

Idea Tithing

By Mark Victor Hansen

Co-Founder Chicken Soup for the Soul Enterprises, Inc.
America's Leading Authority on Human Potential
New York Times #1 Best-Selling Author
Marketing Maven and Sales Expert



Expanding Your Vision of What's Possible!

©2001 Mark Victor Hansen

Mark Victor Hansen & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 7665, Newport Beach, CA 92658-7665
(949) 764-2640 (949)722-6912 fax
www.markvictorhansen.com

“Nature gives all, without reservation, and loses nothing; man or woman, grasping all, loses everything.”

- The Path to Prosperity
James Allen

Almost everyone knows about tithing. Tithing is an age-old concept. It is endorsed by every major religion in the world. To tithe is to give back ten percent of your net earnings to your spiritual source, whether that be the church, temple, ashram or mosque you attend . . . it's where you get your spiritual nutrition and sustenance.

My vision is that everyone – 6+ billion of us – start to “idea tithe.”

Together, we can make the world work for 100% of humanity!

Idea tithing is defined as taking ten percent of your intellectual effort and creating concepts that, when executed, benefit everyone.

My concept is new to the literature. It is a breakthrough that can have enormous positive implications.

See, ideas are a basic resource. A basic God-given resource. A resource that almost no one fully values or fully utilizes. Each of us has ideas. We each have the ability to manufacture more upon request. If we do and apply these ideas, spontaneous and serendipitous wonders can occur to the benefit of all living, and all who will be alive in the future.

I created the concept of "Idea tithing" to get people into the giving spirit. Idea tithing gets people who have never given, to give, make an instant difference, feel good about themselves and their gift, and move their lives and our world forward.

As this concept is understood and applied, it can literally make the world work. It can gainfully employ 100% of us. It will also solve a vast amount of problems because individuals will start offering heretofore un-offered brilliant solutions, which create abundance and plenty for all.

It costs us nothing to give ideas. We'll get back more ideas . . . ideas to make our lives better, our families better, our schools better, our churches better, our philanthropies better and

our world better for everyone, every where, at every moment. Together, it's a dreamy vision, but we can create Camelot.

Only giving creates human dignity.

Only giving opens up the soul.

Only giving can miraculously change a life.

Only giving works at soul level and radiates outward to every area of your experience.

Only givers get.

Only givers live a truly fulfilled, powerful, positive, happy and deeply meaningful life.

Idea Tithing for Our Natural Resources

Our precious planet is literally sucking for air and you can make an immediate and lasting difference. We need to instantly plant 18 billion trees to re-balance the Mother Earth's ecological systems.

Our parents and their parents, out of infinite love (but total ignorance), cut down our forests for warmth, homes, hospitals, roads, buildings and malls. However, they never re-planted what they took. They taught and perhaps you do too, that Mother Nature would automatically take care of herself and her needs. Or perhaps you believed that the foresters who are now replanting two trees for every one they cut down are doing an adequate job of replenishing Mother Earth. It just isn't the case. Unfortunately, human kind has grown in population in one hundred years from 1 billion to over 6 billion and our omni-various needs are depleting Mother Earth's resources at an accelerating clip. God's first commandment to humankind in Genesis was: "Be fruitful, multiply, replenish, and subdue the Earth." We have over-subdued it, and have not sufficiently replenished it.

Trees are the great givers on the planet. Think about what trees give: they give shade, food, firmness to the soil, beauty, wind breaks, they hold the ionosphere in place, they prevent erosion, they give oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide and other pollutants, they keep our hydrological system in balance . . . I could go on and on. I love trees. I suspect that you do, too.

You and I can make a difference. You can **choose to plant three trees right now**. Plant one for being born, one if you ever plan to die, and one if you have ever been or are in love. (If you are a serial lover, you can plant a forest!) I prefer you plant fruit trees for your own and other's nutrition. As fruit trees bear abundant fruits, you can share them with the hungry and the needy.

As co-creator of the Chicken Soup for The Soul series of books, we have tithed to some charity on every book with which I was involved. We planted 250,000 trees at Yellow Stone Park with the Arbor Foundation. I issued a challenge to everyone in the publishing business or that uses paper to help re-forest the planet, because we are direct beneficiaries of its largess. Many took up the challenge and I hope more will.

Perhaps, you've never thought that you had a responsibility to trees and re-forestation. Well, now you know the truth. If the entire world were to live or die based on whether or not you have personally planted at least three trees, would the planet make it?

Please make a goal to do this immediately. Better yet, inspire a Tree Planting Saturday and get your pals together for a Tree Planting Celebration. Bring out the media to tell your story. Consider giving gifts of trees, seedlings, and seeds as your great gift to your friends and the planet. I nominate you as an official friend of the Earth. Thanks to you, we will all breathe a little better.

