One Family's Philanthropic Legacy

Charles R. Bronfman, Ellen Bronfman Hauptman, and Stephen R. Bronfman Talk About Philanthropy, Values and the Jewish Community

Interviewed by Marge ***Tabankin***

The North American Jewish community is constantly evolving and adapting to the world. The generation that grew up in the shadow of the Holocaust, the birth of the state of Israel, and widespread anti-Semitism has begun to make room for a new generation of confident, independent, and socially integrated Jews who are developing an increasingly influential voice in the Jewish community.

This confluence of the experiences of one generation with the blossoming of another has resulted in a powerful set of challenges that many families and organizations face: How do we pass on our values and traditions to the next generation? Clearly there's no consensus on which values and traditions are most important. In fact, they vary wildly from family to family and community to community and can serve as a point of great tension. While many see the growing diversity within Jewish life as a great strength, others view it as the community's death knell.

The following interview is a peek into one such family discussion: one brimming with optimism and in which the transmission of values has been integrated since birth. In this conversation, Charles Bronfman, along with his daughter Ellen Bronfman Hauptman and son Stephen Bronfman, discuss where they came from, where they are now, where they are going, and the experiences and values that drive their personal and philanthropic decisions.

This interview took place in Los Angeles on March 31, 2010, at the home of Ellen and Andrew Hauptman. Marge Tabankin facilitated the discussion.

PHILANTHROPY AND RESPONSIBILITY

TABANKIN: The Bronfman name carries a long legacy, much of it connected to philanthropy. How have you been affected by this legacy? What have you learned from the previous generation(s)?

CHARLES: I learned what I know about the ideas and ideals of philanthropy from my parents—mostly from my father, even though I remember that during World War II my mother was very involved in the Canadian Red Cross. She knitted squares for the troops, which would then be made up into blankets. My parents were always very involved in philanthropy. I started my involvement in philanthropy myself when I was 17 years old and was collecting 50-cent pieces from kids for the United Jewish Appeal.

I remember one day asking Dad how he decided what you should and shouldn't give to, and he said, "You learn." And when my children started asking the same questions, I told them, "Well, this is the answer my father gave me. It was good

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enough for me, and it should be good enough for you." Philanthropy, culturally and in my family, is just part of who we are.

TABANKIN: Was philanthropy a value that was always talked about in the house?

CHARLES: Yes, because according to my mother, my father had two kinds of business. He had "business business" and "Jew business," as she used to call it. Although my father was involved in the Canadian Jewish Congress, during World War II, he made sure that Canada came first, and was a major supporter of the war effort. He was sort of half philanthropy and half business.

So you learn about philanthropy, and that's who you become; it is a part of your culture and just the normal being of the family. Now, a lot of children get turned off, because their parents are away; they're out at philanthropic meetings in the evening and so on. For some reason, my parents' involvement didn't turn off any of my father's and mother's four children. Each one of us in our own way did our own philanthropic thing.

TABANKIN: Stephen, what about you?

STEPHEN: I also learned about philanthropy from my father and grandparents. When we were kids, we had a big house. I remember being up on the mezzanine and looking downstairs over this open area. About every couple of months, here would be hundreds of people downstairs for another cocktail party. I didn't know what it was about, but it was something Jewish, because there were a lot of bald heads and a lot of gray curly hair. There were a lot of yarmulkes.

I guess those parties were what philanthropy meant to me as a child.

ELLEN: My view of those parties was a little different, because I liked to be at the front, and I liked to help check the names off the list as they came in.

TABANKIN: You were the worker bee. You were the volunteer.

Charles: "So you learn about philanthropy, and that's who you become; it is a part of your culture and just the normal being of the family."

ELLEN: Yes, but I think that when we look at what Dad has done, and we know what our grandfather did and our other family members, it seems like it is just our responsibility to the community, to our community – whether that's the Jewish community or the community in Los Angeles, or the community in Montreal, wherever we've been.

