



ellen krug
writer, lawyer, human

Combined Impact Report for 2018 and 2019

Introductory Note

From 2011 through 2016, I served as the founding executive director of a Minneapolis legal access nonprofit. In that capacity, I learned how metrics are important toward measuring impact and mission fulfillment.

Thus, I offer this, my fourth annual Impact Report (see my website, www.elliekrug.com, for Impact Reports from 2015, 2016 and 2017). The press of business in early 2019 prevented me from getting a report completed for 2018; hence, this is a combination of two years' worth of work.

To explain further, considering America's continuing political and social divisions, I feel it necessary to issue annual reports on the potential impact of my inclusivity/compassion work. That said, I understand some might perceive this report as ego-feeding or some kind of "brag sheet." It is not. Those who know me or who've heard me speak appreciate that I'm rather humble and eschew aggrandizement. Indeed, I'm simply grateful for the opportunity to occupy anyone's brain for even a few minutes as I go forth doing what I call "my remaining life's mission work."

Thank you for viewing this report through that lens! To further reduce the "I" factor, the remainder of the report (except for the closing) is tensed in the third person.

About Ellie Krug

Ellen (Ellie) Krug is a sixty-three-year-old lawyer who transitioned genders in May 2009 while engaged in a civil trial practice in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Ellie's gender transition ultimately resulted in the loss of her law practice and in March 2010, she relocated to the Twin Cities to start over. She subsequently published a memoir and then served as a founding nonprofit executive director for five years.

Shortly after her gender transition, Ellie began receiving requests to speak on what it's like to be transgender and over time, Ellie created a formal "Transgender 101" talk. Eventually, her speaking platform expanded to include general diversity and inclusion topics, including motivational talks and a highly innovative human inclusivity training, "Gray Area Thinking®." In 2016, she formed her company, Human Inspiration Works, LLC, which is dedicated to educating about the values of human inclusivity and compassion and teaching on how to welcome and accept humans who are "Other."



Self-described as an “inclusionist,” Ellie is constantly informed by the words and examples of “The Special K’s”—Dr. King and Robert F. Kennedy, who instructed that we each have an affirmative obligation to work to improve the world and to speak for those who lack voices of their own due to societal barriers. Ellie’s goal is maximum impact: via her spoken and written words, and in the role of radio host, she seeks to reach as many people as possible with a message about the need for greater inclusivity and compassion for others and for one’s self. Ellie’s bio can be accessed at <https://elliekrug.com/printable-cv/> .

Summary of 2018 and 2019

A. Speaking and Training

The most recent two years demonstrate that Ellie’s work has been exceedingly well-received, with her human inclusivity training, Gray Area Thinking®, being requested more than 200 times. However, also across the board, audiences and sponsors have wanted to learn how to be welcoming to transgender and nonbinary persons (Transgender 101), how to be better allies to persons from marginalized communities/how to deal with workplace microaggressions (“Workplace Allyship 101”) and how to get past the divisions that afflict America in so many ways (“Bridging Divides”). She has also had requests for her talk, “Changed Genders, Changed Perspectives,” about what it’s like to live as a woman after having presented as male for fifty-two years.

Altogether, the numbers tell the story: in 2018, Ellie conducted 177 trainings, talks, convenings or other events. The number for the same kinds of work in 2019 was slightly lower: 154 events. Over the past two years, we estimate that Ellie has directly touched more than 25,000 persons through live (standing in front of or among humans) or internet presentations.



The geographic scope of Ellie’s work has expanded too: she is regularly working on both coasts and throughout the Midwest. As reflected below, in 2018, she expanded her reach into the South. The goal is to reach every part of the United States.

1. Special Projects and Initiatives

Beginning in early 2018, Ellie (with the assistance of an advisory board—see below) formulated a plan to speak in places where people who are “Other” struggle for inclusivity and acceptance. Hence, in early February 2018 this resulted in Ellie embarking on a 3300 mile self-funded “listening and speaking” road trip that took her to Tallahassee, Florida (where Ellie twice spoke to the community via the local PFLAG [Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays] chapter). From there, Ellie travelled to Birmingham, AL to speak to the local bar association diversity and inclusion committee. After that, she spoke at Ole Miss Law School, which included an hour-long interview on Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Afterward, she traveled to Vanderbilt Law School in Nashville and McKinney Law School in Indianapolis. Ellie’s work was well received throughout the trip, including by those who called in during the Mississippi radio interview. (See Ellie’s blog at <https://elliekrug.com/my-blog/> from early 2018 for a day-to-day report on the road trip.)

