



BEING RELATIONAL

**The Seven Ways
to Quality Interaction
& Lasting Change**

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Being Generous

What is your experience when someone is generous with you? Does it make you feel good? Does it elevate your sense of dignity, self-worth? Does it inspire you? Do you feel grateful? The answer to each of these questions about your experience with generosity is probably *yes*. However, if you really *look hard* at them, the answer is maybe, maybe not. Your experience depends on many factors related to you and to the other person—your thoughts, feelings, and actions; their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Being generous involves someone giving and someone receiving, but the experience of the recipient might not be as positive as the giver might assume. Similarly, for the giver, the experience might have a negative side. Or it could be very positive on both sides of the equation. It depends, right? Our theory is that being generous is your participation in making the world a better place. But we are not going to assume that is the case. In being grounded, we want

to examine that assumption closely. Why be generous? First let's look at that and then we will look at what it means to be generous in a relational way.

Why Being Generous Might Look Too Risky

Being generous is a leap of faith. There is no denying that you are taking chances when you give away anything of value to another, even if it is only your time.

Being generous is a leap of faith. Like us, you might have a moral or religious tradition that tells you that giving is good, but in practice it is full of risks for you and for others

you care about. There is no denying that you are taking chances when you give away anything of value to another, even if it is only your time. It might be easy for an independently wealthy recluse who lives alone in a humble shack to talk about being generous, but it is very different for a person who has family and responsibilities. When you have responsibility to others in your family, when you are a parent, you have to think first about your family. Will they have enough? Will they be safe? Will they be healthy and cared for? Will the children be educated and prepared for life? How can I be giving anything away when I can't be sure that I will have enough to care for my family?

Your responsibility within your family unit is a legitimate constraint on your generosity, isn't it? You can't do something that would put your family at risk. Even if you don't have family responsibilities, the future is uncertain and you can't be sure how much you will need in order to make sure that you never go hungry.

If you are a winner, you may not want to take any risk that you might suffer a setback somewhere down the road that would force a change in your comfortable lifestyle. So, yes, you want to be good, but you feel kind of stuck. You have to continue to accumulate as much as you can in wealth and devote the vast majority of your waking moments to earning the money you need to maintain your lifestyle. You do your duty in paying taxes and in giving what you comfortably can to charity out of your excess. That is the safe and prudent course financially.

There are other risks to consider. For instance, the risk that your generosity would be wasted or, even worse, that you will set yourself up to be taken advantage of or ridiculed for being foolish. The money you give might be used for things that are not good, instead of necessities and things that really make a difference in a good person's life. You may have no control over how your gift is actually used by the person who receives it. And, if you give support to others, then they might come to expect it. They might not be grateful at all for your generosity. They may even come to depend on it and feel entitled to it. You could actually be contributing to their dependence, which isn't good for you or them. You might be giving to someone who doesn't even deserve it. They could be mean and violent and greedy and just using you or the system to get stuff for free.

Then there's the risk of the precedent you set with your generosity. If you are an employer for example, and you give one employee a raise out of generosity, then you can expect others to be coming and asking for the same treatment. If you give a customer a break on their bill or a tenant a break on their rent, you can expect others to come and ask for the same deal. Next thing you know, your

generosity has snowballed into something much bigger. It's costing you a ton of money and people are thinking that you are a push-over, a soft touch, and maybe even a bad business person. If you are working for a profit-driven boss or private investors who want you to perform well for the company and you give a customer a break on price or pay more than you have to for a service, then you've set yourself up to be criticized and possibly fired. Likewise, if you spend too much time with charitable work, you are also putting yourself at risk with the boss. Being generous is risky. Is it worth it?

Why Being Generous is Good for You and Others

Now consider the other side of the equation in weighing your decision. First is the value of generosity simply in the context of your dealings with others and the relative ease of transactional

When you are generous, you easily break negotiation deadlocks.

interactions. When you are generous, you easily break negotiation deadlocks. Since you aren't trying to get the last dollar on the table and maximize your

gain, resolutions are quicker and your dealings more pleasant and less stressful. You part with a smile and a handshake. There was no winner and loser. You were generous, you left money on the table, and the other person was happy not to get squeezed, which made you both feel good.

Being generous. It physically and emotionally makes you feel good.