STEPHEN: When Dad set up his first foundation, I was asked to join the board. I was in my early 20s then. That was a good way to learn how to go about setting up a foundation and how to go about doing successful projects and what it meant to start something, get it up and running, bring in partners, and then slowly back out and move on to other things. That model always stuck with me: If you're going to create something, you can't do it forever. If it's good enough and it sticks, other people will want to join.

TABANKIN: Do you remember any time when you were told that philanthropy was your responsibility? Or did you just by osmosis "get" that by being raised in that household?

ELLEN: I remember my mom always saying that philanthropy is just the Jewish tax. It's our responsibility to our community, but I don't ever remember being told it specifically. It just was what we do. There was no question about it.

TABANKIN: Both your dad and your brother talked about this notion of philanthropy in which you are joined by other people: Do you feel that concept was something that was passed on to you as well?

ELLEN: Definitely. Because you can do better things and have a bigger impact if you can get others to join in with you in doing things that are worthwhile.

TABANKIN: Stephen, you clearly made a decision to stay in Montreal, which carries the whole family legacy in that community. Why did you do that?

STEPHEN: It's home. I'm a kind of traditional guy. We are just about to finally move into the house where Dad grew up, which is quite exciting. We have a lovely community. It's a great place to live and it's the place to uphold the family traditions.

And my wife Claudine and her family are from Montreal. I've got a great group of friends, and Canada is a small enough country, business-wise and philanthropically, where you can make your mark and not get lost in the numbers. In Canada, everybody knows who you are, and that's nice.

THE NEXT GENERATION IMPLEMENTS THE LEGACY

TABANKIN: The word "legacy" is a heavy word that carries a lot of big baggage with it. Did you ever feel any negatives from that?

ELLEN: No, I think I've had it easy. Wherever we have lived, Andrew [Ellen's husband] and I have been able to start fresh, however we wanted to do it, and we've purposefully formed our foundation here in Los Angeles as the Hauptman Family Foundation. We've created our own thing as the Hauptman family, and we don't typically associate it with being part of the Bronfman family, although I think a lot of people know that it's all together. We have taken our cues from the great work Dad's done but have been able to model our foundation in our own way. I think that "legacy" has a bigger connotation for Steve because he is based in Montreal where he's literally taken over certain responsibilities that both Dad and Papa had.

STEPHEN: It's just evolved over time, and it's a pleasure and honor to be the keeper of the flame. In Montreal we have a small but strong and very traditional community, and there are leading families in town, and we're definitely one of them. And we are also part of the Sam and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation, which is in its third generation. It's winding down, but the main bulk of the funds go toward the annual Federation pledge to the Combined Jewish Appeals (CJA). And we maintain that, and there's always a large family gift, which I'm happy to represent.

There are a lot of projects that we do in town on the Jewish side and on the non-Jewish side as well. I haven't run any of the major organizations in town yet, but as of this year, my wife and I are chairing a new endeavor called GEN J, which is

a ten-year plan providing some pretty serious funds for reinvigorating community, making things a lot more viable. I'll use the example of what was the Saidye Bronfman Center, which was funded by the kids of Saidye, I think for Granny's 70th birthday. When it was created, it was ahead of its time, but over its 40-year span, it got a little bit tired. And so another family came in two years ago, the Segal family, and they injected some new funds into it. They took this institution, and they revived it. That's what my wife Claudine and I are trying to do with the Jewish camping system, the Jewish school system, and even young adult engagement programs. It's really a chance for this generation to make a mark and to make change. So much good energy and so much groundwork got laid 40 or 50 or 60 years ago, and now they really need facelifts.

TABANKIN: That's interesting because a lot of what your dad's foundation has done is to invest in revitalizing the values and the energy of the next generation of the Jewish community.

STEPHEN: Yes, what is exciting as well is that GEN J is really nicely tied into a lot of what that they have done in New York. What we're doing in Montreal is not recreating the wheel. We're learning, and we're taking from all these various communal things that have worked, raiding them and putting a local spin on them.

JEWISH IDENTITY, VALUES, AND LEARNING

TABANKIN: So Charles, when you think of your Jewish identity, what does it mean to you?

