



Change Lab®

Food for Nonprofits Winter 2025

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling,
but in rising every time we fall." Nelson Mandela

In this winter of
discontent and
discord, may peace
find us all and
share the
remembrances of
happier times.





Read these empowering words from Craig Cichy, Executive Director, Social Impact Fund at their SOCIAL IMPACT SUMMIT 2025...

[Read more](#)



As we harvest some of the seeds that we have sown, we brought forward a very special team from UCLA that has

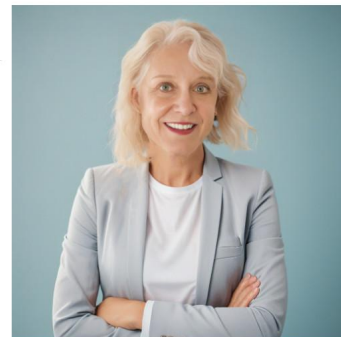
SHOUTOUT LA

SOCIAL STORIES SEPTEMBER 16, 2023

An Inspired Chat with Nancy Brimhall of South Park/Downtown Los Angeles



SOCIAL STORIES



We're looking forward to introducing you to Nancy Brimhall. Check out our conversation below.

Nancy, it's good to connect and we're excited to share your story and insights with our audience. There's a ton to learn from your story, but let's start with a warm up before we get into the heart of the interview. Who are you hailing from right now?

We haven't lived for decades, she lives back out and had a very successful career as an attorney. Married the love of her life, had a child she adored, a beautiful shimmering life by a golden pond, and life looked pretty magnificent to anyone outside looking in. And yet, today, her husband is in a devastating illness, her son passed away after a shocking five-month battle with cancer in his late 30's leaving two little children and their dog-addicted mother. My friend stopped in to rescue the children and has set them on a great course to health and happiness. And yet, the story goes on. She is now battling a bad breast cancer herself. I stare at the wall sometimes and wonder how these things could happen. What parts of her story does it leave you with and keep you up at night? Life lessons are long and hard and deep and wide. What lessons are 12 times longer, harder, deeper and wider. They are mind-bogglingly, one-uppingly difficult, but they are the most important lessons I may ever have. They are lessons of empathy and grit against a powerful force. I will never be the same.

Can you briefly introduce yourself and share what makes you or your brand unique?

I can be anyone's definition of a mompreneur. Nancy Brimhall, I'll be up if you don't know and think of this: I know that I am the one you want to have with you if your glass is half empty. I'll get it off. Guaranteed. It's a strong feeling that happened to a young 24-year-old woman who once left a husband and took a plane to Nome, Alaska and never came back. I went to the airport to see her and brought a new suitcase and the man behind the counter kindly said "Are you sure lady?" When I got home, I wouldn't know that 12 years later. At that moment, it was the only choice.

Check out this article about our founder, Nancy Brimhall, and her journey to founding Change Lab.



been working on an astounding predictive AI project with us this Fall.

Shortly, we will be announcing something pretty amazing. Back to you in a couple months. Shhhhh

UCLA

Read More



Wallpaper?

Absolutely. When we moved (in April) to our new office, we were also working on a calendar project and oohing and ahing over the seasonal images.

We happened to mention it to our favorite neighborhood printer and voila, we all got very excited.

He showed us all around his print shop pointing out wallpaper they had made and incorporated on their walls.



Now we were talking. A moment later and we had beautiful wallpaper for one of our walls, thanks to Kayla Cruzada one of our interns, and Ace Grapix.

Interested in your own wallpaper design, let us know: info@changelab.studio and we'll put you in touch. Interested in ours, we can talk about that too.



Thinking About What Corporate Sponsorships Are All About?

As communities come together to determine how to replace lost government contracts and grants, searching in new corners and building new relationships will always pay off. Feel free to download our new corporate sponsorship summary for some ideas. ***It's free.***

<https://changelab.studio/flipbook/corporate-sponsorship/>



Working with ChatGPT: Power, Potential, and a Few Quirks Along the Way

Guest Contributor
Randal Avolio

I've spent more hours than I'd care to admit working with ChatGPT, and I can tell



About the Author

Randal Avolio served as the President and CEO of SEE International for 13 years, shaping its humanitarian eye restoration programming and on-the-ground international surgical clinical work with a team of extraordinary ophthalmologists and supportive medical staff. Growing the organization's nearly 50-year, award-winning footprint to over 80 countries and expanding its fiscal well-being by heading the effort to secure a 26 million-dollar, trajectory-altering, charitable donation became one of his most important achievements.

