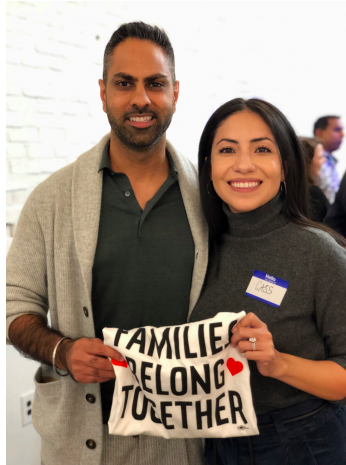


Subject: How we raised \$10,000+ for a charity (actual metrics)

What happens when you try to raise money for a cause you care about?

Last week, my wife and I held a fundraiser in NYC. We both come from families of immigrants and we wanted to raise money for families being separated at the border. What we've seen has made us feel helpless, outraged, and sad. But we also know that we're in the enviable position of being able to do something about it.



This was the first time we've ever raised money for a fundraiser together and I want to share what we learned (plus all the numbers).



[VIDEO: My wife and me explaining why we launched this fundraiser](#)

It turns out I LOVE fundraising. I think it's because...

1. It's a cause I care about
2. I have friends and readers I can share this with

3. Thanks to having 40,000 customers, I have no fear of asking for money. Especially from IWT readers who asked for a free ticket to my event, and (1) one had spent \$10,000 on my products, (2) another worked at Amazon, and (3) a third was an engineer at VISA. I showed no mercy.



MRW when someone asks for a free ticket to my charity event, but they've spent \$10,000 on my products

Our fundraising metrics

- **We raised \$12,975**, beating our goal of \$5,000!! (We donated 100% of that money.)
- To raise money, we first asked a few friends in the nonprofit space for their advice. They pointed us to groups we started researching, then we settled on [Families Belong Together](#) to donate our funds to.
- Our next step was to email friends. We emailed about 50 friends and family, raising \$2,450. Some people donated to come to the NYC event we held, while others just donated funds.
- Then Cass and I recorded a video explaining why we were raising money and why this is important to us, which I posted on my [Instagram feed/stories](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). The video got watched about 50,000 times.
- That video linked back to our Eventbrite page, which got ~2,000 views and raised ~\$9,000.
- We held an event in NYC on Friday, where we hosted about 35 people in a space donated by <https://energi.life/welcome/>. Paola from [Families Belong Together](#) shared stories about what she's seen along the border, along with drinks served by [Andrew from Crafttender](#) (big thanks to everyone for making this possible!!).



Overall, for our first fundraiser, this was a big success!!



Paola shared her experiences working with Families Belong Together. Some of my friends cried during the presentation.

LESSON #1: Get comfortable with small numbers

Initially, Cass and I set a goal of \$50,000. When we went to a few fundraising friends and asked for advice, one of them smiled. “Why don’t you start small?” he gently asked us. Even though it was hard to hear, he was right.

I learned that I had to get comfortable with smaller numbers.

This wasn’t some massive fundraiser where we could leverage crazy press or the entire IWT business (e.g., when [IWT raised \\$300,000 for Pencils of Promise](#)).

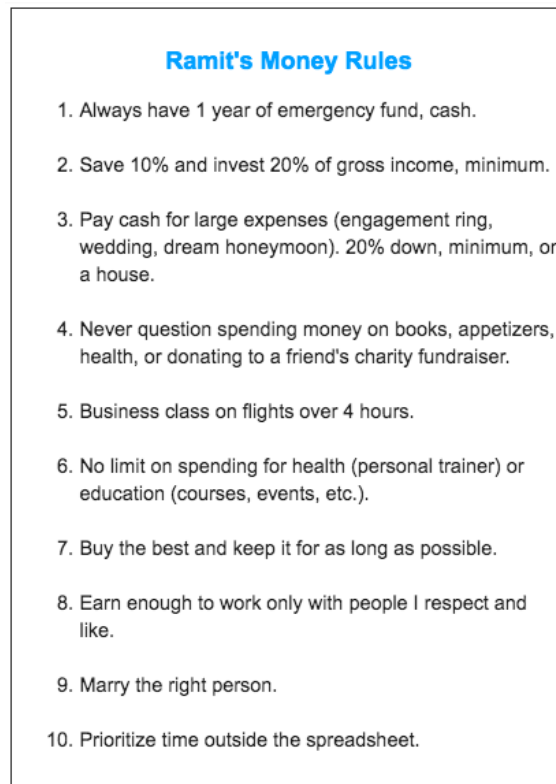
After running IWT, where I oversee a team that manages complex lead acquisition, funnels, conversion, and products, I’ve gotten used to big numbers. To give you an example, during the last week when my wife and I raised \$12,975 for this fundraiser, *one individual IWT student* bought 3 courses equaling \$10,388.