That brings us to another great reason for being generous. It physically and emotionally makes you feel good. You get an emotional rush out of it. Some

people who feel this rush more strongly actually come to crave it and seek it often. Studies in neuroscience show that even compulsory giving, like paying taxes, activates portions of the brain that release dopamine, providing pleasure and warm feelings as if you yourself received a reward.¹² Especially if your generosity meets with approval from the other person and they offer you a smile or some other gesture showing their good feelings toward you. You are also more likely to live longer and more contentedly.¹³ What's more, if the approval of others is important to you, it probably makes you look good in the eyes of others who are not even the recipients—neighbors, peers, and colleagues. You may get some recognition from them for being a generous person.

You also internally give yourself recognition. Your sense of self and your value in the world is given a boost. Generosity, particularly in the form of volunteering time to help others, is regularly used to help people suffering from depression to break out of their state of self-absorption and negativity in how they view themselves.

There are other benefits for you. You build goodwill with others to whom you give. They are happy to receive a gift and may repay your kindness someday. What goes around, comes around. If you pay a kindness forward, it may be paid back to you. When you are generous with clients and customers, they are likely to return. You create positive karma that you yourself are the beneficiary of. Generosity is contagious and when you are generous, others feel empowered to be generous too, and you start a ripple of generosity that can quickly become a wave.

12 See Svoboda, Elizabeth, "Hard-Wired for Giving", WSJ Online(August 31, 2013).

13 See Firestone, Lisa, "Generosity, What's In It for You?, Compassion Matters," PsychologyToday.com (November 24, 2010)

If you are generous to people who work for you, then you have happier, more satisfied workers who might be more productive, more positive in their dealings with other workers, and less apt to quit. You reduce costly turnover in employees. You also have made a down payment on peace and harmony in your community or workplace. When you are generous, you reduce the likelihood that others will feel oppressed and exploited, and they are less likely to create unrest. This makes your community safer and happier and a more pleasant place to live and work.

Being in a place that is happier and safer is good, isn't it? Your community is an extension of you, just like your family. You are

You are generous because you feel a sense of responsibility to others in your community just like you feel responsibility to care for your family.

generous because you feel a sense of responsibility to others in your community just like you feel responsibility to care for your family. You want to be proud of your community and how it treats people who live in

it. When your generosity helps lift up the lives of those around you, then you know that you have contributed to reducing misery and poverty and shame, and to fostering well-being, dignity, beauty, and connection. You have been a part of respecting the dignity of all families, not just your own, and their desire to live and work in peace and in conditions that are healthy, safe, and even aesthetically uplifting.

So, if you look at it from a purely personal and even self-centered perspective, it's totally worth it to be generous, isn't it?

Being Generous in the First Instance

So, if you have decided that being generous is a way of living that you want to adopt, we want to help you explore how your generosity can have the greatest positive impact. We all know that generosity involves giving, but there are different ways to give aren't there?

To start, there is **altruistic giving**, which involves giving with no expectation of anything in return. Our perspective is that really, given what we know about the ability of giving to create a positive ripple effect, we rarely give with no expectation of anything in return. As we discussed above, we fully expect our giving to create positive outcomes that indirectly will benefit us, albeit not in a transactional sense. We know there is energy in the act of giving, and there is an energetic reciprocity. The issue is not the *expectation* of anything in return, it is more the *asking* for something in return. Altruistic generosity means you are not asking for anything in return.

Altruistic generosity means you are not asking for anything in return.

Communities are experimenting with this kind of giving and doing it in ways that are counter-cultural for those of us who live in competitive societies. For instance, there is the Seva Café in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, a restaurant where there are no prices on the menu only this footnote at the bottom of the check: "Your meal was a gift from someone who came before you. To keep the chain of gifts alive, we invite you to pay it forward for those dine after you." Patrons pay whatever they want. In the restaurant's own words, here is the concept:

*At Seva Cafe, we serve with the spirit of ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’ which translates to “The Guest is God,” a deep and ancient Indian view that honors each guest with reverence. We’re all used to the concept of offering a meal to family or a friend who visits our home, but at Seva Cafe, we extend this generosity to a stranger we don’t even know. The guests are told we trust them to accept this gift and pay forward the generosity so that this experiment can continue.*¹⁴

The Seva Café is thriving. Why? Judging from all of the positive attention it has gained, it is because it inspires people to give. Then there is the Aravind Eye Care Network, also in India, which provides life-changing cataract surgery to millions for free.¹⁵ Patients pay nothing or whatever they can afford and wish to pay. Aravind is rigorously efficient and manages to be financially viable by performing a great volume of high quality procedures at a fraction of the cost incurred by traditional hospitals. Those who pay for services subsidize those who do not. Making these ventures work is greatly challenging, but their success surprisingly proves that, in the right circumstances, radical generosity can not only lead to feelings of good will in a community, it can be part of a sustainable model for enterprises that provide valuable service to communities.

