

## Agency for Change Podcast: Marjorie Maas, CEO, Share Good

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**Marjorie Maas:** 0:01

With a firm faith. I really ground myself in the belief that there is enough.

**Announcer:** 0:09

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

**Lyn Wineman:** 0:32

Hey everyone. This is Lyn Wineman, president of KidGlov. Welcome to another episode of the Agency for Change podcast. So today we are diving into the world of philanthropy and we're giving it a fresh perspective. We are welcoming back Marjorie Maas, formerly of Share Omaha and now the CEO of Share Good. So if you haven't heard of them before, Share Good envisions a world where everyone has the power to make a difference, where nonprofits can seamlessly voice their needs and where helping others is just a click away. Under Marjorie's leadership, Share Good is transforming the way we connect, volunteer and give back, making it easier than ever to create lasting change. All good. Marjorie, welcome back to the podcast. I'm eager to talk to you again.

**Marjorie Maas:** 1:34

Lyn, it's so great to be back with you today.

**Lyn Wineman:** 1:36

All right, Marjorie, I always love talking to you. Last time you talked to us on the podcast, you were representing Share Omaha. Now you're representing Share Good on a national level. Can you just start by telling us more about Share Good and its mission?

**Marjorie Maas:** 1:56

Of course, my favorite thing to do so Share Good. We look to spark a movement of holistic, hyper-local community involvement across the country.

Oh, yes, and these local initiatives in Omaha, like you said, but also Charlotte and Detroit and Greater Lynchburg, Virginia there's seven of our communities right now across the country. They're spurred by dedicated teams who work to assemble as many nonprofit organizations as possible in one online resource, one place. Those nonprofits post self-reported needs for support and service. The organizers

drive neighbors, families, employers, businesses and students to get involved in the way that they choose and where they are in their capacity. We are a nonprofit ourselves and we look to build the sustainability of each of our community's efforts in our mission to democratize philanthropy. So we want these communities to be as sustainable as possible so they can go forward and democratize the work of philanthropy across the country.

**Lyn Wineman: 3:12**

That's fantastic. Now talk to me more about that. That is a term you do not hear every day. What do you mean when you say democratize philanthropy, and why is it so important for communities?

**Marjorie Maas: 3:21**

I believe there's joy in democratizing philanthropy. I believe that democratizing philanthropy is basically allowing people to join the table in the way that makes the most sense to them. So we want nonprofits to raise their hands for exactly what it is. They need to articulate that as cleanly as possible and then the public to come meet them where they are able to. And we believe, by making as many of those options available on both sides, that there's a beauty in coming together that's a democratic process and people being able to voice how they want to get involved and nonprofits getting what exactly it is they need.

And I will tell you and, and you and I have talked offline about the joy of this and I wanted to talk about that a little bit. So I believe there's, I was thinking about it and I was like I think there's three types of joy related to this work. So, first, I believe there's joy in connection. So I feel like like-minded people, like to find common purpose. Yeah, and when you are able to connect with people that are passionate about the same thing that you are passionate about, there's beauty and there's a joy there that's of human connection. And I believe there's joy of purpose. Some of us are lucky to find purpose in our professional roles And I think you and I are lucky in that manner. Yeah, but for so many that purpose is truly discovered in service to our passions out in the community as volunteers or supporters or advocates. It's separate from their professional life and we want at ShareGood and in our shared communities, to make that seeking a purpose as easy as possible, and we believe that when that happens, you get to see the joy of improvement and social change. So seeing the needle move on something you're passionate about, whether it's increased ticket sales, more cat adoptions, better advocacy and awareness around a crucial issue, right? So any of those things seeing that improvement and change and activity is completely motivating, And to know that you had a role in making that happen, either as a financial supporter, as a volunteer supporter, in any way that you want to get connected to that mission, you feel like you're like, like you've helped make that change possible.

And so, in democratizing philanthropy, we want to do this in the most joyful way possible.

**Lyn Wineman: 6:12**

That is so amazing. You've just hit so many of my hot buttons right there, like I feel like since the pandemic and I know we're, you know, a couple of years out here, but since the pandemic, I think we've we as humans have been just hungry for connection and belonging and I you know because we talk about it offline, Marjorie. I just know that purpose is so important to people and I think we're hungry for that as well. So in the work that you do, you're able to help people find connection and find purpose, which then leads to that joy and I think that's so beautiful.

