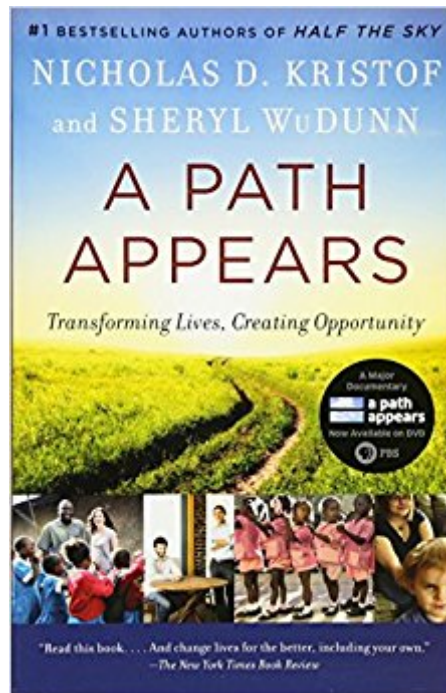


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A Path Appears: Transforming Lives, Creating Opportunity



Synopsis

With scrupulous research and on-the-ground reporting, Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn explore how altruism affects us, what are the markers for success, and how to avoid the pitfalls. In their recounting of astonishing stories from the front lines of social progress, we see the compelling, inspiring truth of how real people have changed the world, underscoring that one person can make a difference. *A Path Appears* offers practical, results-driven advice on how best each of us can give and reveals the lasting benefits we gain in return. Kristof and WuDunn know better than most how many urgent challenges communities around the world face today. Here they offer a timely beacon of hope for our collective future.

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Customer Reviews

“Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn show you, through many amazing vignettes matched with serious evidence, that you can make a difference. . . . Read this book. Seize one of the many opportunities it lists, and change lives for the better, including your own.”
•The New York Times Book Review• “A Path Appears is an exhaustive though not exhausting profile of giving, with surprising guidance—indeed, coaching—on how to be an effective giver. . . . Upon finishing the book, readers are likely to . . . find themselves willing to do something in the world, unconcerned by questions of scale, but instead, to simply become more engaged, and in that, alive.”
•The Boston Globe• “[A Path Appears] opens an important conversation for anyone interested in how to contribute to catalyzing positive change . . .

[it] sheds light on the exploitation and inequity that exist in our own backyard, while also spotlighting the individuals overcoming it. — Christian Science Monitor — “Readers will be inspired by the stories [Kristof and WuDunn] tell. There are so many problems in the world, and so many organizations wanting charitable donations, that we can sometimes feel overwhelmed. [The authors] help us weed through those issues and find that path so we can make a difference. — National Geographic.com — “Engaging and informative. . . . Kristof and WuDunn’s commitment and passion for substantial action is inspiring. — Publishers Weekly — “[Kristof and WuDunn’s] vibrant portraits of ordinary citizens who are motivated to effect real and dramatic change present a rallying call to action and a voice for the power of volunteerism. This is a slow-go read in the most positive sense; it is hard not to constantly put down the book in order to further investigate the many exemplary causes that are profiled. — Booklist — “The authors deliver a profound message that packs a wallop. — Kirkus — “A Path Appears . . . shows how someone with little can make a massive difference to the world we live in. — The Christian Post — “This is a lyrical guide that addresses the deep human yearning to make a difference. It’s full of indelible stories reminding us that, yes, helping people is hard — but it’s both possible and infinitely rewarding. — A Path Appears — offers practical steps that any of us can take to empower others, and ourselves. — Anne Rice — “Nobody clarifies the social challenges of our time, or the moral imperative to help meet them, better than Nick Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. Their latest book, A Path Appears, — offers an inspiring roundup of the many simple and effective ways in which we can lend our hearts and talents to grow hope and opportunity both at home and around the globe — and an important reminder that just because we can’t do everything doesn’t mean we shouldn’t do something. — President Bill Clinton — “Nick Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn have done us all a great service by shining a light on the problems faced by the poor. These stories of real people struggling for survival and opportunity serve as a powerful reminder that poverty is complex and painful, but the call to action doesn’t need to be. With insight, compassion and optimism, Kristof and WuDunn show us that we can all play a role in making the world a better place. A Path Appears is a compelling read that can’t help but to educate and energize. — Bill and Melinda Gates, co-chairs of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation — “Cold facts, flesh and blood stories - the written word is their loud hailer. They write, we read, and our world view is not the same. — Nick and Sheryl’s meticulous arguments and free flowing eloquence — is what

inspires their readers to become activists . . . myself included.