So with this fundraiser, it was humbling to start small and be satisfied with small numbers and modest goals. This was my wife and me setting up our first fundraiser together, trying to find a free event space, and trying to send anything we can to support families at the border.

I had to reframe our new goal of our goal of “only” \$5,000 as a win. When you’re starting something new, it’s hard to remember that starting small is how EVERYONE starts off. This was a great reminder. Most of all, we were just thrilled to be able to contribute to a cause we care about.

LESSON #2: When a friend asks, show up

You might have seen “Ramit’s 10 Money Rules” that I posted a while back. Look closely at #4:



#4: “Never question spending money on books, appetizers, health, or donating to a friend’s charity fundraiser.”

[Read about Ramit’s Money Rules](#)

There’s a reason I always donate to friends’ charity events. When your friend emails you for a fundraiser, they really want your help (in general, people HATE asking for money, so when they do, there’s usually a reason for it).

If you respond and donate quickly, they’ll appreciate it.

And if you donate more than they asked for, they will never forget it.

For example, Sam Gavis-Hughson is a Zero To Launch graduate who [helps job candidates prepare for their coding interviews](#) at companies like Google and Facebook. He used our [Zero](#)

[To Launch program](#) to recently run a \$50,000 launch. When we posted about our fundraiser, he was one of our first donors and came in big with a \$500 donation -- that's *more* than our requested \$100 donation. I will never forget it.

Other friends never donated. Maybe they were busy or missed the email. But I'll never forget that, either.

Showing up doesn't just mean spending money. It also means physically showing up when it's important to your friend.

Over the last couple of weeks, two of my friends have launched books. I went to Nir Eyal's launch of [his book](#). A few days later, Cass and I went to support Paula Rizzo's launch of [her book](#). Yes, I'm busy. Yes, it was out of the way. Yes, we showed up.



Showing up for Paula Rizzo's book launch of Listful Living

When an author launches their book, they're nervous, they're excited, and most of all, THEY DESPERATELY WANT YOUR SUPPORT.

SHOW UP!! Show up for birthdays parties, weddings, book launches, and charity events. ALWAYS.

Those are moments in someone's life that mean so much to them.

Also an amazing chance to meet IWT readers who've been following along for years

Common phrase with multiple people was: "Ok, I've tripled my income in 2 years...now what?" There's a yearning for doing more than just making more money — of using it to help others



Cass and I learned the importance of showing up when we were planning our wedding. After we were married, we made a set of **joint rules for attending other people's weddings**:

1. Always be first on the dance floor
2. Be the couple that you can seat anywhere because you know we'll get the table having fun (AKA, don't be a dud)
3. Make sure your gifts arrive *before* the wedding

After going through our first fundraiser, our new rules are:

1. Always donate to our friends' fundraisers

2. Always donate MORE than they ask for (an extra \$100 or \$200 will always be remembered)

LESSON #3: Deal with critics

Invariably, I had some people who didn't agree with the cause we were raising money for. I think this stops a lot of people from ever getting started with something like this (or starting a business). What will people think? What will they say? Will my friends get annoyed by me asking them for money?

Whenever you try something new, you're going to encounter critics. It happened with this fundraiser.

LOL at the critics who decided that instead of donating, they'd leave angry comments on a fundraiser for a good cause.

I typically find that they use 3 strategies:

- Telling me they disagree with my cause
- Hateful comment: "Send everyone the fuck back" (screenshots below)
- Confuse the issue by asking seemingly innocent question (concern trolling): "What about X? Have you considered Y? Are you concerned about Z?"

Here's how I dealt with them.

First, when they disagree with your cause: I had a woman DM me on Instagram and politely tell me that she doesn't agree with me politically, but she appreciates that I'm using my platform to support a cause I care about. I totally respect that.

Then there were the #MAGA morons who decided to lob potshots from their anonymous accounts with hateful comments.

Unfortunately for them, this New York Times bestselling author is considerably smarter than the usual empty-headed cretins they deal with at the local parking lot where they spend their Saturday nights.