**Marjorie Maas: 6:58**

There's one thing you didn't really ask a question, but this is something that is one of my favorite anecdotes and facts about, specifically, the pandemic. So, right when the pandemic started, when I was at Share Omaha in 2020, April of 2020, we started telling the stories of what was closed, what was sad, what was gone, of our nonprofits, the needs, the sad stories and we got some traction for that but we had a media partner come to us and I'll tell, I'll tell you who they are. It was KETV and they said what can people do? And it was like a switch flipped for us. It was like we are not here to tell the sad stories. We are here to give people hope and we came up with a campaign called Share At Home. So a typical month on Share Omaha at that time was about 100 volunteer applications a month, with the help of KETV. In April of 2020. Of 2020, and us asking our nonprofits for what are all the things people can still do for you? We had 700 volunteer applications.

**Lyn Wineman: 8:17**

That's one month into the pandemic Marjorie, One month. We all were not sure what was going to happen at that moment in time.

**Marjorie Maas: 8:26**

Nobody had ideas. Nobody had ideas what they wanted to do, but they just knew that they were, they felt alone and they felt isolated. And what can I do to be part of something good? Right and, and I think about that Some Good News. You know, like that, that video series that was on and, but I think about that and it just gave me hope in humanity and what's possible in our communities and it spurred me to keep this work going, Because I think, honestly, if we hadn't done something about activation, I the idea of share could have withered on the vine during that period of time. But we're here for hope, we're here for joy, we're here for connection and purpose.

**Lyn Wineman: 9:11**

That's amazing and, honestly, that probably leads right into my next question is what inspired you to take on this role at Share Good?

**Marjorie Maas: 9:22**

Well, I'd seen it. I've seen that there's beauty that happens in this work, and I often call it magic. So I believe there's magic when people find the right fit in their community and find purpose connected to their passions and I believe making that magic happen through the holistic solution of share good can be transformational for not only the individual but the communities in increasing commitment and involvement to itself, these actions and investments Lyn, they can be contagious and produce more good for regions across the country.

And a sense of pride that there's a way for me to get involved that maybe not my neighboring community doesn't have, and we believe that that kind of fear of missing out that is going to cause this to be a movement across the country, and I feel like that drew me to it.

That excitement. Conceptual and creative thinking are my strengths, and so figuring out a way to make this work in communities where it is their local solution, not just the way that I think it needs to be done, is this collaborative thing that I get to do every day, and I cannot tell you how much joy there is for me in that. So it drew me to it after I saw what was possible in Omaha for me to be like this and it is evangelist for it across the country. Like let me in that, let me pass on that energy.

**Lyn Wineman:** 10:58

Yep, Marjorie, since this is a podcast, our listeners can't see you, but if they could see you, I will tell them. Imagine Marjorie's face has just lit up. See you, I will tell them. Imagine Marjorie's face has just lit up. She's got an ear to ear smile. She's talking with her hands. We're both talking with our hands, right, but I can feel the passion coming from you as we have this conversation, and so I'm really curious what's next, what are some of the key initiatives that Share Good has in the works that focus on connecting communities and nonprofits?

**Marjorie Maas:** 11:35

Well, what I like is that it's different in each community, right. Each community in our network flexes the technology for what they need the most, what their community needs of them to do the most. In Omaha it's split pretty evenly between financial and service. In Charlotte it's about service and events and activations in the community. In Detroit, they're very much about volunteerism and nonprofit advocacy, and so each of those communities kind of has signature programs that I think bring that to life, which I think is back to those dedicated teams that bring this software into reality. So in Charlotte, they have a nonprofit summit every year. They bring thought leaders to the community. They create collaboration and connection within their nonprofit communities and it spurs a trust and a relationship and an engagement with the platform that they can't replicate just online. They're connecting in real life and they had online during the pandemic, another back to real life and I got a chance to go last year and it is magic in a room.

**Lyn Wineman:** 12:53

It's great, it's a great event.

**Marjorie Maas:** 12:56

And then Detroit they say that need doesn't take a summer vacation. So they have Summer Share, which allows nonprofits to get gifts from people attending the ballpark, the Jimmy John's ballpark in Detroit.

**Lyn Wineman:** 13:13

Oh, such a good idea.

**Marjorie Maas:** 13:15

And so the nonprofits that are part of the Share Detroit network. People buy tickets and then they get to choose which nonprofit they want to support with their ticket expense.

**Lyn Wineman: 13:26**

Love that.

