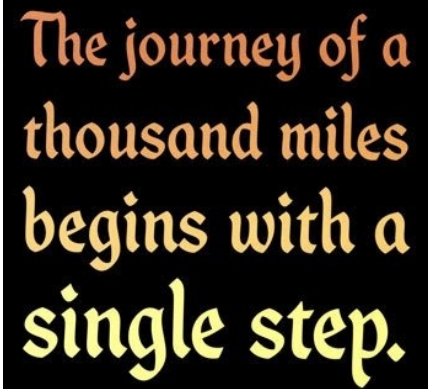


A Single Step

April 26, 2012 by [Nathan J. Winograd](#)

| *Take it!*

Today's large, animal welfare organizations have built a dependency model where you write them checks and they "promise" to help animals. That has made them very rich and, too often, the animals no better off. In some cases, they've made things worse. They either hoard that money in the bank, use it to thwart lifesaving reform, use it to kill animals, or waste it on whimsy over substance.



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In fact, here's their dirty little secret: when you donate to the large groups, even when you donate to help a specific animal or for a specific campaign, it doesn't necessarily go there. HSUS will raise millions ostensibly [to help a Missouri dog rescued from a dog fighting bust they don't even have](#), and when people complain about being misled, they might give ½ of 1% of what they raise to the group really caring for the dog. The ASPCA will take your hard earned dollars—in fact \$140,000,000 of your collective dollars every year—hire a service to drive their CEO around, [while sick kittens are turned away or taken to the city pound down the street to be killed](#). And Best Friends asks you to donate to a campaign to end BSL in Miami that [another group is spearheading](#). Other than sending an email alert asking you to write a letter of opposition and then sending another alert asking you to donate to them for their anti-BSL campaign, it is the other groups that are in the trenches fighting BSL in Miami, not Best Friends.

Best Friends, HSUS, and the ASPCA already have enough money to do all the programs they want—if they choose to do them. They are not using the additional money you scrape together and send them to do *more*. They are just sticking it in the bank, where along with millions of dollars from other donors, it sits and gathers interest. When you send \$10 to the large, national organizations, they might tell you it can feed a dog for a week, or allow a stray cat a second chance, but the reality is they can already afford to feed all the dogs and give all the stray cats as many chances as they want. They have more money than they know what to do with. So there is a good chance your money goes straight into their bank accounts, where it sits, year after year, making them richer. No additional dogs are fed. No additional cats are given a second chance. So put away those check books and roll up those sleeves. If you want to help animals, do it yourselves.

I am going to post one small thing you can do to help animals as often as I can. And none will take longer than a couple of minutes. Individually, they may not amount to much, but the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. And while some of these things will not change the world in and of themselves, they might change the world for a single animal. And if you choose to do them, collectively we'll move mountains. Plus no matter what happens the rest of the day, you'll feel like you did something productive.

Of course if you choose to do more, you can. And should. You can start your own campaign to reform your community such as [this group did](#). You can help spread the word [through a blog](#). You can take on [positions of leadership in local shelters](#). You can work with local organizations [to rescue animals and adopt them out](#). Every No Kill community in the U.S. started with one person who made the decision to end the killing. The No Kill revolution starts with you. What will you accomplish?

Go to <http://nokilladvocacy.tumblr.com> for today's single step for animals. And then check in periodically.