You might be saying, “That is all well and good in India, but it would never work in America.” You might be right. But the Seva Café and Aravind Eye Care Network do give us an intriguing

¹⁴ See <http://www.movedbylove.org/projects/sevacafe/> (2014)

¹⁵ See www.aravind.org; also Rosenberg, Tina, *A Hospital Network with a Vision*, New York Times Online; http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/01/16/in-india-leading-a-hospital-franchise-with-vision/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0 (2013)

model of generosity to explore that we ask you to consider adopting as way of being relational. They both give in the *first instance*. They don't maximize the first transaction with the idea of giving back later. *They give up front with faith in the good that will come back to them later.*

The American model of giving is very different. Generally speaking, it works like this (and winners know this model well): You work and try to gain as much as you can from your work. You take care of your needs and the needs of your family. You contribute to the general well-being by paying taxes and doing other required duties as a citizen such as living within the boundaries of the law. Then, if your current needs are met, if you have enough saved up to ensure your future financial security, you show your gratitude by giving your excess time and money to your favorite charities, making sure to take the allowed tax deduction. Did we get any of that wrong?

Let's be clear. There is nothing bad about this kind of giving. It is, after all, giving, and we don't want to look down our noses at it. We don't want to be snobby about generosity. We don't want you to think that if this is what you are doing then you are not being a good citizen, a good person.

But *how would it feel to do it differently?* How would it feel to be generous in the first instance, to give now without waiting to make sure that your gift will not take needed resources away from you, without waiting

How would it feel to be generous in the first instance, to give now without waiting to make sure that your gift will not take needed resources away from you, without waiting to see what you might get in return, without waiting to make sure your gift will be appreciated, used well, and received by a person worthy of your generosity.

to see what you might get in return, without waiting to make sure your gift will be appreciated, used well, and received by a person worthy of your generosity. It might feel good to give now without waiting. It might inspire others to do the same. It might create a positive wave of change. You could make a difference with your generosity *in the first instance*.

Break the American model down and look at its component parts and you will discover many opportunities to be generous in the first instance. Step one in the American model is working and trying to gain as much as you can through your efforts and hard work. It is based on the idea of competition as the best and most efficient way to allocate resources amongst people. You know, however, that the American system has a way of giving winners like you the power in many contexts to take more and give less. Being generous in the first instance means that you look for ways to use your power to do the opposite—*take less and give more—daily*, without waiting to see if it is wise to do so from the standpoint of preserving your resources and maximizing your wealth, comfort and security.

You know the expression, you may have grown up with it in your household as we did in ours, “From those to whom much is given, much is expected.” For you as a winner, on the receiving end of plenty, whether by pedigree, family background and good

Being generous means knowing and believing that you have enough.

connections, or hard work and good health, or even just plain good luck in the right place at the right time, being generous means knowing and believing that you have enough. You live in

abundance. Your existence is not about striving for more in terms of wealth, comfort, recognition or security.

Being Generous in the First Instance with Employees

Some challenging situations in being generous involve how you deal with people who work for you. Say you own a company and, being generous, you would like to give the employees a raise. The CFO says the company can afford it, but you don't know what the last half of the year will bring, so you don't. You're not sure how the investors will react to your doing something that you don't have to do. The year ends up well and in December, you tell your employees that you are going to give them a bonus. You gave, but you didn't give in the first instance, you waited and that changed the nature of your generosity. Why? Because you could have given raises six months earlier. The company had the means to do so. By virtue of your waiting, your employees do not have the benefit of six months of additional earnings and income in ways that could make their lives better. And when you put the raise in the form of a bonus, it changes the context entirely. It's as if it is now a gift from you, something the employees should thank you for, as if it was not earned by them. Sure, it's still generous; no one is denying that giving bonuses and sharing wealth with employees in the form of bonuses is a good thing to do. It's just not being generous in the first instance.