CHARLES: It means that it's a tradition of thousands of years and that Jews gave the world the norms by which we live. I always think back to my main hero, Moses, and the reason I really think a heck of a lot of him is that he had this ragtag group of people in the desert, and he sectioned them off in tribes. And he told them, "You guys are going to do this. And you folks are going to do that, and you're going to be the teachers, etc."

And our family success stems from the fact that my grandparents on both sides had the guts, and, I mean, the sheer raw courage to leave Bessarabia and go to the frozen wastelands at that time of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I figure if they had the courage to do that, and we're sitting on the fat of the land because of their efforts and their children's efforts, then we'd better thank them. And how you thank them is by carrying on their traditions and doing things for the community. We are saying thank you, grandparents, and thank you to all the other ones for hundreds and thousands of years.

TABANKIN: When you're participating in non-Jewish organizations, like being on the board of Mt. Sinai hospital, and a few other things, is your involvement infused with Jewish values? Do those values affect everything you do?

CHARLES: I don't even know what Jewish values are. It's one of the great weaknesses of our tradition. Everybody says to kids that they have to have Jewish values. Yeah, name them. In fact, one time I really wanted to have a contest to decide what Jewish values are and we'll give a prize, an award. Jewish values

really are today's societal values, except I think there are a couple of things about the Jewish values that are particular to them, such as valuing life over death. And what you do in this life is going to carry on after you through the life of your children, not through your death. That really has to do with life.

I am not a religious Jew by any matter or means, but I love the traditions.

TABANKIN: But you have studied.

CHARLES: I've studied some, but not with any particular interest in mind. In the studying I've done, I've taken it as a sociological study, not as a religious study.

TABANKIN: Ellen, when somebody asks you what is your Jewish identity, what does that mean to you?

ELLEN: It has a lot to do with what Dad has been saying. I don't think of it as from a religious point of view; I think of it from the point of view of tradition. During Passover, what I pointed out at the beginning of our Seder was that we had all of our dishes and things on the table from my grandmother, my great-grandmother, and my husband's family; we had some Hauptman traditions and some Bronfman traditions. We mixed it all up. To me that's what it's about. It's about thinking that 100 years ago members of our family were sitting around and doing the same thing and carrying on those same traditions.

As Jews, we've all been taught to stick together and to look out for our own, as well as helping others in need. That creates a real bond. And I've told Dad this a million times: I went on my teen tour to Israel when I was 18, and I'm still very close friends with a few people from that trip. There's an immediate bond that you get when you meet other Jews. You can be across the world, and you meet someone who's Jewish, and you just feel some sort of special connection, because you know that on Passover at their seder, they were doing the same thing you were doing.

At the moment, Andrew and I are trying to decide whether to send our kids to Hebrew school on Sundays. And we just haven't figured it out, but we're trying to: Andrew and I are trying to work out what that all means to us and our family. Our children are definitely going to have a bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah.

RELATIONSHIP TO ISRAEL

TABANKIN: What is your relationship to Israel, and what role does it play in your personal philanthropy?

CHARLES: Israel plays a pretty darned big role, first from the standpoint of Birthright Israel, in which we really use Israel as a living laboratory to try to influence wavering Jews to become Jewish. And they can define whatever being Jewish is or how to stay Jewish. Our target market is those who have been turned off, and those who were defining themselves as "just Jewish" or Reform. And being Reform means that their parents occasionally go to a Reform temple, not that they themselves do. And second are all the projects that our foundation is involved in and other programs in Israel.

I think of Israel as being a miracle. Since the birth of Israel, Jews all around the world are able to stand tall. And I've given speeches about that to people who just had no understanding. It's fascinating to me, because I used to hear anti-Jewish jibes. Once Israel was born and proved itself physically, that it could physically survive, all the "little Jew" stories stopped.

TABANKIN: Do you think there's a resurgence for younger generations of this notion of Israel enabling young Jews to stand tall?

CHARLES: Unfortunately I think it's the reverse, because in those days, Israel was David, and the Arabs were Goliath. And all of a sudden Israel is Goliath.