Let's Save The Oceans

The oceans belong to everyone. The ocean is our commonwealth. If the oceans die, we die. Yet, who's in charge of the oceans? The United Nations is not. America is not. Japan is not. You get the picture – no one is taking accountability and responsibility. Someone needs to, so Wyland, “The Michelangelo of the Oceans and Seas” and I have decided to work with each other, along with Scripps Institute of Oceanography and the Cousteau Society to clean the oceans and replenish them.

Wyland is the world's greatest marine-life sculptor, painter and muralist according to his fans and the Guinness Book of World Records. If you aren't aware of this young master and his prolific output, then visit his website at www.wyland.com. Wyland is my diving buddy and friend and he is a planetary crusader who is committed to making a difference. He has painted 87 “Whaling Wall” murals around America that have been seen by over one billion people. His

goal is to paint 100 “Whaling Walls.” You may remember the movie Free Willy about the whale. Wyland painted the mural that contributed to springing Willie from imprisonment and death to safety, freedom and life. The year 2011 marks the 30 years Wyland has invested in the largest art project in the world, “Wyland: The Whaling Walls,” and in celebration of that event, he has a really big idea. Wyland and I recently invested a day together. He shared his biggest Idea Tithe ever, which is to paint ten miles of “The Great Wall of China” as his 100th “Whaling Wall” in the year 2011 and dedicate it to the idea of cleaning and replenishing the oceans and the seas. He asked me to spearhead this project and help get together the “Lead Team.” I immediately agreed.

Wyland’s vision is to have representatives from 190 countries present as he paints 10 miles of the world’s longest wall (3,500 miles). Beforehand, he wants the children of the world to enter his contest to paint what they believe needs to be lastingly imprinted on the wall. He wants to have one million children on his right and one million children to his left as he works to produce the world’s biggest, greatest and longest “Whaling Wall” mural. It’s such an extravagantly big idea that it will capture the attention of the entire world. The world’s people will hear what needs to be done and will pitch in to help. Visit both of our websites for periodic breakthrough updates as the year 2011 approaches.

The Giving-Receiving Cycle

Curiously enough, the giving spirit creates the receiving spirit. So, to get more all one needs to do is give more. The more ideas one creates and gives away the more ideas one has.

Andrew Carnegie, the steel baron and philanthropist who funded America’s 3,000 libraries and the great Carnegie Hall in New York said: "I’ll spend the first half of my life creating great wealth and the second half giving it away...Attempting to do the most good and the least harm with my benefactions."

Carnegie was a generous genius with ideas. He gave away visionary ideas with his charitable contributions. As a tribute and monument to his gifts, his foundation is alive, well and still processing an ever-growing largess. The Wee Scotsman was the first to give and inspire other rich people to do the same. Now *that* is a legacy worth leaving! It gives each of us a new benchmark to “goal” towards.

In giving and sharing you always have more. It seems arithmetically as though one would have less but, in fact, giving expands whatever one has. Music is the best example of this theory, proving that giving and sharing always creates more for everyone.

When musicians give their all, they feel exalted and thankful that the music flowed through them. The audience is enthralled, entranced, moved to happy tears, and feels compelled to participate instantaneously in a standing ovation. The star musician bares his soul and the audience is wowed and ecstatic to tell everyone to see this performer.

Likewise, the simple act of giving simultaneously creates more good and blessings seemingly out of nowhere. Why? Because God is always watching and cheerfully gives instantaneously to the giver. That's why givers give more. They have experienced this amazing formula, even if they cannot articulate it. They know that it works to theirs and everyone's benefit.

A Tithing Review

To return to the traditional concept of tithing, **financial tithing** is best explained as contributing ten percent of your gross earnings to your church. **Time tithing** is volunteering to serve your minister, priest, guru, rabbi or institution. Most people who attend church regularly, become devote practitioners, and feel compelled by their inner spirit to volunteer and tithe their personal time to serve their church or its equivalent.

One of my **idea tithes** is to give my book, "The Miracle of Tithing" free to everyone. We have asked priests, ministers and rabbis to offer it free in the church bulletins. Ask your church leader to put it in *their* bulletin or literature. You can have it free by going to www.Markvictorhansen.com and finding it in the product section, where you can easily download and print my mini-book. I wrote it to help inspire individuals to tithe, grow and fulfill their spiritual mission on our planet.

Where Idea Tithes Are Already Making a Difference: The Mormon Humanitarian Center

Idea tithing may be best explained operationally, with some stories and examples. The idea-tithing concept gives me mental rushes, because everyone who hears it understands it, gets it, and wants to do it now.