Also, consider the example of an employee who is asking for a raise and she hasn't even been with the company a year. But she is asking now so that it will be in place when she gets to her first-year anniversary date. You consider the request. She is a good worker, but she is slow and it seems as if she doesn't pick up on what she has been trained to do very easily or quickly. You like her well

enough. What she does, she does well. She doesn't do her job as well as her predecessor, but you will definitely keep her on board. She has a very positive attitude and always is there on time and ready to work. You are considering a four percent raise since you brought her in on the low end, giving her time to learn. But, she then told you she's asking for a twenty percent raise! She says she needs to move out of her parent's home and she needs more money to afford her own apartment. What do you do?

You might think that a twenty percent raise is out of the question. She certainly hasn't earned that. What you are paying her now is the going market rate. You know, however, that whatever the "market" may bear, the market is oppressive when it comes to wages. Child labor laws, eight-hour work day laws, and workplace safety laws exist because historically employers the world over who have power will exploit their employees. You are not an exploitive employer, so you won't use the market to justify turning down her request.

Being generous means you aren't held back by precedent setting.

But then you might say to yourself, "But if I raise her that much, then what about the other staff? They'll find out and I'll have to do it for everyone. She will want a big raise every year." Being generous means you aren't held back by precedent setting.

You want to be generous in the first instance, but you might also need to have some dialogue with her about it. Being relational, you welcome quality dialogue in working through issues with others. You don't want to make her beg. You respect her dignity. You want her to understand the risk you are taking. If she really needs the money to move out, if she continues to be conscientious in

her work, and she understands that you won't be able to raise her twenty percent next year or anything even close to that, then you give her the raise. You didn't just blithely say yes, you gave it careful consideration, but you were inclined to be generous in the first instance. In the transactional sense, to use a figure of speech, your thumb was on the scale, but in favor of *giving*.

Just to round out this idea fully, here's another example. You are the CEO of a company owned by a private equity investor group. They come to you with a proposal—if the company outsources labor to contract staffing firms it can save millions in labor costs for unskilled workers. What does that mean? It means you would lay a lot of people off, maybe break their union, and many would be rehired at lower wages by the staffing firm. The employees will lose benefits. The equity investors argue that there is nothing illegal about this and that it will greatly improve the company's bottom line and make it more competitive in the marketplace because it will have a lower cost structure. It will give the company more flexibility because all hiring and firing of workers will be done by the non-union staffing firm and the company will be able to get labor on an as-needed basis, never having to worry about laying people off because that will all be handled by the staffing contractor. Furthermore, competitors are doing it and the company needs to follow suit. The investors demand this change to help them achieve their goals for return on investment and in building the equity value of the company.

You are in a dilemma. It is no skin off your back financially, in fact it might result in your earning even more than you have, but you don't want to do it. You believe it is not only wrong and completely in opposition to your desire to be generous, but you

also think it is bad business. You believe it will cost the company in terms of labor unrest, turnover in workers, harm to the quality of customer service, and bad publicity. What do you do?

You engage with the investors. You use your best relational skills to explain fully your views and support them with evidence. You hunker down and do the hard work needed to try to prevent the company from taking the path of ruthless competition. You are generous with your efforts. You know that it is an uphill battle to argue in the face of the investors' spreadsheet analysis. You know that it's not easy to prove good that might come in the future as a result of choosing the path of generosity. But you are sacrificial in your giving, putting yourself on the line to protect the employees who may not have the power to protect themselves. That's

We need courageous, generous people to step up and be a positive force to help those who are exploited by extreme practices in pursuit of profits.

the kind of generosity that can make a lasting change in the lives of others. That's you making a positive difference.

This kind of thing is going on out there in the marketplace every day. We need courageous, generous people to step up and be a positive force to help those who are exploited by extreme practices in pursuit of profits. Being generous means you *reject exploitation*.

Being Generous in the First Instance as a Mindset

Being generous in the first instance is all about changing your mindset. You are a winner. You have enough. You will always have

enough. You don't have to maximize your take. This applies to you, your family, and organizations that you are involved with.

With regards to yourself, that means you live modestly. We are not saying that you should sell all your worldly possessions and give them all to the poor, but if you want to do that, it would be exceedingly generous. How you live reflects your humility, which is essential in being relational as we will discuss below. You want to live a good healthy life. You will have to decide what that means for you. But your focus is not on accumulating anything—houses, cars, clothes, jewelry, and so on. Since you are not gathering more and more, you have more that you can give now. You can leave a good tip for your waitress—twenty percent at least. You can put more in the poor box at church. You can give now to any charity when you see its need.

