

## EVOLUTION OF INVESTING

by **John Treadgold** September 27, 2021

Lisa & Charly Kleissner – Impact, Empathy and Evolution

He sees impact investing not as an intellectual exercise, but as an expression of who he really is.

Lisa and Charly Kleissner were both working in Silicon Valley in 1999, at the peak of the dot-com boom. Charly was at NeXT Computer, along with Steve Jobs, while Lisa was an early employee at Apple. They had shares in companies that went public, and soon enough they found themselves with lots of money, but, they didn't take the typical tech-millionaire route.

Instead, they pioneered a new path, towards impact.

Their first tentative steps weren't easy. They encountered financial advisors who were confused about their ambitions to do good with their money, rather than just make more of it.

At the time, there were none of the options that impact investors have available today. But eventually, the financial services sector did its thing, and realising there was a business in positive impact, funds emerged.

In 2004 Lisa and Charly established the KL Felicitas Foundation, seeded with a \$10 million donation. But again, they wanted to do things differently, they wanted the foundation to do more than simply give grants. So, they steered the foundation's investible funds towards impact investments.

At the time this was an emerging trend, but the Kleissners were determined to grow both their impact portfolio, but also the broader community, so they went all in. They invested 100% of the foundation's corpus towards impact investments.

This was no small feat, and contributed greatly to paving the way for other investors to follow. You can read in more details about their journey in a [report](#) from New Philanthropy Capital.

They were now impact investors, and in order to help others do the same, they founded [Toniic](#). Toniic is a community where impact investors come together to learn, to teach and to share the lessons from their own journeys. The organisation's name is an inside-joke that links the organisation to the [GIIN](#), another leading industry organisation.

The Kleissners have demonstrated that money can have a positive impact, that investments can offer social and environmental returns, and that our capitalist system can promote empathy and compassion.

Humans aren't outside the eco-system, he says, they are an integral part of it. Evolving and adapting, with the potential to contribute in either a positive or negative way.

<https://onimpact.com.au/lisa-and-charly-kleissner-impact-empathy-and-evolution/>