Another initiative has been Ellie's Greater Midwest Project, which has involved offering pro bono or low bono (greatly reduced fee) trainings in rural Midwest locations. In 2019, this resulted in speaking in Beloit WI, and Virginia, Andover, and Mankato, MN.

Further, after learning in the spring of 2018 that seven churches and a religious academy in Hastings MN had issued a public two-page letter titled, "Our Thoughts Concerning the Promotion of Transgenderism," Ellie made it her intention to speak in Hastings. After several failed attempts to secure a sponsor, the Hastings YMCA and a local community D&I organization, Thrive in Hastings, agreed to sponsor Ellie for a Transgender 101 talk.

The Hastings Trans 101 talk was attended by 140 persons on a cold Tuesday evening in November 2019. Many in the audience were from the letter-issuing churches, but with Ellie's offbeat humor and self-deprecation (along with many references to human commonality), the evening turned into a respectful mix of conversation and questions—indeed, questions continued a full half hour after the expected quit time. Later, Ellie heard from some of the churches audience members that her approach was unexpected. As one attendee remarked, "Ellie, we expected you to yell at us and shame us." The comment was proof that Ellie's fundamental approach—via compassion and underscoring commonalities—works.

For 2020 and beyond, Ellie will continue to seek more opportunities to present in the greater Midwest in order to give voice to those who are "Other."

Finally, 2019 brought more opportunities to present to or collaborate with communities of faith—from all spectrums. This included working with the Steamboat Springs, CO Methodist Church to help launch a year-long human inclusivity program with Gray Area Thinking® principles as the foundation.

B. Radio

In January 2016, Ellie launched a weekly hour-long radio show, "Hidden Edges Radio" on KTNF, AM950, in the Twin Cities. The show's mission was to focus on stories of human grit and resiliency, consistent with one of Ellie's core messages: that regardless of skin color, religion, LGBTQ status or any of the other things that separate us, everyone is attempting to survive the Human Condition.



Beginning in January 2018, Ellie launched a successor radio show, "Ellie 2.0 Radio," which focuses on "practical idealism" and Ellie's work to change the world. The show highlights historical idealists, such as Bayard Rustin and Harvey Milk, and contemporary idealists, like Benjamin Saulsberry with the Emmitt Till Interpretive Center in Mississippi.

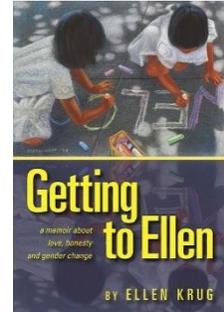
On December 9, 2019, Ellie 2.0 Radio aired its 100th episode; the future of the show remains bright. Ellie is grateful to KTNF owner, Chad Larson, and the entire KTNF staff for their incredible support of Ellie 2.0 Radio—they too understand the significance of renewing interest in idealism and the theme that *everyone* can play a role in making the world better.

C. Columnist, Writer and Newsletter Curator

Ellie has been a monthly columnist for *Lavender Magazine* since 2011. Her column, "Skirting the Issues," is about her journey as a transgender woman trying to navigate the world. To date, her nearly 100,000 column words have continued to attract positive commentary.

In early 2019, Ellie began as a columnist for *Minnesota Women's Monthly*, a magazine focused on various topics and issues affecting women.

Ellie's memoir, *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*, published in early 2013, continues to sell on various platforms (Amazon, Kindle, etc.). In fact, 2019 marked the biggest year for sales since the book was launched in 2013, with several clients making bulk purchases of hundreds of copies as a "perk" for those attending Ellie's trainings.



In July 2016, Ellie began to issue her monthly inclusivity-focused newsletter, *The Ripple*, with less than 300 recipients. By November 2019, the number of *Ripple* readers had risen to nearly 9000 recipients. Ellie consistently hears from *Ripple* readers that the newsletter brightens their lives while at the same time, motivates them to be more inclusive and welcoming to those who are "Other."

D. Human Ripple Works, Inc.—A Nonprofit to Assist with Pro Bono Work

In late 2017, several personal advisors recommended that Ellie create a nonprofit to reimburse Ellie's expenses (mileage, overnight lodging, meals) when she engages in pro bono (and low bono) work outside the Twin Cities. Subsequently, Human Ripple Works, Inc. was founded; the present board members are:

Gina DeConcini, Esq.—KPMG (managing director)

Stephanie Glaros—Humans of Minneapolis (founder)

Paul Quast, Esq.—DeWitt (partner)

Vanessa Tennyson—Capitalize Your Humanity (founder and president)

Dennis Tharp—retired attorney (and Ellie's lifelong best friend, featured in her memoir)



The first-ever fundraiser for Human Ripple Works, Inc. occurred on October 17, 2019, raising nearly \$1000.00. Future fundraisers are likely. The board of directors and Ellie appreciate the support of those who have contributed to HRW and who generally support Ellie's pro bono work.