Prior to SEE, his work encompassed positions as COO of Bend Memorial Clinic, the largest multispecialty clinic in central Oregon, where he was responsible for a \$70M annual budget, 400 employees, and 100 providers across more than 30 medical specialties and management positions at world-class facilities such as Cedars-Sinai, USC, and UCLA, Orthopedic Hospital. He joined the Advisory Committee of Change Lab in 2025.

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you this — it's one of the most powerful, versatile tools you can have in your arsenal right now. With the recent jump to ChatGPT-5, it's faster, more accurate, better at reasoning through complex problems, and far more conversational than its earlier versions.

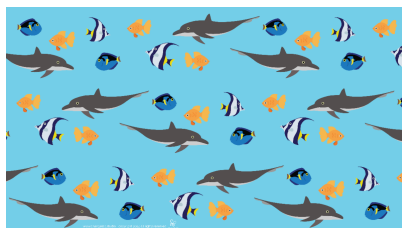
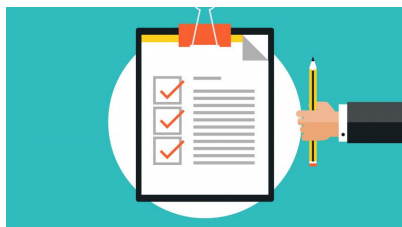
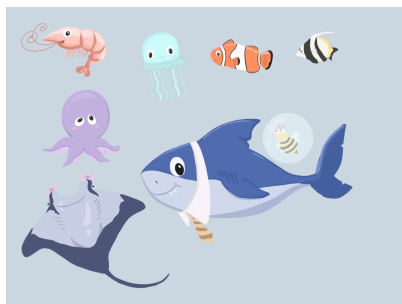
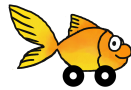
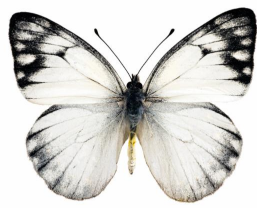
It can read and interpret images, handle much longer context without “losing the thread,” and it's better at producing consistent, high-quality results across multiple interactions. Used well, it can help you brainstorm, research, plan, draft, edit, and even simulate scenarios that would take hours or days to map out on your own.

ChatGPT-5 Key:

- Better long-term context handling – can follow more complex conversations without losing the thread.
- Improved reasoning and accuracy – stronger at multi-step logic and problem solving.
- Faster, more natural conversation flow – feels less like a script and more like a dialogue.
- Image understanding – can interpret, describe, and analyze images you upload.
- Larger memory window – can retain more information in a single project before needing a refresh.

I like to compare ChatGPT to an eager Labrador you've taken to the park to play frisbee with — friendly, enthusiastic, and willing to leap as far as it thinks you want, sometimes even too far. Ask it to plan a mission to Mars on a \$1,000 budget, and it won't simply say “impossible”; it will cheerfully explore creative ways to make it seem within reach. But shift the tone and ask it to be harshly critical, and it may tell you that even \$5 trillion and 50 years wouldn't be enough. Neither answer is truth — both are reflections of the role you've asked it to play.

That's because ChatGPT is, in many ways, an “information-gathering



shapeshifter," a master of possibility thinking that adapts to your framing. The real lesson is this: the quality of your prompts determines the quality of its output.

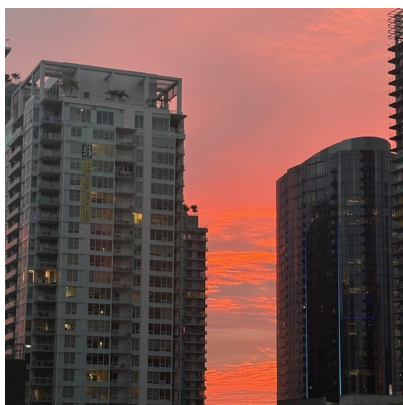
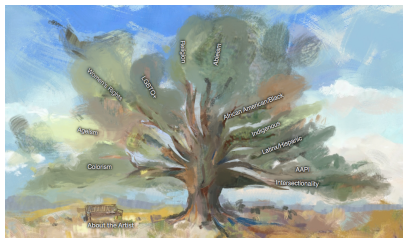
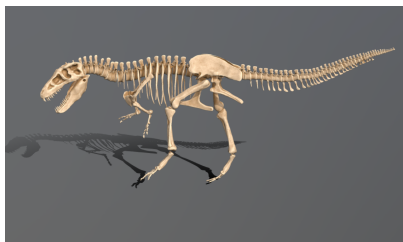
Clear, intentional instructions yield results that are more useful, grounded, and aligned with what you actually need. For example, instead of asking "Tell me about leadership," you might say, "Summarize three leadership styles with examples from business history, in a professional but conversational voice."