**Marjorie Maas: 13:27**

And it's just a coming together of community and community servants and people passionate about the community. It's a beautiful event, and so they've had that in the past. And then in Omaha there's Do Good Days, which is all about turning on the faucet to the fire hose of volunteerism in the community and all of the good that can happen. So we know that our platform allows for all that good to happen all year long, and so during Do Good Days they really emphasize the volunteering. But it's interesting because the donations during that campaign also go up because people see, well, maybe I can't serve the day, but I can give a gift. And so it's an opportunity to blast the URL of the platform and people to start checking it out and figuring out how they want to get involved. So it's really this activation combined with the online resource, and I just think that I think I said it before we call it magic. We said that the tool is the tool is the tool.

And it's going to get better and change and get improved with the whims of technology every year. But the real magic happens with the connections, with the teams offline, with the nonprofits.

**Lyn Wineman: 14:47**

Absolutely. But the tool facilitates it. The tool makes it easier, it makes it possible. And what I love about something like a summit or Do Good Days is like there's just so much buzz around it. It really makes you think. It takes, takes you momentarily out of you know, the hum of your daily life and says, oh, I should put my focus on this for a minute. And you take a whole community and you get them to pay attention on the needs of the community momentarily. That is when magic happens. It's like waving your magic wand and bringing action into the situation. So I think that's so cool. So we both know the power of storytelling. Do you have any stories in your back pocket of successes that you've witnessed through the platform?

**Marjorie Maas: 15:45**

Well beyond what I shared about COVID and the Share at Home campaign. We just had a huge success in the midst of a tragedy, in the midst of a crisis, so Southwest Iowa got hit really hard. Minden etc. with the tornadoes and what was gratifying and humbling for the Share Iowa community in Southwest Iowa brought to life by the Community Foundation for Western Iowa is that they were able to be not only, they were appointed pretty much by the disaster relief efforts, to be the point organization for rallying support so volunteers, items, donations, fund development, but also directing people toward resources. So they were this hub for people who were affected and people who wanted to assist, and it's just been so beautiful to watch how we were able to pivot our software toward what this emergent need was and that the community rallied behind this resource of [shareiowa.org/emergency relief](https://shareiowa.org/emergency-relief), if you're interested but I will tell you that it is just it's not just for the good days that this happens. This is for, like, I don't know if you remember, but back like 2018, there was a housing, I don't want to call it crisis, but like rental property crisis in Omaha, and me and my board looked at each other and we just said, gosh, I wish Share was a thing right now because people didn't know who to go to help, and when I see a site like Share Iowa or Share greater Lynchburg or Detroit become this hub for what happens in the midst of

an emergency, like that's really the reason we do this is that so people when they're looking for ways to be of help, or not just significance, but just to be of assistance that their efforts are not going to be wasted, that they're going to be used in the best way possible. That is a home run for Share Good, and if there's anything we can do to make Share Iowa look better in that process, we're going to from the national level. We want to make sure that it is easy to navigate, that it's easy to find and we're thinking all the time like how can we make that process even better?

And what's beautiful is that Share Iowa is they have Council Bluffs, yes, but they have a multi-county region that is very much rural, and it has been exciting for us. A success story is that we learned this doesn't have to exist just in major metropolitan areas, that this can exist and be useful in micro communities, in rural communities, in rural counties, in rural regions. And we have shifted the way that we message our software and our offerings and our capacity building for those nonprofits and those communities in a way that makes sense for a lifestyle that's not in a big metropolitan area and that opens up a statewide strategy, that opens up rural strategy. It opens up greater Nebraska strategy. I mean I like that gets me so excited because I believe that, yes, like the midsize metropolitan areas, like I have dreams of Indianapolis, I have dreams of Nashville, I dream, I think, two random communities who knows if they're part of my strategy or not, but I have dreams of these communities, but I also I'm like this could go across states, whole states.

**Lyn Wineman: 19:50**

And maybe that's what rural communities really need, because you know there's a lot of talk right now, a lot of research, a lot of articles on rural communities and how they get services and how you know the youth of the rural communities. Some are choosing to leave, and so you being able to serve a rural community, I think, is really, really powerful. Also, you're going to love this, Marjorie. As I was getting ready for our conversation today, I was in the KidGlov office in our kitchen area. I was getting my coffee mug out of the cupboard and I looked at our refrigerator next to me and I have a Share Iowa magnet on the refrigerator in the office. I'm not even a hundred percent sure where it came from, how we got it, but I was like, oh, how perfect is this that I'm? I'm looking at this magnet and I'm about to go get on a call with you and then you reference it, and so I had to tell you that.