E. Mentoring and Ellie's "Standing Offers"

Since December 2012, Ellie has been a mentor to "Jasmine" (a pseudonym), who was seven years old when she and Ellie were paired through the Twin Cities Big Brothers/Sisters

program. Jasmine is now fourteen years old and even though their formal participation in the Big Sisters program ended in 2018, Ellie has continued to mentor to Jasmine on a regular basis.

Anyone who has attended Ellie's talks or trainings knows that she regularly makes a "Standing Offer" at the outset of her presentation, with the "offer" being that she will, "Meet with any human in a public place or talk on the phone for up to an hour—and I don't watch my watch—to talk about anything related to surviving the Human Condition." She reiterates that it's a "real offer" and that it is "transferable" to someone who might need the offer.



The genesis for Ellie's Standing Offer goes back to the "Special Ks" (Dr. King and Robert F. Kennedy), whom Ellie listened to as she was growing up. (Ellie was eleven years old when both were assassinated.) They taught Ellie (and millions of others) that we have an obligation to be present for those who lack voices of their own; the Standing Offer is one of the ways Ellie tries to carry forward this mandate.

In 2018-19, a number of people (approximately 30-40 persons) took Ellie up on her Standing Offer. This included a probation officer in Idaho, asking that Ellie reach out to a transgender client he was supervising. (Ellie wrote about this interaction in *Lavender Magazine*; see <https://www.lavendermagazine.com/featured-home-page/skirting-the-issues-mattering/>)

Despite many demands on her time, Ellie will continue to put forth her Standing Offer and will continue to meet with offerees. This is incredibly important work on a granular level that cannot be duplicated any other way.

F. Other Impacts

In early 2018, Ellie was asked to be on the executive committee of the Twin Cities Diversity & Inclusion Roundtable (TCDIR), an association of Twin Cities diversity and inclusion professionals. TCDIR provides programming and fellowship for D&I professionals—which is incredibly important given that often, these folks are isolated and lack support. As part of her leadership role, Ellie and another TCDIR executive committee member, Tonya Hampton, conducted an innovative training on white fragility in September 2019.

On two occasions, in late 2018 and early 2019, Ellie conducted public Gray Area Thinking® trainings at the Open Book literary center in downtown Minneapolis. The purpose of these events was to offer the training to the general public given that Ellie usually presents to "closed loops"—organizations that bring Ellie in just for their team members or membership. Both events were well attended and give reason to offer future such trainings.

Ellie is also a founding member of Community Mediation Minnesota (CMM), a state-focused nonprofit aimed at making mediation accessible to all Minnesotans. She continues to serve on the board of CMM.

Recognition

One of Ellie's blind spots is that she disfavors public recognition—instead, she would much rather her work be highlighted and leave it at that. However, 2019 brought three awards: in June, the *Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal* conferred its 2019 Business of Pride Career Achievement Award to Ellie and her company, Human Inspiration Works, LLC. Later in the year, *Minnesota Lawyer* named Ellie a Diversity & Inclusion Honoree. Finally, in November 2019, OutFront Minnesota, the state's largest LGBTQ advocacy organization, conferred Ellie its 2019 Legacy Award.

Ellie is grateful for this recognition; it's humbling to know that others appreciate Ellie's role as a hopeless idealist seeking to make the world a better place.

Thank You and Gratitude (In the First Person)

My work wouldn't be possible without the support of many, many people. Specifically, I thank the Human Ripple Works, Inc. Board of Directors for grounding me and providing critical advice.

I also thank those who attend my presentations and then share about me and my work with others. This is very much a word-of-mouth endeavor (movement?) and it wouldn't be possible for me to have nearly as much impact without the goodwill of others who "talk me up."

Also, I am grateful for the growing list of people who have become super champions of my work—Michelle, Meg, Shelly, Patrice, Erik, Dawn, Renee, Joseph, Sally, and so many others—their relentless championing has allowed my message to reach thousands who otherwise would never hear it.

There are many others who continue to reach out in a variety of ways: please know that it means so very much to me! There are times that this work becomes incredibly taxing and lonely, and hearing from you makes all the difference in the world!

Finally, please remember to act with compassion and kindness toward others and yourself! Include in your life people who are "Other." It's truly the only way forward.

Respectfully submitted,

ellie

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<https://humanrippleworks.org/how-to-donate/>

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