



Extraordinary You Core Ability: Giving Consciousness

A Giving Consciousness is the topic of our discussion at our Global Center for Spiritual Awakening's Spiritual Café from 10:30 to 12 noon on Nov. 19, 2017 at our Durham headquarters (1405 Autumn Ridge Drive – our house).



Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. (Leo Buscaglia)

*From what we get, we can make a living;
what we give, however, makes a life. (Arthur Ashe)*

We believe when you meet with us on Sunday and discuss the Core Ability of a Giving Consciousness, you'll gain a whole new appreciation for how incredibly extraordinary you really are and realize that a generous spirit is in your DNA.

An open palm instead of a closed fist is the conceptual foundation for this Core Ability. We're going to toss two questions at you as attention getters:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest, where would you place yourself in terms of how rich you are?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest, where would you place yourself in terms of how much you give?



We hope these opening questions gave you a moment of pause, because they're central to the essence of a giving consciousness.

A giving consciousness is critical for your connecting with the Extraordinary You. Why? Because a giving consciousness implies that you have a consciousness of abundance instead of a consciousness of lack.

Self-Reflection Question: As you look at the rankings you gave yourself, consider this: were you thinking only in terms of money? If not, what other things were included in your assessment?

Your personal and professional success, along with your spiritual growth and happiness, are never more than a thought or act of generosity away! Your success, as a person who champions generosity, is closer than the objects which appear in your rearview mirror. It's as close as your next breath. It's as close as your next thought, intention, or choice. It's as close as your willingness to give generously and often to others.



What Does Scientific Research Say About a Giving Mindset?

We're going to mention one of a number of scientific findings that reinforces the value of a giving consciousness. Neuro-biologically speaking, a giving consciousness is nestled within the same frontal regions of the brain which are activated by awe, wonder, transcendence, and joy. An internal coherence results, which fortifies your immune system, strengthens the neural pathways in the frontal lobe, and arrests the feelings of fear and uncertainty which are the products of the amygdala.

Generosity for many is driven by a sincere desire to benefit others. If you're generous, you receive more respect, you have more influence, and people cooperate with you more. For example, many research studies on generosity have found that people who give to charity are motivated more by generosity than from the prospect of receiving personal or financial credit for their giving.

Generosity, it seems, brings more happiness than selfish indulgence. Giving just a few dollars or a few minutes of precious time to someone else helps you feel better about yourself, leads to a happier and more fulfilled you, and contributes to a healthier you because it strengthens your immune system.

It really is better to give *and* receive with the focus on giving. This formula is no longer just a mother's admonition, but a perennial guide to happiness. Giving to others leads to more extended effects of happiness—and longevity—than simply settling for receiving from others.

In another study, organizational psychologists identified three types of attitudes encountered in the workplace: Givers, Takers, and Matchers.

- *Givers* epitomize generosity, expressing the mindset of giving by such acts as being open with information, making time to assist others in their projects, and giving credit to others for ideas and work-related accomplishments.
- *Takers*, on the other hand, are basically looking out for themselves, asking for help but rarely offering it, and seem to have a sense of entitlement.
- *Matchers* live in a reciprocal mindset of trading favors, recognition, and assistance in a “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours” mindset.

According to his research, *Givers* experienced more meaning in their work, were more resilient, and handled stressful events more effectively than *Takers* with *Matchers* scoring a little higher.



By strengthening our giving consciousness, we're in a position to create an atmosphere of generosity, which allows us to serve others better, because this 'sharing spirit' ignites a philanthropic spirit in us and in others. An added benefit comes to us in the form of increased happiness, satisfaction, and inner peace. We're not making this up! There's research to confirm it.

We're going to toss one more snapshot of sociological research at you. Joint research at the University of California, San Diego and Harvard University posted in an online edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, provides laboratory evidence that cooperative behavior spreads between people.

According to their research, those who benefit from kindness tend to find it contagious—and “pay it forward” by helping others. James Fowler, an associate professor of political science at UC San Diego, and Nicholas Christakis, a Harvard sociology professor, showed that when one person gave money in a “public-goods game” to help others, the recipients were more likely to give money away in the future. The domino effect continued as more people were swept up in the tide of kindness and cooperation, according to the researchers.

Why Should We Strengthen Our Giving Consciousness?

A giving consciousness is one of the deepest connections to our Extraordinary Self, our Divine Nature. It acknowledges our oneness with and appreciation for our diving genealogy with others. It’s the realization that there’s more to us than the circumstances we face, and there’s more than enough of everything we need to succeed in life. It’s the recognition that we have a capacity to give that outshines any thoughts of lack. And it’s our acknowledgment that we and others are the One Reality expressing as all of us in human form.

The person who doesn’t fit in with our notions of who’s worthy of our giving ...

- the bag lady at the corner,
- the strange old man who rides through town on a three-wheeled bike all strung up with flags
- the young unemployed man in torn and soiled clothing who sits outside a fast food restaurant hoping someone will gift him enough money for a meal ...

...is just the person who, by not fitting into society’s acceptable patterns, reminds us to expand not only our views inclusivity, but also our capacity to give. So stretch your heart and expand your love so it touches not only those to whom you can give easily to, but also to those who need it so much.

We agree with those with unwavering giving mindsets—everyone is capable of giving. It becomes very clear that doing nothing for others turns out to be the undoing of the one who chooses selfishness over philanthropy, judgmentalness over compassion, an open palm over a clenched fist.

We can tell you, the spirit of giving is contagious because it’s part of our essential makeup. It’s rewarding. It’s joyful. It’s immensely satisfying. And the healing power, the uniting power of selfless giving is priceless!



A giving consciousness seems to be an Rx for the whole body. And it's also the royal road, the noble path to connecting with what neuroscientists call your Deeper Self, and what we refer to as the Extraordinary You.

Did you know that the modern English word generosity derives from the Latin word generōsus, which means of noble birth? The same root gives us the words genesis, gentry, gentile, genealogy, and genius, among others. The fascinating thing about that is that the giving consciousness Core Essence helps us connect with the 'noble' part of us that we call our Extraordinary Self, our authentically Divine Nature.

Perhaps the conversation between Scrooge and Marley in *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol* is a fitting close to our treatment of a giving consciousness:

“But you were always a good man of business, Jacob,”
faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

“Business!” cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again.
“(Humankind) was my business; charity, mercy,
forbearance, and benevolence were all my business. The
deals of my trade were but a drop of water in the
comprehensive ocean of my business!”



We hope you'll join us for a highly informative discussion this Sunday, Nov. 19 at GCSA Headquarters. Bring a snack if you want—we'll supply the coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and water—and plenty of 'soul food.'