But just even looping back to what you said about how the software is so powerful all year round, not just for Do Good Days, like when you have an emergency situation come up and people need help immediately, and those of us who want to help are looking for ways to help immediately, it would be difficult to spin something up that hadn't been started, so the fact that Share Iowa was in place or Share Omaha was in place when these situations happened made it easy for them to be out there. Another thing I always look at when a situation like that happens is I'm always on alert for all right, the scammers are also out right now, and it's terrible that that's sometimes what happens in the face of an emergency, but I think having a known brand like Share also gives somebody who wants to help the confidence that I'm doing this in a way that A. is real and B. I'm meeting a real need as well. I'm not just doing something random that may or may not help.

**Marjorie Maas: 22:10**

Yes, and because you want to go to a trusted resource yes, even if you haven't been there yourself in the past. Like people are familiar with the shareiowa.org brand, they're familiar with shareomaha.org, they're familiar with what those campaigns are that are spurred by those entities, and so it gives you more confidence that if they say this agency is collecting water, this agency is collecting shovels, this

agency is collecting this, that they know, or that this community foundation is putting together the emergency relief fund, they know that their money and their resources and time aren't going into this weird vacuum where it's not going to be of effectiveness. So you're exactly right. Like us, being in place in a community when tragedy strikes gives people more confidence when they're going to get involved and so this, this emergency relief, like kind of like product line that we have, is something that we want to make sure each of our communities knows is available to them if and when an emergency happens.

**Lyn Wineman:** 23:17

Yeah, yeah, makes a lot of sense, all right. So, Marjorie, you threw out a couple of community names and I know they're just communities you're throwing out, but what does it look like for you to scale? What opportunities do you see on the horizon?

**Marjorie Maas:** 23:34

Well, I think this has to be a movement among civic leaders and I'm not just talking about mayors and county commissioners, of course. I think honestly if elected leaders saw this as something that was going to change their communities. Like we're always making sure when we go to a community that we're talking with those individuals, but I feel like this is something that a concerted and concerned group of citizens that have the ability to flex certain resources in their communities that I feel like this has to be a movement amongst people. Like that. I feel like understanding the community champions and the communities that we're targeting, the pillars of philanthropy, seed funding that might be available to kickstart these efforts and these teams, these dedicated teams in key markets, is going to what spurs this nationally and so and so, though I do market research of communities like similar to the communities I threw out there, I'm also looking at which communities have an extreme amount of new residents coming to them, which communities are growing which communities have strong chambers of commerce that are putting effort behind new residents, which communities have an extreme amount of philanthropy from foundations and corporations that are investing in their communities. That it's not all federal funds. I want to see a healthy mix of philanthropy in the communities. So you know, when I travel I'm looking at those donor walls, right, you know, but it's so much. It's like this little puzzle for every community, because some communities, like finding those champions is not difficult, but in some communities, like the access to and the strata related to those communities something I have to be I have to listen very carefully to the people that I meet to understand, like, really is this something that's troubling them or do they feel like they have it figured out?

Because if they feel like, between the resources they have, that it works for them, this might not be the right time for them. There may not be an itch or a problem or a challenge they're trying to address, like at the community foundation or at the city level. But if there is like we have all these new people that want to get involved in the community and there's not a centralized way to do it and we want to have as much engagement as possible, those are the communities that I'm diving right into. So, specific leaders and community champions.

**Lyn Wineman:** 26:21

Well, we're going to put this out there because we've got listeners from across the country and so if anybody is out there and they're saying, hey, this sounds of interest to me and my community, what would be a good way for them to connect with you, Marjorie?

**Marjorie Maas: 26:39**

Well. Sharegoodusa.org is our website is a great resource to learn about our products, learn about our mission, learn about our approach, and there's very many places and opportunities for you to express your interest. So we try to make those call to action buttons as clear as possible. But also check us out on LinkedIn. I wouldn't say it's the most robust posting of information, but you'll get a sense of who we are and what we care about there. And I would say, visit our community's websites. Does that magic sound like something that you want to have in your community? If so, like that's the best research you can have, because it's unfiltered and you can see what really strong engagement looks like. And look at different. I mean, there's, like I said, there's the Detroit's and the Charlotte's of the world, but there's also more intimate communities like Southwest Iowa that the flavor of what you're seeing on those websites reflects the communities that they're in and if you like that type of research, please reach out.

