How did we get here?

Plenty Hidden in Plain Sight

SVCreates | Think Bigger

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Scarcity thinking is believing that what you need or want is in short supply.

There is never enough.

The competition is fierce.

*And life will be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."*

-- Thomas Hobbes
We have allowed the public trust (nonprofit) sector to become infected by private sector thinking.

It is our dominant culture in American, and it is oppressive.

It is a culture of asset accumulation, winner-take-all, nothing-less-than-#1, transactional relationships, loss/gain, winners/losers, and scarcity for most of us.

*To reclaim a world of plenty, we need to reclaim the commons origins of our work.*
A tale of three domains

State (Government)
- Collects Taxes
- Governance: Legislatures
- Checks & Balances: Three Branches

Public (Non-profit) (Commons)
- Collects Donations
- Governance: Boards of Directors
- Checks & Balances: Attorney General (Charitable Regulators)

Private (For-profit)
- Pays Taxes
- Governance: Board of Directors
- Checks & Balances: Attorney General (Private Regulators)
Institutes of Justinian and the ideas of *res communes* and *res publicae* as distinct from the assets of the “state”.

King John and the *Magna Carta*. Two years later the *Charter of the Forrest* is created and incorporated into the *Magna Carta*.

King Henry VIII begins the first great “enclosure of the commons” during his reign—a project that would penetrate through the Modern Era fueled by free-market capitalism.

British economist William Forster Lloyd introduces the idea later termed “tragedy of the commons” by ecologist Garrett Hardin.

Queen Elizabeth I creates the *Charitable Uses Act* or “Statute of Elizabeth” the first modern definition of charitable purpose.

Economist Elinor Ostrom publishes her Nobel-winning refutation of Lloyd in *Governing the Commons* and a new era of commons thought is born.
A common-pool resource (CPR) is a natural or human made resource that can be bounded or defined and shared by an intentional community.

Moreover, commoning is the practice, work, action of caring for resources that are managed as commons through the stewardship of care-wealth.

The nonprofit sector is the original public commons.
Think like a commoner

What if we thought more about...

SHAREING vs. SHAREHOLDING

MOVEMENT vs. MERCHANT

COMMUNITY vs. COMMERCE

ACTION vs. ASSETS
MOVEMENT vs. MERCHANT
COMMUNITY vs. COMMERCE
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<th><strong>Capitalist Economy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Commons Economy</strong></th>
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<td><strong>SCARCITY</strong></td>
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Practice Gratitude – Be Generous.

Embrace Meliorism – Be Better.

Seek Satisficing – Be Enough.
We can move from transactional to transformational. Social norming is among the most powerful motivators of choice behavior.

We can move from loss/gain to gentle reciprocity. The magnitude of pain we experience with loss is 2x the magnitude of joy we feel with gain.

We can move from care-worn to care-wealth. Action and values of relational property and mutual care guide us.