ELLEN: Israel is a really very special place, and however many times I've been there, I just feel very comfortable there. I don't think of it as a miracle. It just feels right to be there, and I feel like I'm part of it somehow.

TABANKIN: Stephen, do you feel it's played a role in your philanthropy?

STEPHEN: Oh, for sure, 100%. When I was 19, on my second time in Israel, I spent ten days with a young park ranger, driving around and being a ranger's aide throughout all the desert areas, and I fell in love with the place. There's a tough time, I guess, in any kid's life, when you've had too many choices and are not really sure of your direction and not really sure about many things. I wasn't very confident at that time either. But spending all that time in the desert, everything that I was being told was sticking with me, and I really had this affinity with the different trees, the animals. So that made a real impression with me. And aside from watching Marlin Perkins Mutual of Omaha on TV when I was five years old, I think that that trip to Israel when I was 19 really had a lot do with my involvement in environmental issues worldwide, the kind of work that I do in Canada.

TABANKIN: Was that the moment when you first really consciously understood that connection?

STEPHEN: Yes. Dad was talking about the power of Israel, but as a kid, you don't really understand the idea of power or what it meant. But I remember watching my parents and three or four other couples who were sitting on the couch in our living room watching when Sadat landed in Tel Aviv [in 1977] , and everyone had tears streaming down their faces. It was really amazing, and I looked around and said, "Wow, this whole Israel thing, this is real powerful stuff. This is important." So that really had a big impact on my understanding what Israel meant to Jews.

CHARLES: One of the problems is, unless there's going to be peace between Israel and her neighbors, particularly with the Palestinians, a lot of young Jews in this part of the world will be turned off and maybe permanently. I think that some of the Israeli politicians don't quite understand that.

WHY BE PHILANTHROPIC

TABANKIN: I want to push you a little bit more on the question of motivation, because Ellen used the expression that Jewish philanthropy is "our Jewish taxes."

Some people like paying taxes because it's their way of taking responsibility in a common society. Other people hate paying taxes. So how do you feel about it? Do you enjoy it? Do you like doing philanthropy? Does it make you feel good? Do you do it because you think you have to?

ELLEN: I don't feel like I have to do philanthropy, but there's no question, I find it rewarding, especially when you see results, and you see the impact of certain things that you're doing. Dad's book, *The Art of Giving: When the Soul Meets a Business Plan,* focuses a lot on the spirit of giving. Dad explains whether you have five dollars or five gazillion dollars to give—it doesn't matter. It's something as simple as our children at their school every Wednesday bringing a packed lunch that goes to a homeless organization.

STEPHEN: It's what you have to do, in a way, but it is also what you want to do. So you have to make those choices, and you have to make the decisions. I know Dad's book talks a lot about it— how to best suit what it is you want to do, how to say no, how to choose projects, how to stay focused—because obviously when your name is Bronfman, you get flooded with requests. We have to set the guidelines.

So it's not really a Jewish tax – it's what we do.

COMBINING PASSION AND IMPACT

TABANKIN: Ellen talked about the soul meeting the business plan. Are there one or two examples of things that you fund that you feel combine soul and business plan, passion and high impact?

STEPHEN: What's actually been the most fun for us are the projects and programs that we've created. That's where you have more control. Recently we took an idea and built it and we just got a million and a half dollars from the local government to support it. That's a huge win, in this business; those are your victories. You're touching lives, but you're also being accepted not just by the philanthropists but also the government.

TABANKIN: So you become like an R&D laboratory that then public policy embraces. What parts of the environmental world do you like focusing on and what is your passion there?

STEPHEN: Through the Suzuki Foundation, I am the largest funder, I think, in the country when it comes to climate change issues. Why did I choose climate? I chose it because it was one of the four or five major projects we were doing, and the toughest one to get funding. So again, it is putting money where your mouth is, and that snowball effect started rolling, and people started coming behind it. That was probably 10 years ago, and in that day, if you asked the average person walking down the street, tell me about climate change, you would not have gotten much of an answer. But if you asked today, it's a major, major topic.

