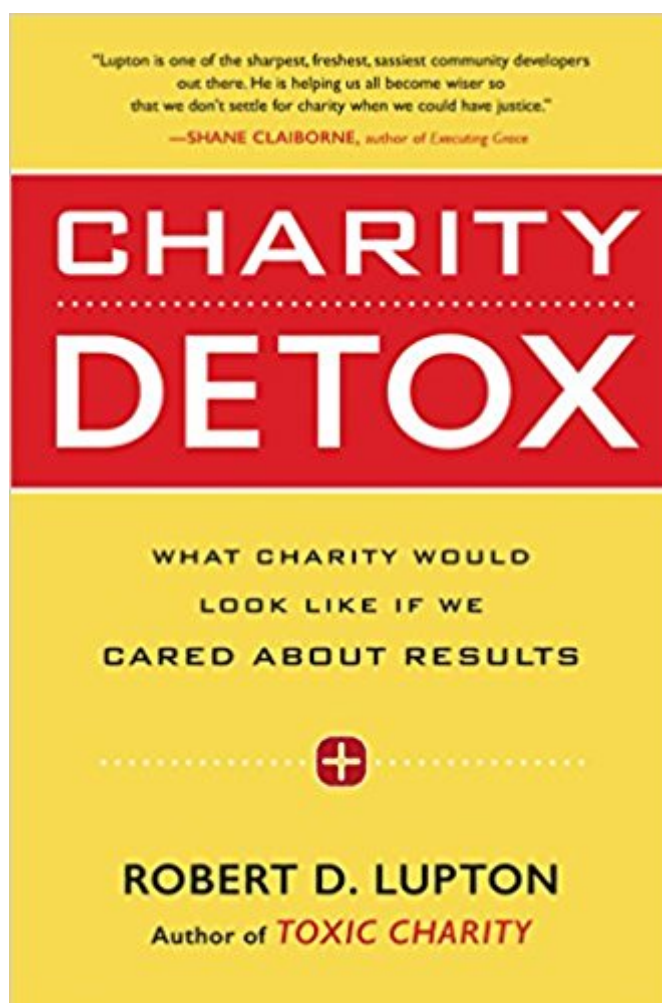


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# Charity Detox: What Charity Would Look Like If We Cared About Results



## Synopsis

The veteran urban activist and author of the revolutionary *Toxic Charity* returns with a headline-making book that offers proven, results-oriented ideas for transforming our system of giving. In *Toxic Charity*, Robert D. Lupton revealed the truth about modern charity programs meant to help the poor and disenfranchised. While charity makes donors feel better, he argued, it often hurts those it seeks to help. At the forefront of this burgeoning yet ineffective compassion industry are American churches, which spend billions on dependency-producing programs, including food pantries. But what would charity look like if we, instead, measured it by its ability to alleviate poverty and needs? That is the question at the heart of *Charity Detox*. Drawing on his many decades of experience, Lupton outlines how to structure programs that actually improve the quality of life of the poor and disenfranchised. He introduces many strategies that are revolutionizing what we do with our charity dollars, and offers numerous examples of organizations that have successfully adopted these groundbreaking new models. Only by redirecting our strategies and becoming committed to results, he argues, can charity enterprises truly become as transformative as our ideals.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Lupton is one of the sharpest, freshest, sassiest community developers out there. He is helping us all become wiser so that we don’t settle for charity when we could have justice.” (Shane Claiborne, author of *Irresistible Revolution*) “When Bob Lupton speaks of the inner city, the rest of us ought to sit up and take notice... [His work is] deeply

disturbing – in the best sense of the word. (Philip Yancey, author of *What Good Is God?*)

“Throughout reading *Charity Detox* the lyrics “How can it be wrong when it feels so right?” were buzzing in my head. That is the tension Lupton describes so deftly with practical illustrations of how we can change the dependency creating relationships formed by well-intentioned servers. (Fred Smith, *The Gathering*)

“His enthusiasm for this method is evident throughout the text and brings hope to readers that if more organizations adopted these practices, there really could be a better future ahead for all of us, not just the poor. (Kirkus Reviews)

“In *Toxic Charity*, Bob identified a weakness with charity as a tool for poverty reduction. In *Charity Detox*, Bob addresses the more complicated question of what might work better. Bob reaches the conclusion that wealth creation must replace wealth redistribution if poverty reduction is the goal. (John Coors, Former CEO of CoorsTek)

“[Charity] efforts, while necessary in a crisis, do little to improve people’s socioeconomic status. Lupton uses this well-worn critique of churches’ charitable activities as a springboard for positive action| all readers will find in this book a useful way to reexamine outreach programs. (James Wetherbee, Wingate Univ. Libs., NC)