• Bono, lead singer of U2 and Co-Founder of ONE and (RED)

“A Path Appears is an insightful book focused on how individuals can contribute to positive change and the remarkable people behind the organizations that make it happen. The authors desire to motivate people to support good causes, learn about the situation in other countries, and find the best way to help their fellow men and women is inspiring.

• Angelina Jolie

“This book is a class act. Its insights and honesty touch me on the deepest of levels and inspire me to raise my game to help the poor.

• Bill Hybels, founding pastor, Willow Creek Community Church

“Helping suffering people around the world to transform their own lives is a rewarding challenge we all share as citizens of a global community. A Path Appears is a helpful and inspiring guide for anyone who wonders what difference a single person can make in building a more hopeful world.

• President Jimmy Carter, founder of the not-for-profit Carter Center

“Rare is the book that can actually transform us into better, more fulfilled people. Having combed through the research and documented case studies all over the world, Kristof and WuDunn present the clearest view I have ever seen of the human soul. A Path Appears tells us whether we are intrinsically good, why specific ways we parent our newborns help predict their chances for success, and how we can live lives of greater significance. This book, full of rich and riveting true stories, reminds us that human greatness is all around us, and even within us, if we dare to look.

• Ann Curry

“Have you ever thought that compared with so many people in the world, you are blessed and should try to help those less fortunate but you worry that you just don’t know how to do it in a smart and effective way? Your problem has been solved. Read this engaging, moving, inspiring book. It will tell you about the world’s myriad problems but also the dazzling array of efforts to solve them. It will tell you how you can make a difference even if all you have is ten minutes or forty dollars. And it will remind you that by giving to others you will gain for yourself the ultimate gift, a meaningful life.

• Fareed Zakaria

“While reading A Path Appears, I felt I was taking a much needed rest under a shaded grove of trees on my own journey to make a difference. I highly recommend it as an absolutely terrific investment of time that will leave those who read it more hopeful and motivated.

• Deborah Fikes, executive advisor of the World Evangelical Alliance

Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, husband and wife, have coauthored three previous books: Half the Sky, Thunder from the East, and China Wakes. They were awarded a

Pulitzer Prize in 1990 for their coverage of China and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize for Lifetime Achievement in 2009. Now an op-ed columnist for *The New York Times*, Kristof was previously bureau chief in Hong Kong, Beijing, and Tokyo. He won his second Pulitzer in 2006 for his columns on Darfur. WuDunn worked at *The New York Times* as a business editor and foreign correspondent in Tokyo and Beijing. She now works in banking. @NickKristof; www.facebook.com/kristof@WuDunn; www.facebook.com/SherylWuDunn

A Path Appears: Transforming Lives, Creating Opportunity is a well-researched, dense book on options for individuals to make a difference. It begins with 3 case stories: one where a young girl died and raised a lot of money for the charity she was supporting; one who was labeled but with the support of an adult, became a very successful adult himself; and one who is implementing a paradigm shift in the way community violence is treated and having good success. Kristof and WuDunn then detail personal stories, triumphs, and how people helped. They point out times that it was a single individual; or a corporation; or a non-profit. The moral: anyone can help; there are many opportunities; giving is good for both social and emotional improvement. At the end of the book, the authors summarize: 1) Find an issue that draws you in and research it 2) Volunteer, get involved, or do something more than just writing checks 3) Use your voice to spread the word or advocate for those who are voiceless. These are really great ideas, but I wished they had been drawn out sooner so readers could be thinking about this approach while reading the chapters. The book is nicely referenced and includes a significant list of groups, agencies, and websites that are good resources if the reader wants to get involved. The reason I docked a star from the book was because it is so incredibly dense that it will take a very motivated individual to thoroughly read it. The authors are NYT writers, and the chapters read as such. It borders on the crossroads of greatness - but the emotional connection is just not quite there. I do think people will feel increased hope after reading it, but my concern is that the people naturally drawn to a book such as this are likely already in a giving mindset, it may have been a better service to the concept to make the book a little more reader friendly to appeal to a wider audience and change their perspective.