It is a passion of mine, and I've stayed with it for a long time. Because I'm also national chair of development now for the foundation, I've had people who have given rather substantial sums, especially local people who have said, "I'm

backing you, because I this isn't a fad. You've been involved in this for a long, long time." Sometimes, you start something, and you get partners, and then you move on to the next thing. But Birthright for Dad or the Suzuki work that I've been doing, it becomes a part of you.

TABANKIN: And the sweet spot for you, Ellen?

ELLEN: City Year, the year of service for young adults, definitely has been something that Andrew and I feel strongly about and are very committed to. The program has a significant impact on so many different areas – social, economic, educational. The impact is felt by the young corps members as well as the students, teachers, and parents that are so affected by the service that City Year corps members do. It feels good to be doing such good work with them.

BRINGING OTHERS ON BOARD

TABANKIN: There's conflict, because when you create something, and you take the lead in something, often people want to say, "Oh, let them do it, then." So you have to be both welcoming, but you don't want to lose control of the project.

ELLEN: Right. Then there is the problem that if you try and get this person involved in your thing, you feel obliged to support their cause. And then you think to yourself, "Well, why don't I just give more of my money to my own project directly?" So how exactly did you address that, Dad?

CHARLES: Many of my projects, again over time, have proved their worth. And so people want to come in, because they trust the people who are running those programs. Our name is respected, and that respect has been earned by the quality of the people who we've been fortunate enough to attract, the professionals.

ELLEN: Of course, but you've also been in situations where you've tried to get people to buy into whatever program you're involved in and then you feel like, "OK, well, I'm going to go meet with this person, and I'm going to convince them of whatever my thing is, and then I'm going to have to give to their thing."

Stephen: "Sometimes you start something, and you get partners, and then you move on to the next thing. But Birthright for Dad or the Suzuki work that I've been doing, it becomes a part of you."

CHARLES: I usually try to avoid that. I did make a deal with one person, and it still bugs me. And sometimes knowing that they are going to expect me to give to their projects, I don't go to solicit them at all. And I never feel that I'm obliged to give to them just because they gave to me.

TABANKIN: And that's because you feel the strength or the merit of what you're asking them.

CHARLES: Yes. As an example, because I'm so passionate about Birthright, I feel that I'm doing them a hell of a favor by even having them look at it, and look at the great opportunity they have to send busloads of kids to Israel.

TABANKIN: I think Stephen said it well when he described bringing in partners so that ultimately you don't have to be the principal.

STEPHEN: Yes, but you're also the venture guy, so you're funding it, and you're promoting it, and people wait on the sidelines to see what's going to happen, and if it's good, they'll come.

CHARLES: Build it, and they will come.

BALANCING RISK AND CONTINUITY, DIRECTED AND COMMUNAL GIVING

TABANKIN: But being the venture guy and the builder involves a higher tolerance for risk; you're willing to try out new things, where not everybody is willing to do that. That's something we know about your father's philanthropy. Is that willingness to take risks something you see in your own philanthropy?

STEPHEN: Claudine and I have renamed our foundation, which started as the Stephen Bronfman Foundation. Now it's the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation. There's a lot of initials—CSBFF—but we also have a tagline, which is "create and innovate." So we are the older school model, which is giving lump sums to different organizations, and we try to balance that with also taking smaller sums and creating innovative programs that might have some pretty good impact.

CHARLES: There are two parts to philanthropy. You give to the Federation or you give to the United Way, because that's the way our society works. And these folks do a heck of a good job. It's not very glamorous, but you contribute to the Federation because that's part of being a member of a community. Then you say, "What do I really want to do; what really grabs me?" Because giving to amorphous institutions is now not very exciting.

It was more than 100 years ago when Federations were started, and there was a very good reason for creating them. Now they are having problems. I think the New York Federation has 120 or 150 agencies that are affiliated with it. Now what's happened, of course, is that the Federation is strapped. And so these folks have all gone out fundraising on their own, and the reason that the Federations were formed initially was to prevent that very thing from happening. So there's got to be some changes made.

