

Deeply Authentic Donor Outreach

Embrace your full humanity as a fundraiser
Find flow with more regular, joyful donor connections

A 90-minute workshop | Tuesday October 7 | 2:00 - 3:30pm PDT

As fundraisers, we can often find ourselves “performing” -- putting on the mask of what we *think* our bosses and donors expect. Someone older, someone more experienced, someone who comes from money perhaps.

We may procrastinate on individual donor outreach for weeks on end, and when we finally do reach out, our language may feel stilted or boring. There’s very little of *us* behind it, and the responses we get back are tepid at best.

This whole situation stinks because we care deeply about our work and we *want* to be in real relationship with our donors. It’s painful time and again to be falling short of what we *know* we’re capable of and what we *know* we should be doing.

But what if the very things you’re worried about – your quirky humanness, your imperfections, or your newness at fundraising – could be the very key that unlocks real connection? Which then unlocks generous giving?

Here’s the thing. Donors are *people* just like us. They put on their pants one leg at a time, secretly worry that they aren’t enough, and truly do want to make an impact.

You may have been telling yourself they don’t want to hear from you, but *that’s not true*. What they *don’t want* is to hear from a corporate machine. What they *don’t want* is to be treated like an ATM. And just like us, what they yearn for most is connection and meaning.

So let’s offer it to them!

If you can be brave enough to drop the mask... If you can be brave enough to **invite connection** as the open-hearted, work-in-progress human that you are, then “your people” will sit up and listen.

You will stand taller because you're speaking with your own voice, sharing your own perspective, and being real about who you are. This realness then gives donors permission to drop their guard and show up as who *they* really are.

Imagine them saying, "I'm *so glad* you reached out," "Yes please to that coffee date," and "Wow, can you tell me more about that program?" I have *seen* this approach in action and I *know* that it's possible.

It doesn't take a multi-page strategic plan, a glossy Case for Support, or a moves management system installed in your database. All it takes is **you** and your willingness to show up as you.

Did you feel your shoulders drop just now? Because I did! Yes, this is a place of relief. A place of ease. And there's a lot more where this came from.

So I invite you to join me...

We'll gather to hold the "muchness" of this work with tenderness: our love, our fear, our courage, our dreams, our failings, *and* our brilliance. From this place, we will kindle our courage, feel into our strength, and break the binding grip of inaction.

This Session is For You If...

- You're young or brand new at fundraising and worried that no-one will take you seriously
- You've been a fundraiser for a long time, but you tend to hide behind the scenes, wrestle with self doubt, or procrastinate something awful
- You're an Executive Director or Board Member who finally wants to come to grips with this fundraising thing after avoiding it for years
- You're fundraising curious, wondering whether this could be an avenue for your career
- You're any of the above, wanting to break free from the icky power dynamics and the transactionality that seem to be at play in fundraising

What You Can Expect

- **Unpack your current perspective** – Reflect on your current approach to fundraising and any beliefs that are holding you back
- **Explore powerful mindset shifts** – Discover new framing for your role that can make fundraising feel more easeful, joyful, and fully aligned with who you are.
- **Practical, actionable strategies** – Learn and practice simple language you can use to build authentic connections with donors
- **Leave ready to take action** – Identify one donor outreach you'll commit to making today, without overthinking or wordsmithing.

My intention is to host an experience that sparks new insight and offers you more fulfillment, joy, and ease in your work. My intention too is to feel into where I may take this body of work, so this

time I'm offering this workshop free of charge, asking only for your reflections afterwards of what this work has stirred in you.

Towards the end of the workshop, for no more than 5 minutes, I will share a bit more about the work I do as a consultant and coach, and invite you to stay in touch going forward.

To cultivate the warm and supportive experience I have in mind, I'll ask that you come ready to interact for the full 90-minute session with your camera on. I'll also ask that you not record or use an AI notetaker, as I find that that can subtly change the dynamic in the session.

Feeling moved to join me?

If you'd like to sign up, send an email to vanessa@bravelyaligned.com saying 'workshop please!' I'll then reply to confirm your place and share the Zoom link. (Space is limited to 10 participants.)

In the meantime, if you have any questions at all, please drop me a line. And if you're interested but this date and time doesn't work for you, please let me know. I am indeed planning to offer this again in the coming months.

Warmly and with excitement,

Vanessa

P.S. If you attend this workshop and love it, you may also be interested in [Find Your Flow](#), a Learning and Co-Working Community I'm starting that's grounded in the principles I've outlined here. Feel free to save the date(s) – I'd love to see you there!

More about Vanessa and *Bravely Aligned*



In my first Development Director role, I started off as a one-woman shop with a \$1 million fundraising goal and I felt completely overwhelmed. While I had a solid seven years of professional fundraising under my belt by then, I also had a wicked case of imposter syndrome and the belief I needed to forge bravely ahead without help. Needless to say, I spent a lot of time spinning my wheels and crying in the parking lot.

I had the chance to work with two kind and wise consultants during those early years who coached me to trust myself and who connected me with the additional tools and resources I needed. I also put together a small group of fellow fundraisers who would meet up from time to time to

provide each other encouragement and advice. Thanks to these supports, I was able to build out a four-person development shop and launch a \$15 million capital campaign – success I never could have imagined at the outset.

Inspired by those who helped me along my journey, I founded my own coaching and consulting practice in 2020. I support open-hearted, mid-career development professionals in growing their impact and leading in alignment with their values. Leveraging my intensive training as a coach and my Masters in Nonprofit Administration, I have a knack for making connections, seeing around corners, and sharing the right tools at the right time. I love working with clients to illuminate new possibilities and to bring ease, balance, and joy to their fundraising leadership roles.

Testimonial from an Executive Director

Vanessa's workshop was both refreshing and deeply inspiring, led with a rare combination of expertise and authenticity. Her encouragement to show up as our real, unpolished selves dissolved the pressure to perform and opened a new field of ease, inspiration, and possibility. What she facilitated went far beyond technique—it created space for joyful networking, genuine connection, and a deep, palpable sense of the potential for collaboration in service to the world.

- Michael Thiele, Executive Director, Apis Arborea

Contact Information

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