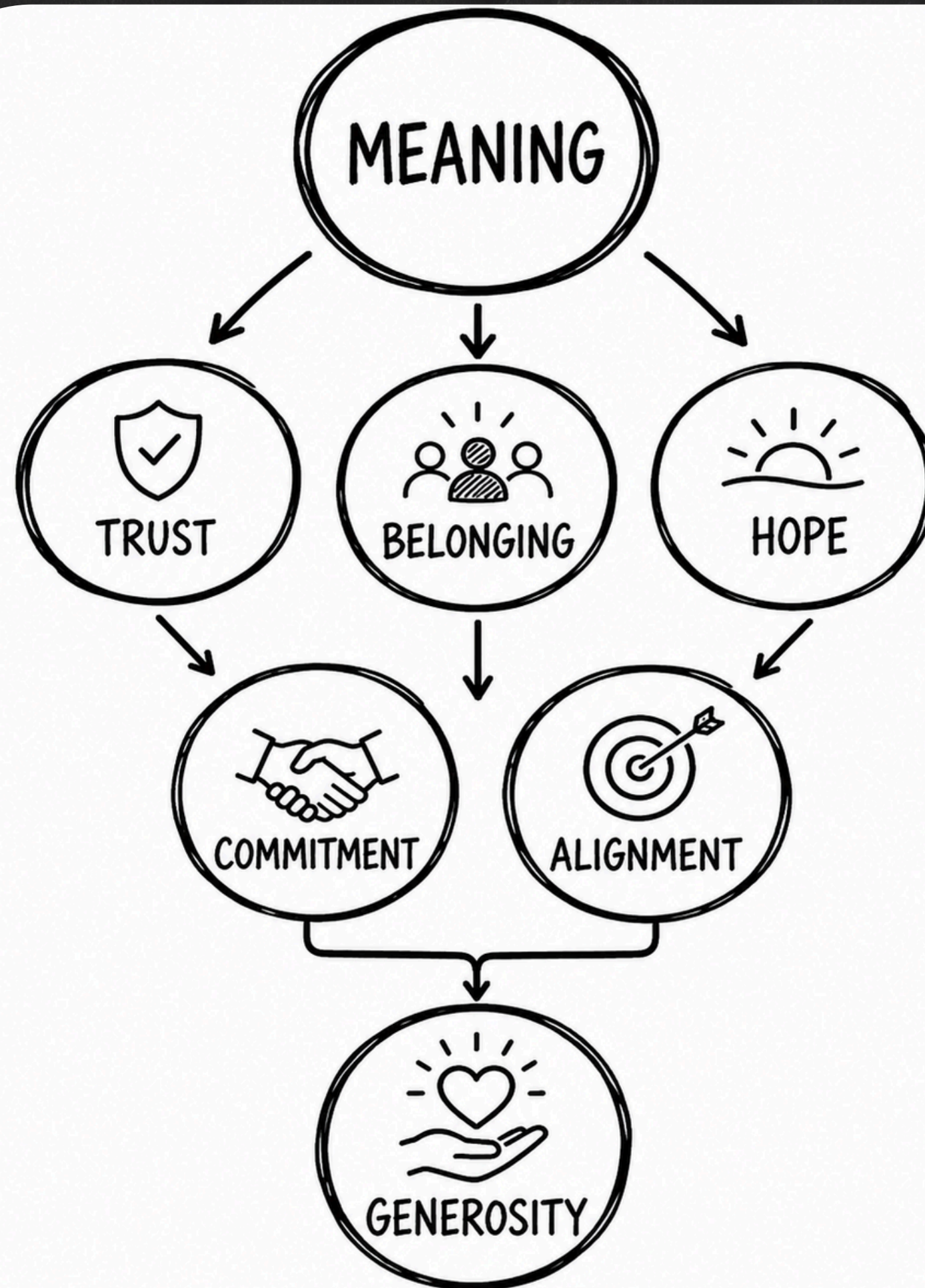
Who is the hero?

Hero: Resident, family, employee, donor, volunteer

Guide: Organization, leader, department



Meaning Creates Engagement





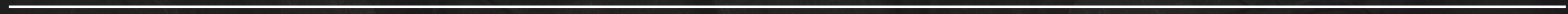
The Gift Was the Fact

The relationship was the story.

Thirty years of relationship.

Thirty years of trust.

Thirty years of belief in the mission.



Leadership Helps People Believe in the Future

Generosity is hope made visible.



Audience Translation

What does this story mean to this audience?

The truth does not change.
The translation changes.





One Story. Different Audiences

Helping Hands Fund

Employees hear support.
Families hear reassurance.
Residents hear community.
Donors hear impact.

Board members hear mission and strategy.



The Three Tools

1. Donor-Centric Lens.

Who is this story really about?

2. Story Reframe Framework

Fact → Human Impact → Meaning → Gratitude or Invitation

3. Audience Translation

What does this story mean to this audience?

Supporting Lens: Hero vs. Guide





Story Reframe Game

Take a dry update.
Find the human.
Create meaning.
Translate for an audience.



Story Reframe Game Worksheet



Dry update:

Fact:

Human Impact:

Meaning:

Gratitude or Invitation:

Audience:

What does this story mean to them?



Ready-to-Use Messaging Templates

Because of you...
More than...
Before and after...





Tomorrow Morning

Reports
Budgets
Staffing updates
Strategic plans
Metrics
Goals



Every one contains a human story.
Every story contains meaning.
Every leader can help people see it.