STEPHEN: About a decade ago, designated giving became important, because people wanted to direct their giving. I remember that we had the opposite philosophy at the family foundation. When funding programs at our local Montreal Federation, we said, "OK, we want to do designated giving to the things that are the least glamorous that nobody else wants to give to. Let's give every year to three or four areas that you're having the toughest time with."

But I think the Federation systems have pretty good challenges ahead. I was reading a statistic the other day that, 15 or 20 years ago, more than a million gifts were given to Federations. This past year, and it's not just because there was an economic downturn, there were only 300,000 gifts, which is a huge difference. Maybe that's because there hasn't been a major event, a war or something disastrous with the Jewish people in some time, but there's intermarriage, also a disconnect that's part of the challenges out there of getting people involved.

CHARLES: One of the interesting things is that while people keep on giving less to these amorphous organizations, they're giving a heck of a lot more to focused things.

ELLEN: But then how do you explain a guy like Warren Buffett who just gives his money to the Gates Foundation, and says, "Look, they're doing it. They're doing it better than I can do it. I don't have time to do it. And I trust these guys, and they're doing a great job." It's just a different philosophy.

TABANKIN: But he's also a different generation.

CHARLES: John D. MacArthur of the MacArthur Foundation said, "I know how to make money. I don't know how to give it. So therefore I'm not going to do it. But I'll leave it all to a foundation. And the trustees of that foundation will please figure out what to do with it." And now you've got the Genius Awards and many other things.

People like MacArthur or Buffett or Gates know "to thine own self be true". They know what their strengths are, and they know what their weaknesses are. And they say, "OK, this is the way it is."

LEARNING FROM FAILURE

TABANKIN: All three of you so far have talked a lot about doing things that others might not want to do: taking risks, working with start-ups, beginning your own programs. What about when something fails – how do you feel about that? How do you feel when you use philanthropic dollars and the project doesn't work?

CHARLES: You feel two things. You feel badly, because you don't like to see anything fail. But you learn a lesson. And I don't think that anybody can get anywhere in life without making mistakes.

TABANKIN: Stephen used the word, it's sort of VC [venture capital] like. Obviously most investments that a VC firm makes don't work. They bet on the one out of ten that does. Are you comfortable with that philanthropically?

Ellen: "We have learned that it's really OK to say no, and hopefully, because it's a good program, someone else will say yes."

STEPHEN: No, not those odds. We've just been working on an arts project where we've had a bit of a setback by making some wrong decisions and probably affiliating with the wrong gallery. But again, that's how you learn. You incubate ideas; you grow them. You think you're making the right choices, and you find that afterward it was a mistake, so you rebuild, rethink, and move it forward, building on its strengths.

ELLEN: I don't look at anything that we've done as having been a failure, but more as a learning experience. Over time, we've been able to hone in more on areas of importance to us. Now that we've been in Los Angeles longer, we've gotten a sense of what's important to us in this community. When we first got here, we wanted to be good citizens; we wanted to cover a lot of ground. We now realize that it's OK to pick areas of focus.

We have learned that it's really OK to say no, and hopefully, because it is a good program, someone else will say yes—it doesn't have to be us. And so far I don't really see that we've had any failure in what we've done. We know what we want to continue with and what we don't want to continue with.

STEPHEN: Sometimes the phone rings too often on the philanthropic side, and sometimes the mistakes end up being semi-political. We get so many requests, and sometimes we riffle through them, and it might be a request for $5,000, and right away I say no. Then I think back on it and, say, the person making the request has been really supportive of my causes, and I've got them on board. So I have to go back the next day and say to them, "You know what, I screwed up. I apologize."

FUNDING THE ARTS

STEPHEN: We funded a museum, the Canadian Center for Architecture. We started the Saidye Bronfman Award for the Crafts in Canada, which was the largest crafts award. We ran it for over 30 years, and again, being a big success, it was taken over by the government, with the Governor General's Award, which is the highest level of arts awards.

