



# Nonprofit Webinars

## What's a Mission Statement Worth?

October 13, 2010

Sam Frank  
Synthesis Partnership

use Twitter hashtag

**#npweb**

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Nonprofit Organization Banner

On Our Mark! Get Set! Fundraise! (by Melinda)

Page Creator: Melinda Swenson  
Event: World Run Day 2008  
Event Starts: Nov 09, 2008  
Training buddies: Mark, Maren, and Kathy

Fundraising target: \$3,000  
So far we have raised: \$460.00

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Fundraising progress: 25% 50% 75% 100%

Share this page

I want to raise money too

Our personal message:

Hi friends and family! Thanks for visiting my fundraising page.

I'm raising money for the Parkinson's Institute because over the past 5+ years I've watched my best friend's dad fight a neurological disorder that is increasingly inhibiting his movement, communication, balance, and overall independence. Mark's efforts to rise above these new limitations has been downright inspirational. It seems that for every ability his condition has impeded - the ability to work, drive, run, sing etc - he has sought a new ability - yoga, pilates, volunteer work, travel, photography, etc. Mark has always been a model of strength, kindness, and compassion for me and it is very difficult to watch the pain and frustration surrounding his disease.

Initially Mark was diagnosed with Parkinson's (in '02) but since then doctors have removed that label and concluded that he has a related disease about which they know very little.

About our nonprofit:  
**Parkinson's Institute**  
The Parkinson's Institute was started in 1982 when a group of young Bay Area drug addicts appeared in emergency rooms unable to move or speak. Dr. Langston was able to discover that the cause of their...

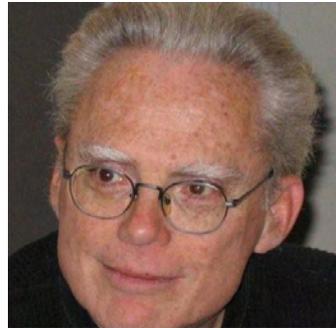
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Online Sponsors to date:

Display Name	Date	Comment
Carrie and Sean Gross	10/17/2008	
Christy & EK MacColl	10/17/2008	For the Elliott family--you are a model of closeness and love:)
Kate Swenson	10/16/2008	
The Lingards	10/16/2008	What a wonderful cause - thanks for doing this Melinda!
Candace (Melinda's mom)	10/16/2008	For the Elliotts, my role model family, and Melinda, I'll be in Boston cheering you on!
Melinda	10/16/2008	

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# Today's Speaker



**Sam Frank**  
Synthesis Partnership

Hosting: Chris Dumas, FirstGiving



# **What's a Mission Statement Worth?**

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Sam Frank  
Synthesis Partnership

# Topics

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- Why a mission statement?
- Related tools: vision, values, taglines, pitches,...
- What's in a good mission statement; what's not.
- How a mission statement focuses strategy.
- *What's Your Mission?* Competition finalists

# Why?

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# Why?

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## External:

Get and hold attention (branding / differentiation / positioning)

Underpin the case for giving

## Internal:

Inspire stakeholders

Provide clarity and focus

Fortify strategic thinking

Structure planning (strategic, program, business, technology...)

Point to metrics

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# Mission Statement

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Articulates the essence of why you exist

Can encompass what you are, but should avoid what you do and how

Important qualities:

Specific

Sufficiently broad

Appropriately focused

Concise

Simply stated

Jargon-free

Differentiating

Memorable

Compelling

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# Mission Statement

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Solve complex network computing problems for governments, enterprises, and service providers.



We save people money so they can live better.



To create the most enjoyable shopping experience possible for our guests.



We provide expert care and innovative solutions in pharmacy and health.



Our mission: to inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.



Our mission is to operate the best specialty retail business in America, **regardless of the product we sell**. Because the product we sell is books, our aspirations must be consistent with the promise and the ideals of the volumes which line our shelves. **To say that our mission exists independent of the product we sell is to demean the importance and the distinction of being booksellers.**

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# Mission Statement

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To connect people through lending for the sake of alleviating poverty.



To inspire all girls to be strong, smart and bold



Creating ownership and economic opportunity for minorities, women, rural residents and low-wealth families.



