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Thank you Bill. This is a first for us: I don't know the precise number of times you and I have been at the same occasion but it's definitely a treat to be *introduced* by you.

And, what a treat to be in this setting. The story of America in the 20th Century can't be told without the life and times of Richard Nixon and it is uplifting to see his legacy captured with such exquisite care. When Henry Kissinger passed away last week, so many images came to mind of him with President Nixon as they shaped the world together. There was an uncertain world buffeted by the forces of change, both at home and abroad. Hold that thought—I'll come back to it.

(Pause)

Before anything else, thank you to the SCAHD Advisory Board. I honestly don't know what my leadership report card looks like. I do know I've had incredible opportunities —too many to count—and I'm grateful to Cedars-Sinai. And I hope that over the years I've been helpful to my colleagues, to AAMC, and AHP, and SCAHD itself.

(Pause)

Since we are all development leaders and, at the moment, I happen to be the one up here, I'll begin with something we *all* know: In healthcare, fundraising has never been more important than it is today.

In an unforgiving economy, giving matters *greatly*. I think that holds true whether you work for a big institution, a small organization or something in-between. Whether adequately-resourced or *under*-resourced, our organizations are tethered to their capacity to understand—and then achieve—their philanthropic potential.

And we're the ones who get to figure that out. At least, that's the plan!

As I said, any one of you could be up here, but today got me thinking about what I've learned in my 23 years with Cedars-Sinai. I of course wanted to share some brilliant insights, but my thoughts kept returning to basics.

In *our* work, what is *most* basic is people: the relationships we build and sustain.

Fundraising *is* people, start to finish. In fact, the longer I'm in development, the more I think that "*Outstanding leader*" is a euphemism for "*You got lucky; you found the right people. You found professionals who love what they're doing and then, mostly, you got out of their way.*"

When you have the right people, and you've established genuine trust, and you've communicated the goals, you and your teammates will figure out what needs to be done, at which point your job is to give them what they need to do it.

I should also add that many of us work with volunteers and/or board members, and (*somewhat lightly*) those relationships have their own logic. In one way or another, volunteers have been *called* to something, and that creates its own set of dynamics. But regardless of the roles, the operative word is trust. And trust means:

You do what you say you are going to do.

You are transparent without violating confidences.

You choose integrity over short term gains—and if you are a high achiever, passing up short-term gains may take some effort.

So trust doesn't come easy—nor should it—but when your team has it, they can do almost anything.

Here's another "basic" I've learned: yes, healthcare *is* a business but, as a leader, if you think your "business brain" can understand everything about healthcare, you are probably in for some surprises.

People give to *many* causes, of course, but health—and sickness—occupy a unique place in the way people frame their lives and the lives of others. When donors look at the world, education matters, the environment, the arts, housing, justice—they all *matter*.

But healthcare is in a category all its own. When you have your health, all things are possible; when you're sick, the picture changes. As the saying goes, "*When you are healthy, you have a thousand problems; when you're sick, you have one.*"

Our experience at Cedars-Sinai is probably similar to yours: people have deeply-held convictions about the importance of healthcare and, as a result, their giving—their philanthropy—comes with equally high expectations. Often, they give for intensely personal reasons and they expect their gifts to be handled accordingly. They *expect* absolute clarity and fidelity in how their money will be used.

So one of the intangibles in fundraising leadership is to build teams that understand the unique place healthcare has in the minds and hearts of donors.

(Pause)

If it is energizing to know that development has never been more important, it's *sobering* to know why: development is more important than ever because, due to several factors, there are difficult times ahead.

For one, although we are accustomed to the gap between costs and revenues, for the foreseeable future that gap is going to get *much* wider and there are only a finite number of ways to bridge it. Philanthropy is high on the list and climbing.

Another factor: illness is often tied to aging and our population is aging on a scale we've never seen. The strain on healthcare resources will expand accordingly. Illness is also linked with poverty and, at least for now, poverty is growing.

The list goes on. As development leaders we, and our teams, are entering a period of enormous opportunity and enormous expectations. Which brings me back to basics, to the fundamental importance of people. Relationships *always* matter but when times are difficult—and the forces of change are in motion—our relationships matter in new and deeper ways.

So please know that, as leaders and fundraisers, you and I will be digging deep into the reservoirs of good will that we are building today. We will keep making withdrawals and deposits into the goodwill bank that holds everything together.

Lastly, staying with "*things we all know*," I want to remind us of the absolute, irreplaceable value of face-to-face communication—in person, with each other, in actual rooms.

Good will and trust are visceral. We know this intuitively. We've known it since we were children. Nothing against emails, smart phones, memos, laptops, algorithms and artificial intelligence—all useful tools—but they are not the source of good will: **we** are. Our presence. Our attentiveness. Our relationships. The things that connect us.

In our increasingly high-tech world, our **presence** together is where good will thrives. As we think about our goals, make our plans, allocate our time, and lead our teams: I hope we will always remember to keep people, and their needs and aspirations, in the center of it all.

With that, thank you for being (*smiling*) so present and attentive and for making my day.