Then we decided that we wanted to continue supporting the arts, but let's study the local market. We spent about a year studying the market and trying to figure out where we could have the most impact for not huge amounts of dollars. And so in the arts we chose two areas, one of which is a combined prize that goes to a French university, University of Quebec, and Concordia University, two of the best arts schools. In Canada, the Canadian Council for the Arts funds a lot of artists, but the toughest period in an artist's career is between when they graduate with a masters or PhD and when they can actually get that funding; they need about three years of work that's been in galleries and been in shows to be able to apply for arts funding. And so we've created this award that two artists, one from each university, win each year. They get funded for that period of a couple of years, so they don't have to work five jobs. They can actually concentrate on their work.

Our other arts project is teaching collectors to appreciate art and not to be scared, to not be intimidated by galleries or artists. People pay for a six- or seven-week course. It's a good idea, because you can influence and work with young couples that want to buy art but don't know much about it. It's been fun.

Charles: "Our foundation will close in 2016. I, however, will stay philanthropically engaged to the limit of my ability and the limit of my life."

MOVING INTO THE FUTURE

TABANKIN: We have had a lot of conversation here about how each of you developed your own philanthropic goals, your actions, visions, and the lessons that you've learned from the mistakes and from the successes that you've had. Do each of you have a plan at this point for the next period of years?

CHARLES: I plan to not expire. [LAUGHTER]

As is well known, our foundation will close in 2016. I, however, will stay philanthropically engaged to the limit of my ability and the limit of my life. But we won't have the overhead to deal with. Our thing over the next few years is to find homes for our projects so they can continue and homes for our executives so that they can continue. We just want to make sure that they keep going and going from strength to strength.

And then I'll stay with a very few things from thereon out – Birthright, of course being numero uno on the agenda—plus some of the Canadian projects. The Vancouver Olympics, to me, were so profound, watching on NBC, and hearing the commentators, and Brian Williams in particular when he did his ode to the Vancouver Olympics. I recall one thing so very well. The Canadians have been so unsure of themselves, because they always said that we're not British, we're not American, we're not French. And they say, "Who are we?" Now they're Canadians. There is a research study that shows that all of a sudden the number of people in Quebec who identify as Canadians has changed incredibly, after Quebecers see how they are part of Canada, and being part of all these Canadian teams: They won the first Canadian gold medal while on Canadian home soil. So all of a sudden, they started feeling part of this country. And I've been working on that for 25 years. And you just say, "Hey."

TABANKIN: As the youngest here, Ellen, how do you see your philanthropic agenda playing out?

ELLEN: I see us getting more focused in certain areas and having more of a plan. If you look at City Year as a kind of a venture, it's something we innovated. We brought it to Los Angeles, and we're trying to make changes in it. We see that there are certain areas that we haven't gotten into as much as we might want to. I think we want to stick with the education piece and the social justice piece, and the sort of service that Obama's a big supporter of.

TABANKIN: Do you think about levels of giving? I've often heard you talk about being young but at some point having to deal with what amount you really do want to give away. How do you think about that now?

ELLEN: I don't. [LAUGHTER] I truly feel like things just sort of fall into place and that we'll get there at a certain point. We've been very confident in what we've done, and everything that we've done to date we feel comfortable with. I think that we just want to have more focus going forward.

STEPHEN: We've been operating on a pretty good budget for years, and I'm happy with the direction. We'll make some changes, but we'll continue to grow and do good projects, things we enjoy, and, hopefully, eventually get the kids involved and keep building.

TABANKIN: Do you see philanthropy as something you want to do with your kids as well?

ELLEN: I think that we have; I used the example of bringing the packed lunch for the homeless to school. We bring our kids to City Year service days. We talk about helping others all the time. In everything that we do, we try to set an example of how we can help others and we remind our children and ourselves how lucky we are. We make that really an important thing for them to understand. And they seem to really understand it, so we feel like we've already brought them in. We watch *American Idol*, and they have that "Idols Give Back" project. My daughter gets on the phone, and she dialed the number to make a donation. So they are already involved.