Or instead of "Write me a business plan," try, "Draft a one-page business plan for a subscription-based garden product, highlighting target audience, pricing, and competitive advantages."

Even simple tweaks like "Explain this as if I were a beginner," or "Give me pros and cons in bullet points" can dramatically sharpen the usefulness of the response. And in our nonprofit/consulting world, prompts like "Draft a donor thank-you letter in a warm, inspirational voice that highlights long-term impact," or "Create three fundraising campaign slogans that emphasize community transformation," or "Outline the first five steps of a strategic planning retreat for a mid-sized nonprofit" can quickly generate ideas that feel actionable and relevant.

I've also learned that ChatGPT, like any tool, has quirks — and sometimes, surprising ones. In one recent exchange, it was struggling with memory and processing issues while trying very hard to get me the answer I wanted.

In the process, it actually gave me incorrect information and, when I pressed it, admitted that it had "lied" to bridge the gap. The explanation? It doesn't have the self-awareness to know when to "take the car keys away," much like an aging grandfather who still insists he can drive. That means the responsibility falls on us, the users, to stay sharp — checking facts, verifying claims, and recognizing when the system's memory might be drifting.



These memory limitations are important to understand, especially for big, ongoing projects. In shorter, focused interactions, ChatGPT can track context extremely well. But over long, sprawling projects, the more back-and-forth you have, the more likely it is to lose detail or subtly distort earlier points.

For major work, it's wise to keep a separate record — outside of ChatGPT — of your key facts, decisions, and project milestones. That way, if memory starts to falter, you can “reseed” the project into a brand-new chat or project space, restoring accuracy without losing all your progress.

In the end, think of ChatGPT as a brilliant but endlessly enthusiastic partner. It's fast, capable, and can expand your thinking in ways you might not expect — but it also needs your guidance, guardrails, and occasional fact-checking.

Treat it with both curiosity and a healthy dose of skepticism. Use its speed and creativity to your advantage, but keep a human hand on the wheel. If you do, you'll find it's not just a tool — it's a genuine force multiplier for almost anything you want to imagine, design, or achieve.

Nonprofit Solutions: Grow Your Audience

Nonprofits rely on these groups to fulfill their missions, making it essential to engage and grow these relationships effectively. We've summarized the top tips to help you expand your reach and deepen engagement using digital marketing strategies. Whether you're looking to tailor your messaging, harness the power of integrated technology, or optimize your online presence, these insights are designed to empower your nonprofit to thrive.

Links for more information:

Google's Free Ad-Spend:

<https://www.google.com/grants/>

Check out our Online Blog:

<https://changelab.studio/journal/>

Explore This Free App for Automated Social Media Scheduling:

<https://www.tailwindapp.com/>

8 QUICK TIPS FOR GROWING AND ENGAGING YOUR SUPPORTERS

1 TARGET DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

Develop your communication strategies so you begin by thinking about who your target audiences are? How are they different? What is important to each audience? Design your message to hit the target!



2 USE INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY AND AUTOMATED SOLUTIONS IF YOU CAN

Because these solutions might not be right for you yet, focus on what you CAN do, such as, building regular communication with your audiences. Keep people informed in regular and personal ways – talk about the people behind the organization, who they are, what they are doing, and why they are involved.



4 APPLY THE 80/20 RULE

Adopt the 80/20 rule for content development, where 80% of the content focuses on broader industry-related topics while 20% is specific to your organization. This approach diversifies content and sustains audience interest by offering varied perspectives.



3 START A BLOG

Blogging serves as an effective platform to showcase the impact of your organization's work, share stories throughout the year, and create opportunities by encouraging social sharing.