You can safely ignore twitter commenters whose feeds are filled with hateful posts, whose headshots are cartoon characters wearing a birthday hat, and who seem to share one thing in common: the intellectual aptitude of a gnat. Just move on -- they already live in a prison in their own mind.

But beyond anonymous critics, there were the more insidious critics who try to confuse the issue by concern trolling, or asking question after question after question.

Here's what you must understand: These people will never support your cause, whether it's a fundraiser or a business or your plan to lose weight. They have no interest in a genuine discussion (if they did, they would engage privately). They're asking questions because getting others riled up is their entertainment. And, to put it delicately, my successful friends never leave comments like this.



scottwalker44 Why didn't you do this when Obama was in office. Continue to follow the left winged lies and you will be part of the down fall of this country. Facts are that this has happened prior to Trump and it's also been proven that it's not at all like what the left is promoting. Co TJ is to follow their lead and you will continue to lose. Don't give to this ridiculous effort.. If people are going to flood in they need to do it legally. We have to do it right on their side, why does the left believe laws don't count for them. You are following a ridiculous platform that will continue to lose, because facts aren't on your side.

24m Reply



ramit @scottwalker44 Scott, we can debate politics another time. For now I want to help these families. I'm confident you can afford a \$100 donation. Thank you.

1m Reply



Janeile Cudjoe-Myers • 2nd 7h ...
Building Brands That Move Real Estate

Ramit Sethi Debate politics later? The first thing that pops up on their website is "defend immigrants against Trump's attacks". It's backed by tons of left leaning political action groups. If it was JUST a humanitarian group maybe. This group is oozing politics.



Ramit Sethi Author 1h ...
Author of NYT bestseller I Will Teach Y...

Janeile Cudjoe-Myers Thank you for your comment. And I appreciate your help in spreading the message to support the families separated at the border.

I'm wondering what kind of person goes out of their way to leave antagonistic comments on a post raising money for a good cause. If you're not interested in the cause I'm raising money for, I respect that. But out of the 50,000+ people who have seen this fundraiser, only 3 have responded the way you did. I suspect there's something deeper going on for you.

"If it was X, MAYBE I would donate" = "I will never donate"

You can delete or ignore these comments. I intentionally responded to a couple so my followers could see my responses.

If you decide to try something new, remember this: Opinions are cheap. You'll ALWAYS get people saying, "What about this? What about that? How do where every cent of this \$100 is going? If you did X, *maybe* I would donate."

Oh, ok. Suddenly, some anonymous guy with an icon of a banana has developed a 14-page quiz on Kantian ethics that you must answer before they donate \$100. In reality, they have the moral compass of a cupholder.

Guess what? They're not your audience.

Actual supporters didn't demand that I jump through their gauntlet of requirements for one hundred dollars. They wanted to get involved, they clicked DONATE, and they showed up.

It's fine if not everyone supports your cause (whether it's a business, a new hobby, or a fundraiser). But I wanted to show you some of the worst critics of all -- the ones who try to derail you by questioning you, by concern trolling you, by trying to make you second-guess yourself -- so you can see that these people are everywhere.

You want to raise money for your own cause? Great! Do it. My wife and I saw something we wanted to support and we raised over \$12,000 to help these families. If you're more comfortable lobbing hateful comments on social media, then sit down and get the fuck out of my way. I have work to do.

LESSON #4: Use your time and money to live a Rich Life

THIS is a Rich Life -- where you use your time and money to help other people.

When something outrages you or inspires you...when something makes you MAD or SAD or THRILLED, that's an opportunity to lean into it and use your time and money to improve it.

It's not about needing to have \$1,000,000. A tiny amount can change someone's life.



IWT isn't simply about earning more money. I show you how to do that in [my book](#), my [business courses](#), and [my career courses](#).

But to be able to *use* your time and money to help other people...that's another level.

NAME, I want you to see how that you can use money to support the things you care about. Your family, your health, and yes -- giving back.

I want to show you that raising money for something you believe in comes in lots of shapes and colors and sizes. It doesn't mean you have to attend a black-tie gala in Manhattan. I never wrote fundraising checks as a child -- but I did do "sewa" (volunteer service) at my local Sikh temple.

I want to show you how to pick a goal, then go after it without anyone or anything getting in your way. Critics? GTFO. What about the perfect financial structu--forget all that! Raise the money and send it.

More than anything, I want you to know that you can define your Rich Life. This is ours. I hope you find yours and lean into it.

To your Rich Life,



Ramit Sethi
CEO, I Will Teach You To Be Rich