TABANKIN: It sounds like all three of you have used your parents as mirrors, so you were clearly affected by your parents, and your Dad affected you, and now you're doing the same with your kids, instead of children rebelling and running the other way. Would you be disappointed if your kids didn't grow up with the philanthropic spirit?

You're looking at me like you can't even imagine it.

ELLEN: I can't even imagine it. I mean, it's not even an option.

STEPHEN: You've got to let them do what they want to do. But you would hope that some of what you do rubs off on them.

CHARLES: Every organization, be it a for-profit or a not-for-profit organization, has its own culture. And I think every family has its own culture. Part of our family's culture, as I said at the very beginning of this conversation, happens to be philanthropy. Don't shoot us: That's who we are. I also think that you do philanthropy because it's not only part of you, but it's very enjoyable. A lot of the stuff each us has done we've had to fight for. We had to win. We've had to sink our teeth in and let our passion take over. And sometimes it hasn't been so logical. But by gosh, the sweet smell of success is there.

I don't think anybody goes into philanthropy just to do "good." At the end of the day, you've got to feel good in your soul.

STEPHEN: But what our dad's been great at, and I think that is one of the things that we've been working on as well, is that he's a natural leader and so passionate about projects that others can't help but get turned on and follow that message. I have one example with this new project that we're working on, this GEN J, where there's one fellow who's a little bit older than me who is part of a very wealthy family at home that really is known for not doing much at all. I brought this guy in, and he's on our board, and he's giving some real money, and it makes me feel good. He's coming to me, and he's saying, "I'm doing this for you. I think this is great, and I'm really enjoying it. I thank you." So it's one of these things where you feel that maybe your passion has cracked a tough nut and brought this guy in, and hopefully he'll be a strong community member going forward, especially in a smallish community like we have at home that's not really growing.

TABANKIN: So back to the word "legacy," which we started with. Can each of you come up with either a word or a phrase describing how you want your philanthropic legacy to be perceived?

CHARLES: I would say that we made a difference. It's a big world, and we added to it and made a difference, because we focused on certain niches where a difference could be made.

STEPHEN: There are a lot of much wealthier people, much wealthier families. But I think the Bronfman family history of leadership and legacy and the Bronfman name have meant a lot, not just in the Jewish world. And so that's an important thing to continue.

TABANKIN: Ellen, what would you want people to think about you in years to come?

ELLEN: That I was thoughtful and that it's important to make a difference to others

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND PHILANTHROPY

TABANKIN: You all have your own passions and you're also family. How does it work in terms of asking each other for funding for your projects? Is that something you do? Is there a rule about asking each other for philanthropic support?

STEPHEN: On the bigger projects we do.

CHARLES: On the bigger projects we do, yes, such as the gift to the Montreal Federation. And then recently I asked Stephen and Ellen to join me in a major remake of the Saidye and Samuel Bronfman Archeological Wing of the Israel Museum.

STEPHEN: We joined Dad for Birthright. The family has been supportive for me in my efforts with Suzuki.

CHARLES: We'll all be writing checks to City Year. [LAUGHTER]

STEPHEN: I wanted to mention one thing that has been great working with on together—creating the Bronfman Prize. That was really something that we spent a lot of time discussing, and I think it's done a lot of good, brought a lot of joy, and allowed us to honor our Pops.

TABANKIN: What is the process of selecting the winner?

STEPHEN: The meeting when we select the winner is a great day. We sit together in a room, and we hash it out for two or three hours. Everyone goes in with their top choices, and then there are really good, animated discussions, and the outcome is always so interesting.

TABANKIN: I assume by the time you get to the finals, there are so many worthy people.

ELLEN: Back to what Dad said, you're choosing between good and good. You walk out feeling good, because you know that it was someone who was worthy, for sure.

The way we structured the voting is that Andrew and I have one vote and Stephen and Claudine have one vote, and each of the other judges has a vote. If we can't be there in person, we're all on the phone.

TABANKIN: Did you know they were cooking this up when they created the prize?

CHARLES: I had no idea.

STEPHEN: It was for our Dad's 70th birthday.

ELLEN: There's not going to be another prize for your 80th birthday next year. What kind of tie do you want?