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# Mission Statement

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## **Mission** (national)

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Adopted verbatim by Austin, Denver, St. Louis, Phoenix...

Adapted elsewhere to different community preferences:

The YMCA of Greater New York is a community service organization which promotes positive values through programs that build spirit, mind and body, welcoming all people, with a focus on youth.

The YMCA of San Francisco builds strong kids, strong families and strong communities by enriching the lives of all people in spirit, mind and body.

Building a community where all people, especially the young, are encouraged to develop their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body. (Seattle)



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# Mission Statement

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## **Mission** (national)

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

The West Suburban YMCA, located in Newton, Massachusetts, is a nonprofit community service organization made possible because of charitable donations, member support, and dedicated volunteers and staff. The YMCA is devoted to the education, physical health, mental well-being and moral development of children, families, and communities and is committed to this simple policy: Nobody will be turned away from our programs and facilities due to an inability to pay. The Y strives to incorporate all its programs with the core values of honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility.



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# Context

## Mission Statement

- Articulation of the essence of why you exist
- Can encompass what you are, but should avoid what you do and how.

## Vision Statement

- Aspirational view of the future
- Capture either
  - the organizational ideal or
  - a world in which the organization is no longer needed

## Tagline

- Grabs attention

## Statement of Values or Principles

- Provides a more robust picture

## Elevator Pitch

- Concrete, vivid, memorable, compelling overview

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# Vision / Mission

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## **Our Vision**

One day all artisans in the developing countries will earn a fair wage, be treated with dignity and respect and be able to live a life of quality.

## **Our Mission**

Ten Thousand Villages provides vital, fair income to Third World people by marketing their handicrafts and telling their stories in North America. We work with artisans who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed. The income artisans earn helps pay for food, education, health care and housing. Ten Thousand Villages is a nonprofit program of Mennonite Central Committee.



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# Vision / Mission / Values

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**Save the Children®**

**Our Vision** is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

**Our Mission** is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

## **Our Values**

**Accountability:** We take personal responsibility for using our resources efficiently, achieving measurable results and being accountable to supporters, partners, and most of all, children.

**Ambition:** We demand the best of ourselves and our colleagues, set high goals and firmly commit to improving the quality of everything we do for children.

**Collaboration:** We respect and value each other, thrive on our diversity and work with partners to leverage our global strength in making a difference for children.

**Creativity:** We are open to new ideas, embrace change and take disciplined risks to develop sustainable solutions for and with children.

**Integrity:** We aspire to live to the highest standards of personal honesty and behavior; we never compromise our reputation and always act in the best interests of children.



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# Vision / Mission / Values



INDEPENDENT SECTOR



## IS VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

### VISION

A just and inclusive society and a healthy democracy of active citizens, effective institutions, and vibrant communities.

### MISSION

To advance the common good by leading, strengthening, and mobilizing the nonprofit and philanthropic community.

### VALUES

#### Independence

- The freedom to be creative and uplift the human spirit
- The right to advocacy and freedom of speech
- A commitment to promoting and protecting the independence of the sector
- An obligation to serve as a leading voice for the common good

#### Interdependence

- Productive cooperation between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors
- Effective collaboration between funders and grant recipients

#### Inclusiveness and Diversity

- Embracing a variety of perspectives and people
- Respect for the views of others

#### Social Justice

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# Mission / Values / Plan

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FOR THE HONOR OF TRUTH  
Moses Brown School

## **Mission**

Moses Brown, a Friends School, exists to inspire the inner promise of each student and instill the utmost care for learning, people, and place.

As it enters its third century, Moses Brown School exists to inspire students to reach their fullest intellectual and spiritual potential. We engage students in a rich academic curriculum, a broad offering of arts and athletics, and a daily life strongly rooted in the Quaker values of cooperation and community service. We affirm the Quaker belief that there is a divine presence in each person which influences our decision making, leads us to the truths we seek, and commands our highest respect. We consider the virtues of simplicity, integrity, group wisdom, and respect for differences paramount to helping students of all faiths and backgrounds discover their mission in the world.