The first time I clearly enunciated this concept was when I visited the Mormon Humanitarian Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. What I saw inspired me that night to put together the words "Idea Tithing" and my audience uniformly commented that it was an original idea.

The Mormon leadership truly believes and acts on the admonition of Christ, which says: "Give in secret and you will be rewarded openly." They do. I was so deeply impressed that I spontaneously wanted to help them help others.

The Mormon Humanitarian Center receives goods that did not sell at the churches' Dessert Stores (the equivalent of Good Will stores). The Center also works in close harmony with Good Will and cheerfully accepts the clothes that they cannot sell. They also work with the American Red Cross to quickly get to disasters and source and serve those in need.

Eighty percent of this clothing is clean and in good condition, so it's sent out to Americans in need (Acts 1:8 suggests charity starts at home.) On the day I was visiting, most of the clothes were being sent to rural Kentucky, Louisiana, and Alabama. Other clothes were being bundled and express shipped into India, just one day after their devastating 7.8 earthquake.

What amazed me most is that nothing was wasted. The clothes that were too worn or torn were crushed and pressed into very soft blankets. That same day I saw 100,000 blankets shipped into India to warm and cover those who, the night before, had lost their homes and all their belongings.

At the Center, I saw goodies that I never would have started to suspect. Mormon Moms had hand-crocheted bandages to be used to cover lepers' wounds, because regular bandages are too painful. I saw microscopes, crutches and walkers for kids and adults, and a smorgasbord of every imaginable goodie. Over the years, these folks have deeply thought through the needs of those experiencing trauma, drama and pain.

Selfless Mormon volunteers and a few minimum wage employees are doing all this good, invisible, and needed work. The church does not seek or even want this publicity. I am not a Mormon. I am just an interested visitor who witnessed something so incredibly heart touching that it demanded sharing.

The Book Needs at The Center

At the beginning of this story about the Mormon Humanitarian Center, I said I wanted to spontaneously help. Why? Because I saw that they are the only organization in the world that

supplies BOOKS to those in need. Their founder-leader Brigham Young said, "You glorify God with your intelligence."

Books increase one's intelligence and many people worldwide have no access to books. The Center provides books for free and it needs more books.

I told them that when books don't sell at local bookstores, their covers are ripped off and returned to the publisher for credit. The books are burned, and thereby wasted. I promise you, this age-old practice does not settle well with any self-respecting author. Why not give them to the Humanitarian Center instead?

Here's the principle, their trucks leave Salt Lake City full of every manner of needed supplies and literally go everywhere in the United States and Canada. Unfortunately, until now the trucks travel back empty. That's a crime. I want you to help fill them with books-in every language, for every age, on every conceivable subject, that would benefit future readers. I feel confident that authors, publishers, bookstores, libraries, and many individuals with libraries or excess books would love to do so, too.

I am asking you to give. I am asking you to get others to give too. I am asking you to spread the word: Let's get books in the hands of everyone. If you have any books (over 200) that you want picked-up, call the Humanitarian Center @1-801-977-0444. There is no shortage of books, merely a shortage of people who know that there is a way to expand the readership of books. This will make everyone better off and no one worse off.

It will take all of us to serve the rest of us. Half of humanity is suffering from deprivation, starvation, lack, limitation and no reading literature. Book sharing starts with you.

Idea Tithing for the March of Dimes

The March of Dimes asked me to be Honorary Chairmen of their Walk-A-Thon in my area. Insofar, as one of my 6,000 goals, was to be like Bob Hope someday and lend my name to a great and inspiring activity like this one, I readily accepted the assignment. After all, I want every child born to be born loved and defect-free. Once I accepted the assignment, I put my 'Idea Tithing' to work. I wanted to make the endeavor bigger, better, more interest-attracting and attention-grabbing than ever before.

I called my friend, actress Melanie Griffith, and asked if we could do a TV commercial together to generate the highest amount of walkers ever. She cheerfully accepted the assignment.

We filmed the commercials at the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit at Children's Hospital in Los Angeles. When she and I got there, we saw tiny infants, some born 23 weeks pre-maturely and desperately fighting for their little lives. We both cried a little. If ever you're feeling sorry for yourself, go visit and, if possible, volunteer and serve at a Neo-Natal Intensive Care Center. I promise you'll instantly get out of you're pity-party.

Our commercial worked, it pulled out the crowds. If in the future, you can join in one of their annual March of Dimes Walk-A-Thons, and you'll be glad you did. If you can't walk, sponsor someone who can. Usually, the walks are five miles on a weekend day. March of Dimes asks that you get five or more people to sponsor you at a dollar or more a mile or \$25 plus dollars. The people who attend fall in love with the other happy, joyful, fun-filled walkers and are astounded at what a gala event it becomes. Parents' subtle job is to create positive memories for their children. Walking with your kids and grandkids at this event is an unforgettable memory that sticks and will be something you'll make into an annual family event.

