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**A**s the author of women's empowerment books, Angella Nazarian often found herself inspired by her peers at women's conferences, only to miss that strong female camaraderie in the months between. "What we were lacking in Los Angeles was a community that would talk about their experiences," says Nazarian. "We needed regular, periodic ways of meeting. We amplify our voice when we're all together."

In 2014, she co-founded Visionary Women ([visionarywomen.com](http://visionarywomen.com)), a nonprofit organization that welcomes women at the top of their field, from political activist Gloria Steinem to financial expert Lynne Twist, to speak to its members. "Visionary Women is now a movement," Nazarian says. "It was created by a group of women who are interested in having substantial conversations and, at the same time, want to support women's initiatives. It's a new way of philanthropy."

With sponsors helping the nonprofit finance its events, 100% of the membership fee goes to over 50 different organizations that serve women and girls: In the past 3 ½ years, Visionary Women has raised \$1.5 million for women's initiatives including Planned Parenthood, The Trevor Project and Time's Up.

But to Nazarian, who recently released her latest book, *Creative Couples* (\$50, Assouline), about partners working together to elevate each other, female empowerment is not a single-gender issue. "We're in the third wave of feminism, and what it means—especially for Visionary Women—is: How can we be a part of a conversation and have our male allies with us?" she says. "How do we bring everyone along?"

The mother of two adult sons is optimistic that we're on our way to gender equality in the Western world, but that doesn't mean the work should stop. "It's twofold," Nazarian explains. "There's something really wonderful about a sisterhood. Whether there's a need or not, I enjoy the company of other women. And second, we need to support the courageous and motivated young girls in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. There's so much that still needs to be done."

# the TIME IS NOW

Visionary Women nonprofit founder, author and speaker Angella Nazarian talks philanthropy through female empowerment.

By Carita Rizzo  
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