“Lupton uses [his] critique of churches’ charitable activities as a springboard for positive action|the author advocates that churches need to be more involved in communities by living and investing in them| all readers will find in this book a useful way to reexamine outreach programs. (Library Journal)

“Lupton continues his mission to transform the way charities operate. Most efforts to help relieve poverty are ineffective, he says...The road to charity hell has been paved with good intentions, but Lupton provides an inspiring roadmap for an alternate route. (Spirituality and Health magazine)

“Lupton weighs the future of effective efforts to reduce poverty . . . confronting popular practices and assumptions. . . . Inspiring. (U.S. Catholic)

“Lupton offers a roadmap for turning short-lived good intentions into lasting transformation [and shares] his vision for a new way of doing missions. (Christianity Today)

**Charity Has Failed. Let’s Reinvent It.**

This is an OUTSTANDING book that I would highly recommend to anyone who is interested in finding practical ways to make their charitable dollars more effective in their impact. As a psychologist and consultant to families of wealth, I’ve been exposed to numerous approaches (all well-meaning) to helping those less fortunate financially. I’ve followed Bob (Lupton) and his work for decades and he clearly has the experience and track record to “shoot straight” with the rest of us. I

would strongly encourage you to get and read this book. It will challenge and encourage you.

This is a book our Book Club read after previously reading *Toxic Charity*, by the same author. It made us think more clearly about what we are doing with our neighborhood at church, and about social programs that purport to help the poor, but only in the end, create dependency and lower self-esteem on the part of the helped. A tough book, over all, because it tells how hard it really is to change social policy, and what concerted effort it takes to change a neighborhood. Just the right circumstances have to be in place, and the right intent on the part of the helpers. Puts in a plug for the essential assistance of business and the hard-headed, cold look at results, with the end goal to make a profit while making a difference, for only in that way will a program sustain itself.

Recommended for all do-gooders.

On the money....I have worked for inter-city Christian non-profits and the biggest frustration is how government benefits tie our hands when it comes to helping people escape poverty. All the services provided in the city by well-meaning Christians have little long-lasting results, they rarely move beyond maintenance. Also, Lupton's naming of poverty of things beyond financial...spot on.

This is a real thought provoker. I think there is something in this book for everyone, right or left, conservative or liberal. This book is really a part two of the author's other book "*Toxic Charity*". This book picks up where that left off. That book documents where charities may not be the fix but the cause of poverty. Now the author answers what to do next. He calls for an introduction of capitalism to fix the problem. He lays out an argument in why and how that should be accomplished. That for sure alone would cause intense discussions by many. Then he dives even deeper. He reinvents the principle of example. People need to move back into the war zone which has become the inner city of so many of our cities. This power of getting involved in those communities first by living there then getting involved would change things. I personally am not so sure about that but it is an interesting thought. The book has a lot of fascinating ideas. The author does lay it out in easy to understand terms. The book is very simple to go through. However there is a lack of empirical research to illustrate and prove his points.

I run an inner-city social services agency and this book (and Robert Lupton's first one, *Toxic Charity*) have been critical training materials for us. We see first hand out 'charitable handouts' hurts those we serve and agree that we need to do so much better to actually move the needle of we

think we are going to help people out of poverty. Lupton's book is straight forward, honest, and refreshing! I think all churches, nonprofit leaders, and givers need to read this.

With job creation being on many people's minds, this book emphasizes its importance in lifting people out of poverty. Often our well meaning charity work and donations have done just the opposite. The author, who has been involved in successes and has seen many failures, provides examples of each and provides some direction to change our thinking. Whether you are an individual, a business person, on committees or boards that make decisions about charity, this book will stimulate thought provoking discussions about charity. Are we as a society willing to invest in the relationship building and job creation that illustrates that we truly value the poor and want to use their strengths and ours to better their lives and ultimately our own?.

Right on!! Vacation trips to needy areas of the world accomplish nothing however lifting up the needy is the task that has been set before us. Lipton has it right.

Robert Lupton's book "Charity Detox" generated in me contradictory feelings. At the beginning I was confused. He presented a variety of ideas and examples that seemed at times disorganized. By the time he discussed the idea of private-for-profit businesses as the way to correct the failings of traditional charities, I was prepared to despair. When profits, especially short-term profits, become the biggest goal of businesses, the future for ordinary people is not bright, for it is the ordinary people, especially their employees and those providing raw materials who are exploited. Thank heavens all companies to not follow that policy. But the last half of the book was much better. There he started discussing and summarizing key ideas for change, which one could reasonably sit and think about. I did a random computer search on a few of the examples he cited, including the education fraud arrests in the Atlanta Georgia Public Schools in 2013. All was as he claimed. Therefore I think Lupton's ideas are worth serious consideration. However, the absence of structured empirical research might be considered a lack by some.

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