Nicholas Kristof is one of the most-honored journalists of our time. He's regarded by many of his peers as the "moral conscience of journalism" for his decades-long work exposing human rights abuses and human trafficking. Among a plethora of other awards and distinctions, Kristof received a Pulitzer Prize in 1990 along with his wife, Sheryl WuDunn, for their reporting on the student democracy movement in China and the Tiananmen

Massacre. Kristof is best known today for his twice-weekly New York Times Op-Ed column, which I read without fail. Bill and Melinda Gates even credit one of Kristof's columns with pointing them toward an emphasis on world health in their philanthropic work. *A Path Appears* is the fourth book to appear by Kristof and WuDunn and in some ways the most ambitious. Two earlier works grew out of their reporting from China. Then they wrote *Half the Sky*, a New York Times bestseller that explored the oppression and the potential of women to build a better world. In *A Path Appears*, the couple set their sights higher: "So many social problems in the twenty-first century seem intractable and insoluble. We explore Mars and embed telephones in wristwatches, but we can't keep families safe in inner cities. We can map subatomic particles such as gluons, and we can design robots that drive cars, respond to speech, and defeat grandmasters in chess, but we grudgingly accept failure in our struggles to keep kids in school, off drugs, and out of gangs." Through snapshots of extraordinary individuals who building large-scale, mission-driven enterprises, both for-profit and nonprofit, Kristof and WuDunn demonstrate the capacity of the human race to prevail against our most deep-seated social and economic challenges. However, they are by no means cheerleaders for knee-jerk philanthropic efforts to right the world's wrongs; they devote considerable effort to discussing the many missteps that others have taken along the same road, and they acknowledge that massive resources have been squandered in failing attempts by outsiders to improve the lives of the poor. At its most venturesome, *A Path Appears* is an attempt to determine why some people are altruistic and what can be done to raise the level of compassion in the world. Kristof and WuDunn interview cognitive scientists and even undergo brain scans themselves to gain better understanding of the chemical basis of altruism. Their exploration leads to conclusions few readers will find surprising: that helping others makes us feel good about ourselves, and that philanthropy is its own reward. However, the authors deplore the failure of the nonprofit sector to achieve scale. "Researchers from the Bridgespan Group wrote in the Stanford Social Innovation Review that more than 200,000 nonprofits have started since 1975, but that by 2008 only 201 had reached annual revenues of \$50 million. In a similar time frame, more than 46,000 for-profit corporations broke the \$50 million barrier." Kristof and WuDunn note in passing that for-profit companies have the potential to be more sustainable than nonprofits. Unfortunately, they don't acknowledge the implications of this contrast: that market-driven models hold far more promise for addressing global problems at scale than do philanthropic ones. If there's a flaw in this book, that's it. However, for a general audience seeking answers to how the human race can thrive in the face of the world-class

challenges facing us, *A Path Appears* is a brilliant survey of what's possible. In the final analysis, as Kristof and WuDunn conclude, "Our efforts at altruism have a mixed record of success at helping others, but they have an almost perfect record of helping ourselves."

"*A Path Appears*" is sort of a continuation (a sequel, if you will) of their first book, "*Half the Sky*," which I loved. Although both books bring up the mistreatment and social inequities around the world, the chapters are written in such a way that a bright light wells up through each chapter with a story of how such problems are tackled with local and /or global supports. I particularly appreciated their covering education in the USA and the studies down that show the most effective way to help the underprivileged was an emphasis upon early education: teaching mothers about child care and early childhood education for their offspring. I have to admit, I haven't finished the book yet. I had read about half the book (borrowed from the library) and decided this is one to buy & have in my library. (book club, or to share) I highly recommend this for anyone who wants to learn or know more about social issues here and around the world.

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