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# Mission / Values / Plan

---



FOR THE HONOR OF TRUTH  
Moses Brown School

## Mission

Moses Brown, a Friends School, exists to inspire the inner promise of each student and instill the utmost care for learning, people, and place.

## Values

Founded in 1784, Moses Brown is an independent, college preparatory school, enrolling 765 boys and girls, nursery through grade 12. The school's founder — an innovative thinker, philanthropist, and entrepreneur named Moses Brown — envisioned a progressive school that defined excellence. Today, his school continues to help children reach their full potential, academically, spiritually, and athletically. The MB community is committed to the following:

We engage all constituents in the collaborative process of nurturing students' growth and supporting their aspirations. We foster self-discovery, learning for its own sake, resourcefulness, and compassion.

**Friends Education:** Promoting academic excellence, scholarship, and service to others within the framework of a vigorous curriculum, a broad offering of arts and athletics, and a life strongly rooted in the Quaker practices of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship.

**Leadership and Character:** Fostering personal achievement and fulfillment, guiding all members of the school community to become informed, compassionate, and engaged global citizens, capable of leading in an ever-changing world.

**Community:** Building a diverse community that respects all voices, perspectives, and cultures. Honoring the intrinsic value of each person influences our decision making, connects us in essential ways, and merits our full attention.

**Reflection and Discovery:** Creating an atmosphere that promotes reflection and joy in learning — one that inspires students to accept challenges, take pride in their accomplishments, and discover their missions in the world.

**Sustainability:** Instilling a respect for the right sharing of the earth's resources by demonstrating regard for the environment, both locally and globally.

**Wellness:** Developing our students' personal, social, and physical well-being through individual and collaborative experiences that promote a healthy community and school culture.



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# Mission / Values / Plan



FOR THE HONOR OF TRUTH  
Moses Brown School

## Mission

Moses Brown, a Friends School, exists to inspire the inner promise of each student and instill the utmost care for learning, people, and place.

*Inspiring Inner Promise*  
The Moses Brown School Strategic Plan:  
Goals and Objectives

Plan produced by the  
Approved by the

Letter from the Head of School and Chair  
Letter from the Chair of the Long-Range  
Long-Range Strategic Planning Task Force  
Revisiting MB's Mission Statement.....  
Mission, Philosophy, and Core Pr  
A Promise for  
Moses Brown's Educational Prog  
Relationships.....  
Enrollment.....  
Facilities.....

Chair: Laurie Center,  
academic dean

"I had always known of  
Moses Brown's reputa-  
tion and had no hesita-  
tion in enrolling my son."

A PROMISE FOR ENROLLMENT

"One of the aspects of  
Moses Brown that makes  
our school so special is  
the beautiful campus and  
the facilities we all enjoy  
every day. Preserving

A PROMISE FOR FACILITIES

"The Moses Brown  
community's 'expected  
commitment to be of  
standard.'"

A PROMISE FOR FINANCE

"Moses Brown does a  
wonderful job of  
encouraging students to  
take themselves seriously  
as thinkers, doers,  
individuals."  
— MB alumnus

A PROMISE FOR MOSES BROWN SCHOOL'S  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Chair: Laurie Center,  
academic dean

"I think we present a  
strong, balanced educa-  
tional offering for our  
students and try to help  
them find their niche or  
passion, in the classroom,  
on the playing fields, and  
in the performing and  
visual arts. I appreciate  
the Quaker thread that  
holds each of us to the  
other."  
— MB faculty member

A PROMISE FOR RELATIONSHIPS

Chair: Jared Schott, head of  
middle school

"To further develop a  
culture of philanthropy at  
Moses Brown School, the  
tradition of giving should  
be established before  
graduation. MB has given  
me so much — I feel it  
is essential that all of us  
give back."  
— Ted Fisher, alumnus,  
parent, and board member

A PROMISE FOR DEVELOPMENT

"I think we present a  
strong, balanced educa-  
tional offering for our  
students and try to help  
them find their niche or  
passion, in the classroom,  
on the playing fields, and  
in the performing and  
visual arts. I appreciate  
the Quaker thread that  
holds each of us to the  
other."  
— MB faculty member

RELATIONSHIPS  
SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Jared Schott, head of  
middle school

Claude Anderson  
Lucy Frost Lewis  
Sandi Seltzer  
Sheri Sweitzer

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"The culture of the school truly sets the stage for every person's  
experience. The strategic choices we make about people, space,  
philosophy, and pedagogy are essential to a thriving community."