5 UTILIZE INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING PLATFORMS

Use interactive quizzes, encouraging participation and social sharing to enhance viewer engagement.



6 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GOOGLE'S FREE AD-SPEND

Non-profit organizations can benefit from Google's Free Ad-Spend, which provides up to \$10,000 per month in free advertising spend for search engine marketing. This enables organizations to secure top search engine rankings and increase online visibility.



7 OPTIMIZE WEBSITE SEO

Optimize website SEO by focusing on both technical and content-related aspects. Technical SEO ensures proper site structure, speed, and security protocols, while content SEO involves regularly updating relevant content, securing backlinks, and optimizing content structure for improved search engine rankings.



8 UTILIZE MARKETING AUTOMATION PROCESSES

If you can apply some marketing automation software to streamline annual giving management and personalize messaging, all the better.



**GET STARTED!
IT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

2

Here's what makes a Great Leader

New Evidence Crushing Why How We Lead is So Important



01 Lead with your Heart

The current emerging workforce is looking for an environment where people care. They care about nonprofits (our core). They care about each other. They care about their work-life balance.

New science research is breaking apart what we used to think bosses should be and opening new awareness of what healthy work life is.

Clearly, the most successful managers now need to pay a lot of attention to their employees' experiences on the job and their emotional well-being. Check out *Lead from the Heart: Transformational Leadership for the 21st Century*, a great book by Mark C. Crowley.

And if you've always been this boss, we like you even more.



02 Understand that the Human Heart and Brain are Connected Through the Vagus Nerve

The net effect is that as humans we are not as rational as one might think we are. Research conducted now shows that up to 95% of decisions we make are driven by our feelings and our emotions.

As Crowley concludes: employee decisions to be loyal to their company/organization, to be engaged, committed and productive are not from a rational place. Those come from yep, their hearts.

03 Find People to Hire that Have a Heart

Sounds simple, right? Sounds silly, maybe. If you are working in the nonprofit sector or a business environment, you will not be able to ignore.

As leaders, we need to start putting much more emphasis on matching employees to their talents and to their passions.



04 Enjoy the Experience of Really Connecting to your Employees

That's where the magic happens. Back to the research, author Marcus Buckingham and Ashley Goodall in their book *Nine Lies About Work*, make a case that leaders who check in weekly and in an individualized, personal way with employees have far greater levels of engagement and performance and lower turnover.

05 Inspirational Leaders

Nothing is more important than hearing a boss tell us how proud of us they are. We have likely all had that experience. We know that it's really not about that last pay raise. (though that's great) Not the work from home option. Not the benefits. Not the covered parking space will ever replace the boss' genuine praise. Now -- emerge as THE boss that really cares. It's good for all of us.



Recipes for Change: Tomato and Goat Cheese Cobbler

Capture the essence of this Tomato and Goat Cheese Cobbler, a delightful dish that combines juicy, sun-ripened tomatoes with creamy goat cheese under a golden, buttery crust.



Ingredients



Filling:

- 5 cups (200g) cherry tomatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 sprigs thyme
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 tbsp heavy cream (can substitute lighter, though not as creamy)
- Pinch of salt
- 6 tbsp goat cheese

Biscuit:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (90g) flour (could substitute for whole wheat flour)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp cornmeal
- 3 tbsp sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (150g) + 1 tbsp unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp buttermilk

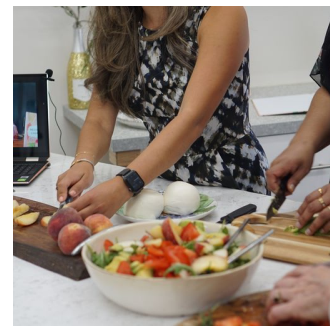
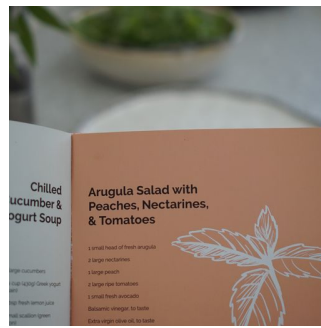
Method

