

Giving away your inheritance

By [Barbara Bogaev](#)

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Usually we end up having to talk about money when we don't have enough or we're afraid we won't have enough in the future. Jesse Spector has a very different reason: She feels she has too much, so she's giving it away.

Spector is the executive director of [Resource Generation](#), an organization that helps wealthy young people use their resources for social change. She's inherited a little more than \$500,000 from her grandparents; so far she's given away about a third of it, and plans to give away the rest in the next three years.

Spector says her upbringing and conversations with her parents influenced her decision to donate and organize for social change.

"My parents both actively set an example around both generosity and organizing for progressive social change," she says. "Some of my earliest memories are of my dad hosting fundraisers and letter-writing campaigns in our house for progressive political candidates."

While her family was forthright in conversations about everyday finances, Spector says she didn't actually find much out about her inheritance from her grandparents until

she was close to adulthood.

"I think they did not want me to develop a warped sense of myself, or my economic standing, or my money," says Spector. "I think like most people in society, it's very difficult to talk about money with your children."

When Spector made the decision to donate her inheritance, she says telling her family was a gradual process spanning many conversations. Her parents' reactions were supportive, but cautious.

"We had some back and forth where I said, 'this is too much money ... it feels like money that's not mine, so I just want to give it all away immediately,'" Spector says. "My parents respectfully, but firmly said, 'We encourage you to think over at least a few years time about this and make sure you're coming from a place of thoughtful, rational, comprehensive thinking.'"

Click on the audio player above to hear the full conversation about Spector's decision and her thoughts on what kind of conversations she might have with her own kids.

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