OUR OBJECTIVES

- Maintain a positive, inclusive, and responsive school ethos.
- Ensure a successful match between our program and our students.

If the program fully inspires each student, all constituents reap the benefits. We must ensure that students are appropriately challenged and supported, and that they have access to the right constellation of experiences.

DEVELOPMENT  
SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Ted Fischer

Russ Carpenter  
Stephanie Ojidan Preston

Administrative advisor:  
Lucy Frost Lewis,  
director of development &  
alumni/ae relations

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# Strategic Planning

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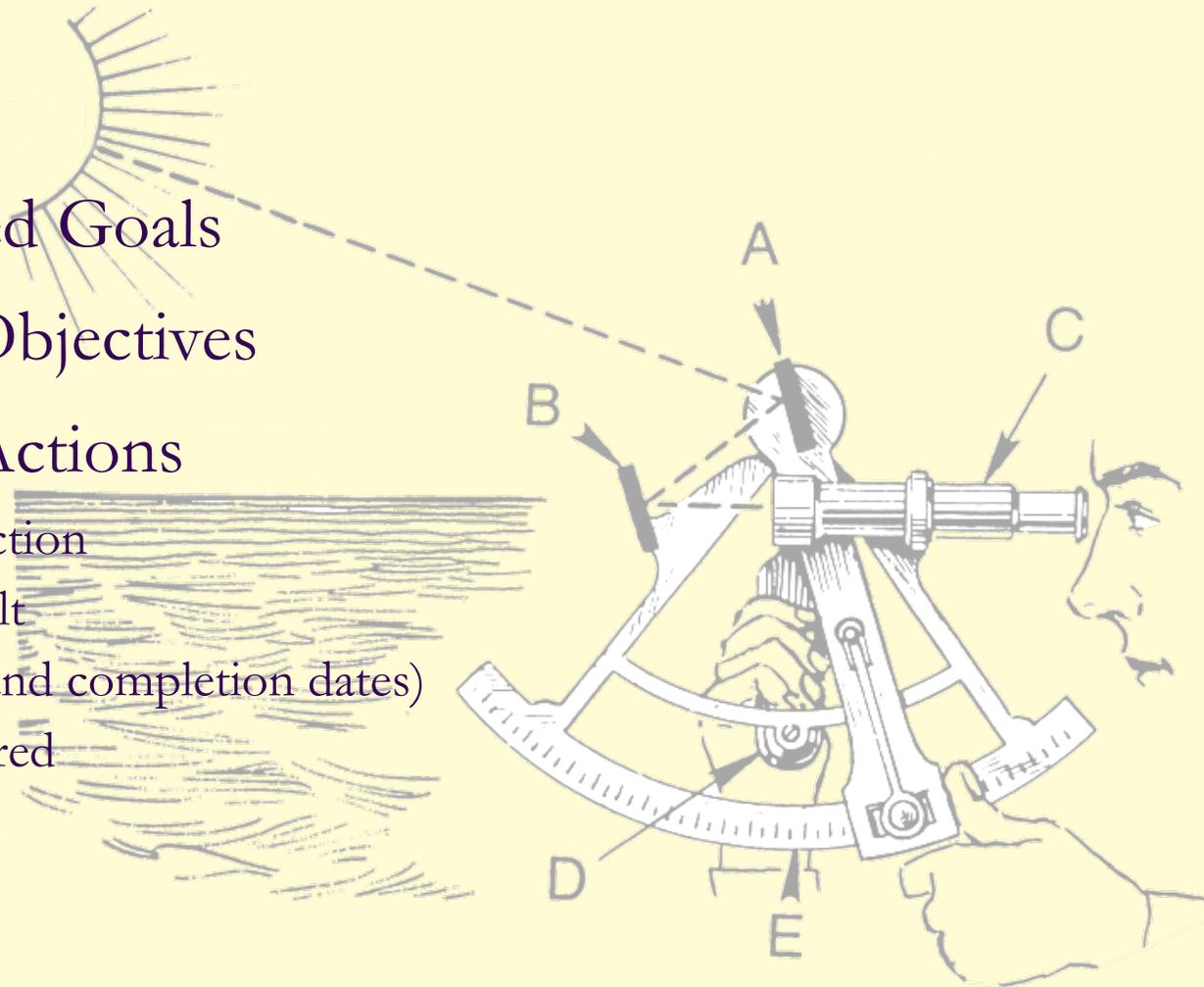
Mission