**Lyn Wineman: 27:50**

Sounds great. Marjorie, we'll put all of those links and, for our listeners, we'll put all of those links in the show notes if you access this on KidGlov's website at KidGlov.com, you will get links to all of those resources if you didn't get them written down. So, Marjorie, I'm really curious. Then, what advice would you have to individuals and organizations that are looking to make a meaningful impact in their communities, besides setting up a Share organization in their community?

**Marjorie Maas: 28:22**

Well, just in general try just try, get out there, initiate a relationship that can be through a gift, an active service, orientation with a nonprofit organization, a mission with a cause or two aligned with your passions and interests. And I will tell you that you are kind of interviewing as much as you're interviewing them, as they're looking to you because you want to see who honors and values your action and takes it to the next level. So if it is an organization that cares about stewardship and relationship, they're going to see that you're a new donor. They're going to see you're a new volunteer lead and they're going to do everything they can to make you feel welcome. The best ones are, and those are the organizations where you want to dig in. So's kind of an encouragement to our nonprofits listening out there that if you get a new lead, treat them like gold, because they came to you.

**Lyn Wineman: 29:24**

Absolutely, build that relationship, right. And not with a photocopied thank you letter in an envelope with a label. Those are all of my hot buttons right there.

**Marjorie Maas: 29:33**

Exactly, you want to make sure that you make a phone call from a key staff member's desk. If there's a letter or a postcard from a client or a volunteer or somebody that's encouraging them that this is a good place for them to put their resources and time and maybe call and ask what drew them to you. As the volunteer, as the donor, like I, wouldn't give up on the organizations that maybe are slower to respond because they maybe need your services even more. You know they could be strapped for resources, yeah, but it's easier to make a relationship with somebody that's also asking you questions. So keep that in mind as you're starting your engagement with the community.



**Lyn Wineman: 30:24**

Okay. So, Marjorie, talking about questions and relationships, you have been on this hot seat before, but I'm going to ask you my favorite question. You know we have done over 200 episodes and I've asked this on every single one, but I am really inspired by motivational quotes. I am so lucky to get to speak with inspirational people like you. Could you give us a few of your own words of wisdom, Marjorie?

**Marjorie Maas: 30:47**

It's kind of like my own mission statement, so I'm going to tell you, Lyn, there is enough. There's enough.

So, with a firm faith, I really ground myself in the belief that there's enough, enough good to help others, enough resources to solve problems, enough kindness and grace to get on top of our challenges. And I believe this is a chosen mindset and it's one of abundance, and it helps me empower others to strive for big goals and big impact. It leads me daily, and I don't think I could do this work if I thought that there was finite ability or finite resources or finite solutions to problems. That doesn't create more people to help.

**Lyn Wineman: 31:39**

Yeah, beautiful. You know, we teased that a little bit in the intro today too, because I know that is a belief of yours. You've talked about it. It's a beautiful quote, and think about if we woke up every morning and said there's enough. You know, let's seek out the opportunities, the ideas, the connections, the purpose today. Think if every one of us did that every morning, what our days would be like. And I, once again, I see the joy radiating from you, and so I'm quite sure you do that and live that every day as well. So, Marjorie, I've loved this conversation. As we wrap up this time together today, what is the most important thing you would like our listeners to remember about the work that you are doing at Share Good?

**Marjorie Maas: 32:34**

Communities have the ability to bring more helpers to the table, and I believe that there's more than one pie, and I believe that when there's more helpers at the table, they make more pies, and I believe that it's part of there being enough right. If there's more of us addressing an issue. Small actions lead up to bigger change, and never underestimate the abilities that you have to address an issue and that you're not just by yourself. When it comes to generosity, people just need to be asked and engaged in a relationship, and it's exponential what can happen when people feel like what they do matters and is appreciated and is valued. It's like that quote like people might forget what you do or what you say, but they're going to make it forget how you make them feel. And I believe that when you believe that more people are welcomed at the table and you and you genuinely welcome them and make it easy for that to happen, great change can happen around us. And I have to believe that, or I just feel like this work is the work I do is motivated by that belief, and I'm grateful to be able to have shared that with you in today. Thank you.

**Lyn Wineman: 34:03**

Marjorie, that was so beautiful. You are just a beautiful human being. I believe the world needs more people like you, more organizations like Share Good. Thank you so much for taking time to talk with us today.

**Marjorie Maas:** 34:18

Thank you for having me.

**Announcer:** 34:22

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