Idea Tithing for the YMCA

When I was a child, I could personally afford to attend the YMCA, paid out of my own allowance and modest earnings. Nowadays, it has become so expensive that you practically need to get a second loan on your car to get your children a membership.

I love the YMCA. I learned to swim there. I made money with my rock band there playing at weekend sock hops, when I was 16 years old.

You may know that the YMCA invented basketball. They never took a cent for it. Back then, licensing was not even a consideration, much less a viable thought form.

So, here's my thinking: **Let's have the YMCA create a new ball game with 12 or less players on a team.** Think about it:

1. All ball games make money and are successful like baseball, basketball, soccer, golf, etc.
2. Let's have the ball made by Spaulding. Spaulding agrees to back give 10 percent of their profits – forever – to the YMCA, with the money ear-marked exclusively toward lowering the fee or full scholarships for deserving children. I have begun talks with Spaulding and the YMCA and both are favorably inclined to make it happen.

You can't realize a dream you don't have.

Idea Tithing for the Boy Scouts

It was my privilege recently to dine with the executives of the Boy Scouts of America. In my talks, I frequently encourage audience members to ensure their children either join the Boy Scouts or the Girl Scouts, or their equivalent organization. Such organizations teach tremendous traditions, ideals, and values that will serve every child in great ways for life.

The Chairman of the Boy Scouts mentioned during the dinner that they were \$5 million in the hole. Being a teacher of positive mental attitude, and how to create wealth with ideas, and not meaning to be a wise guy, I said: "That's great!" (I learned from the billionaire-salesman-cum-philanthropist, W. Clement Stone that when you say 'That's great!' it puts your mind positively on alert to discover the solution and arrest the problem.)

The Chairman was definitely and completely experiencing the pain of the problem. In fact, he was stuck in the problem, and felt like a wiped victim. Truly he wasn't looking for a solution from an outsider.

My solution is relatively easy and would seemingly be painless to implement and execute. My 'idea tithe' vision was to **create a "Golden Eagle Scout" status**, wherein male adults, like myself, who just missed becoming an Eagle Scout could take a week-long intensive, do all the requisite training, get all the merit badges, pay-contribute \$5,000, and become latter day 'Golden Eagle Scouts.' I can easily envision enrolling 1,000 peers, which creates that \$5 million.

To further plus that idea, I can easily imagine doing this repetitively and regularly getting more adults interested. Many of these adults would be re-inspired and cheerfully help younger scouts advance and progress toward becoming Eagle Scouts themselves.

Additionally, these adults would be creating enough extra good money to advertise and expand the Scouting organization. These adults would help create scholarships and many other necessary ideas and items. This concept resembles sports fantasy camps, where some of my peers have paid a fortune to play basketball with Michael Jordan at the University of California Santa Barbara for a week, and made it the talk of their existence. Perhaps you, my reader, will catch the vision and help make it happen.

Tithing is giving back just 10 percent—in finances, time . . . or in ideas.

I have coined the term IDEA TITHING because everyone is capable of creating a great and inspiring idea that will vastly source and serve their cause, institution, charity, or organization. If 100% of us “Idea Tithed,” the world’s problems would seriously start to be solved.

Rules of thumb for Idea Tithing

1. Everyone can generate a good idea.

There are more than 18,000 charities that need help. If you have a great idea to tithe, tithe it. The sooner the better. Call, write, e-mail, or fax the local leader of the team. If possible, arrange a face-to-face meeting. Present your idea and follow it up with a letter, detailing the idea in as much depth as you would a business plan, if you can.

2. Give without expectation of return.

Giving anonymously is the highest form of charity. The best model representative of this concept is giving blood to the American Red Cross because you’ll probably never meet the three people who end up in receipt of your one pint of donated blood.

Or, consider giving anonymous financial gifts to the March of Dimes that will source and serve children you will probably never meet, but who will thank you in their prayers.

Circulation is the key to prosperity

Just as the blood in our bodies must keep circulating to keep us alive, good must stay in circulation to create and spawn more and better good. With enough idea tithing, everything would be in circulation. Everyone would enter into an era of sublime “have ness.”

I respectfully understand that this idea, in and of itself, is one heck of an idea tithe, but it could happen. It could happen if you just share this special report with one other person and they do the same. Pretty soon, everyone’s got the concept.

If you are ever stuck for a reason as to why to give, remember this: You’re riding on roads that someone else built, and drinking water from wells that someone’s dug. No one can do everything. Yet, each of us can do something that makes a significant difference. As each of us does a little, a whole lot gets done. And pretty soon, everything we dreamed would be . . . will be.