Mission-Based Goals

Supporting Objectives

Measurable Actions

- Clear, specific action
- Measurable result
- Timeline (start and completion dates)
- Resources required
- Responsibility



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# Strategic Planning

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## Mission & Strategy

**Mission** To transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life.

### Mission elements

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buildings and communities

transform

- designed
- built
- operated

enabling an environment

- environmentally & socially responsible
- healthy
- prosperous

improves quality of life

### Committees/Functions

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Programs

- Advocacy
- Conference
- Outreach
- Professional Education

Infrastructure

- Communications / Marketing
- Finance
- Fundraising
- Membership
- Governance
- Operations

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# Strategic Planning

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## Mission-Based Goals

i[2]y

### Mission

**End isolation & improve quality of life for young adults affected by cancer.**

---

### Mission-Based Goals

#### Program: Access

Offer access to resources for young adults with cancer, their families, and their care providers

#### Program: Connections

Create opportunities for young adults with cancer to make meaningful connections to each other.

#### Program: Quality of Life

Have an impact on the quality of life of young adults with cancer

#### Fundraising

Develop a sustainable funding stream from foundations, individuals and corporate sponsors

#### Marketing

Make i[2]y a visible resource to all diagnosed young adults, survivors, their families and care providers

#### Governance

Shape the board and its activities to support sustainably the mission of i[2]y

#### Finance / Operations

Put i[2]y on a sound, sustainable footing.

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# Strategic Planning

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## Goals & Objectives

i[2]y

### Mission

**End isolation & improve quality of life for young adults affected by cancer.**

---

### Mission-Based Goal: Access

**Offer access to resources for young adults with cancer, their families, and their care providers**

### Supporting Objective 1:

Upgrade the website to the state of the art, with full Web 2.0 capabilities.

### Supporting Objective 2:

Develop a robust presence in cancer treatment centers.

### Supporting Objective 3:

Develop new/improved promotion strategies.

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# What's Your Mission? Competition

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## Judges

Sam Frank, Synthesis Partnership

Debra Askanase, Community Organizer 2.0

*A mission statement should evoke the emotion and the power of both the problem and the ideal outcome.*

Tina Cincotti, Funding Change

*You want a mission statement that sticks – that's simple, specific, emotionally compelling, and jargon-free.*

Michele Levy, brand strategist

*I went for: (1) concise, (2) compelling, (3) gives me a handle for what they do, (4) well written*

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# What's Your Mission? Competition

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## Semi-finalists

### The Home for Little Wanderers

... ensure the healthy behavioral, emotional, social and educational development and physical well-being of children and families living in at-risk circumstances.

### FriendshipWorks

...reduce social isolation, enhance the quality of life, and preserve the dignity of elders and adults with disabilities in the greater Boston area.

### Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago

Inspire and motivate our children to achieve their full potential in the fields of science, technology, medicine and engineering.

### MicroLoan Foundation USA

We are committed to helping the poorest of the poor to help themselves in order to change their lives for the better.

### Girls' LEAP Self-Defense

Empowering girls and young women to value and champion their own safety and well-being.

### Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston

...builds community through excellence in music.

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# Resources

## Critical Issues

*#7: On a Mission*

<http://bit.ly/SyPci07>

## Blog

(entries on mission)

<http://bit.ly/blogSyP>

- *Two stories about mission statements*
- *Identity, brand and image*

## Case studies

[www.synthesispartnership.com](http://www.synthesispartnership.com)

## Complimentary consultation

(by e-mail or telephone appointment)

[sbf@synthesispartnership.com](mailto:sbf@synthesispartnership.com)





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