



Small But Mighty

**The Real Story of How a Tiny Nonprofit Found Its Strength —
And How Yours Can Too**

A behind-the-scenes guide for nonprofits under \$5M who
want to grow without burning out

By The Community Foundation



A Letter From Us to You

We didn't start as a powerhouse.
We started small.
Really small.
No big donors.
No marketing department.
No fancy fundraising consultants.
Just a handful of people who believed
in something bigger than ourselves...
and weren't sure how we were going to
pull it off.
There were moments we thought we
might fail.
Moments when we wondered if the big
organizations would always have the
advantage.
But something unexpected happened.



Being small forced us to become better.
More focused.
More creative.
More honest.
More connected to the people we
serve.
And over time, that “small
disadvantage” turned into our biggest
strength.
This short book is not theory.
It's not something pulled from AI.
It's not a generic fundraising checklist.
It's the real story of how we became a
small but mighty nonprofit —
and how you can too.
— *The Community Foundation*

WHY WE CREATED THIS GUIDE

**We kept hearing the same thing from nonprofit leaders:
“Everything we read is written for big organizations... not for us.”**

**If your nonprofit is under \$5 million,
the rules are different.**

You don't have:

- Endless staff
- Huge marketing budgets
- Dedicated grant teams
- Time to experiment and fail

But you DO have advantages the big organizations don't.

This guide will show you:

- Why small nonprofits can outperform large ones
- The mindset shift that changed everything for us
- The exact principles that helped us grow without losing our mission

How to build momentum even when resources are limited

And if this story resonates with you... We'll invite you to join us for a live workshop where we go deeper. Because some lessons can't be learned from a book.



We Were Close to Burning Out

There was a time when we felt stuck.

We were working harder than ever... but it never felt like enough.

Every year we needed more funding.

Every year the expectations grew.

And every year it felt like the big organizations had all the advantages.



They had teams.
They had consultants.
They had systems.

We had passion.

And passion alone doesn't pay the bills.

There were nights we sat in meetings asking: "Are we doing this the wrong way?"

That question changed everything.

THE MOMENT EVERYTHING SHIFTED

**We stopped trying to act like a big nonprofit.
And started acting like a small one.**



Instead of copying large organizations, we asked:

- What can WE do that they can't?
- Where can we move faster?
- Where can we be more personal?
- Where can we connect deeper?

That's when we discovered something powerful:
Small nonprofits don't win by being bigger.

They win by being smarter.

That realization became the foundation of everything we do today.

THE 4 ADVANTAGES SMALL NONPROFITS HAVE

Advantage #1 – You Can Move Faster

Big organizations need meetings. Small organizations can make decisions. Speed wins.

You Can Be Personal

Donors don't give to logos. They give to people. Small nonprofits can build real relationships.

You Can Adapt

When the world changes, small nonprofits can change with it. And that's where the real growth happens.

You Can Stay Focused

Big organizations do everything. Small ones can do the right things.



The Mistake That Keeps Small Nonprofits Stuck



Trying to follow big-nonprofit strategies.

Big organizations can afford:

- Huge campaigns
- Expensive events
- Large staffs
- Long timelines

Most small nonprofits can't.

And when you try to copy them...
You burn out.

We learned this the hard way.

That's why we built a different approach.

One designed for organizations like ours.
And like yours.



The Small But Mighty Framework

WE FOCUSED ON 3 THINGS:

1. Clarity

Knowing exactly what matters most.

2. Connection

Building real relationships with donors.

3. Consistency

Doing the right things every week.

Not flashy.
Not complicated.

But powerful.
And it worked.



WHY WE'RE SHARING THIS NOW

We didn't write this book to impress anyone.

We wrote it because we know what it feels like to think:
"Are we the only ones struggling like this?"

You're not.
And the truth is...

Small nonprofits all over the country are doing incredible work.
They just don't always have the playbook.

So we decided to share ours.



Your Mission Matters



If you're reading this...
You care.

You're still showing up.

Still trying.

Still believing your work makes a difference.

That's exactly why small nonprofits change the world.

And why we believe yours can too.

— *The Community Foundation*