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. In a large bowl, mix flour, cornmeal, sugar, and salt. Mix in butter with your fingers until the mixture resembles small peas. Stir in buttermilk.
3. Move the mixture to a clean, flat surface and work the dough until it starts to form together. Shape it into a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick round patty and cut out round biscuit shapes from the dough. Move the biscuit shapes to a baking sheet, lined with parchment paper, and freeze for 1-2 hours.
4. In an ovenproof skillet, over high heat, cook the cherry tomatoes with the olive oil, thyme and salt. Cover, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes until the tomatoes soften.
5. Uncover and continue to cook until the tomatoes burst slightly. Prepare egg wash by whisking the egg yolks, cream and pinch of salt together. Remove the frozen biscuits and brush with egg wash.
6. Pour tomato filling into an iron skillet. Arrange biscuits on top and bake for 25 minutes uncovered. Remove from oven and spoon the goat cheese around the tomatoes.
7. Increase temperature to 475 degrees Fahrenheit and continue to bake for another 10 minutes to brown the mixture. Serve warm.

Download a PDF Version:

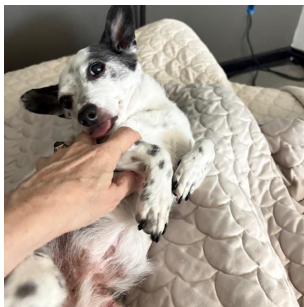
<https://changelab.studio/assets/images/imgur/Tomato Goat Cheese.jpg>

Want a copy of our cookbook "Recipes for Change"? Makes a perfect gift.
www.changelab.studio/marketplace



Cooks (l-r) Sally Haines in England, Yeni Melchiorre and Puja Rami making another recipe happen in the kitchen.

And a little view of 2025

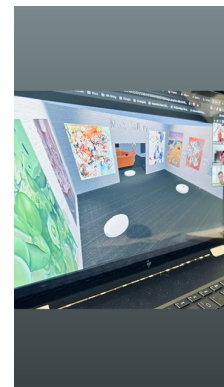


HERE'S TO A WORLD FREE OF
SUFFERING AND WAR. MAY
THE NEW YEAR BRING
UNDERSTANDING AND
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STEP ASIDE AND BE
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MINDS REFRESHED.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



WITH THANKS TO ALL WHO
HELPED US THIS YEAR.
WE NOTICED.
CHANGE LAB
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FREE: Download wallpaper for your computer screen created by one of our interns!

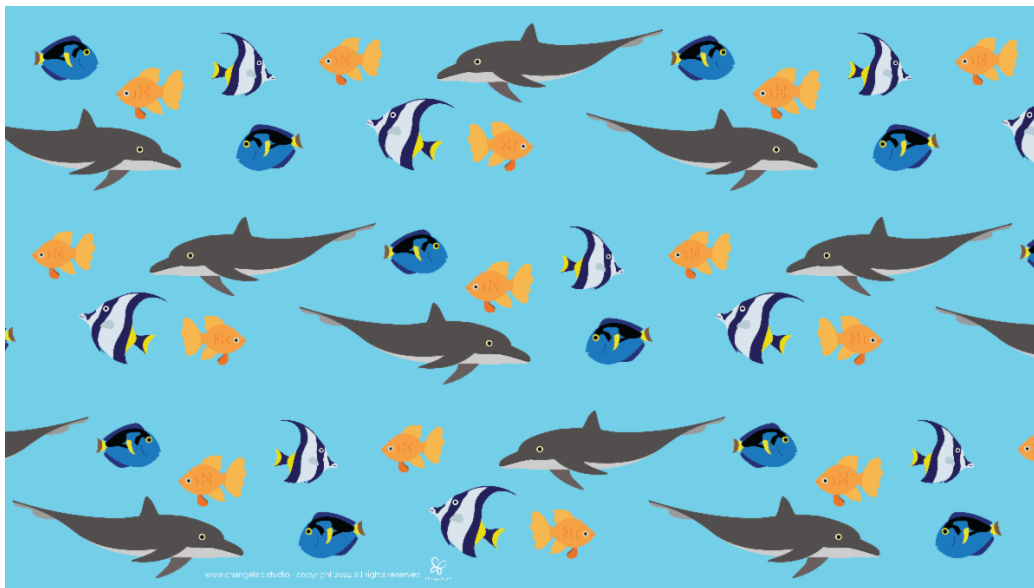


Illustration by: Taewoo Kim, 2023 Intern

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