It becomes a bit more challenging, however, when you extend this concept to your family context. You might have responsibility in your family as a parent, spouse, or child. Now it's not just about you and what you think is acceptable as a good and healthy lifestyle for yourself. There are *other* people involved who may have *different* ideas. Your spouse might want a bigger house, a new car, and kids going to private schools. Your parents might want you to have a high-powered career. Your children might want to go to an expensive university. You will need to engage with them. Once again, being relational calls you to dialogue. You explain your hope and desire that your family's generosity will have a great impact on your community and the world. You ask them to join you in discerning how your family can be generous. Through the relational process of quality dialogue, you make a decision together to be generous. It might take time. You are generous

with your time and efforts because you believe in the power of your generosity.

We are not saying you should change your spending and investing, that is a personal decision based on your family's circumstances, but maybe, before spending or investing, you might ask: Do we need all the insurance policies to protect us from potential losses or should we shed some of them and give more now to others? How comfortable should our retirement be and when should we plan to retire? Is it necessary to go to an elite college or will the state university meet educational needs? Are private schools really needed? Do we need a second home? Do we need elaborate vacations? Is it important to drive a new car? How much is good to spend on our appearances, on clothes, and on jewelry? How much is good to spend on recreation? Do we need to eat out so regularly? How much do we spend on alcohol?

You might be thinking, "Wow, you are going to turn me into a big stick in the mud!" Maybe, maybe not. It depends on your mindset and the mindset of your family. If you feel like you are taking away from your joy of living because you are giving too much to others, then your desire to be generous might only be sowing

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seeds of your future resentment.

It was not giving from a place of centeredness, groundedness, and clarity. If your giving, and your family's choices which allow you to give, make you feel joyful, then

you are on the right track. Talk to your family about it. Have a family meeting. You will find the answers through dialogue. Amazing things might happen.

Finally, think about *bringing the generosity mindset to organizations* of which you are a part. We discussed how this might apply in a private company, but consider how it *also applies in the context of a non-profit*. Many non-profits function just like a family does with regard to finances. There are current needs and desires and there are future needs to consider.

Here is a typical story. The organization starts with a charitable mission. It is beautiful and good. People are excited about it and there is an initial burst of creative energy. It hires some staff, most of whom are willing to work for low wages because they are believers in the mission and grateful for employment. The organization gets some grants and donations. As it becomes institutionalized, its mission changes. The people working there want to keep their jobs. They want to make more money. They want benefits and a retirement plan. It becomes focused on growth and survival, and the charitable mission, though still beautiful and good, is not what occupies the minds of the people working there. They decide that an endowment would help. Building a nest egg to generate investment income to fund the operations would provide the stability that the organization needs. Nicer offices would enhance the reputation of the organization, maybe even a new building. Suddenly the focus is, “We need to raise more money! How about a capital campaign?” So they create a development department and now a sizeable part of the organization’s staff is devoted to fundraising.

You can probably see where this is going. The organization has lost sight of its mission. It has opted in favor of institutional growth, financial security, and service to the financial needs of its leaders and workers. It is no longer able to be a “give first” organization. It risks losing its soul as a charitable entity, becoming just

a for-profit business in non-profit clothes. The only difference is that it doesn't have shareholder owners gaining wealth from its efforts. This is what has happened and is happening in many educational, healthcare, social service, religious, and civic organizations. It doesn't have to be this way.

If you are involved with a non-profit charity, you can bring the generosity mindset to it by encouraging it to *focus on service to its charitable mission* and not on institutional growth and stability. It can *use volunteers* to the greatest extent possible. It can *stay community-based* and resist efforts to make it grow and become institutionalized. It can stay in donated office space and keep facilities costs to a bare minimum. It can give its ideas and methods freely to other organizations seeking to do the same good work in other communities. Being generous means that you want a *thousand* flowers to bloom, not just a few big ones.

Being Generous is About More Than Money

As you can see generosity is a big topic. You might be saying, "But I work my ass off and live paycheck to paycheck. I can't afford to be generous." Yes you can. Because generosity has to do with a lot more than just money.

Giving of your *time* is a powerful way to be generous. Yes, that involves volunteering to help in your community, but it is more than just that. You take the time to listen and be engaged with another person. You are patient in listening and being present. You aren't in a rush to get away and move on to the next thing. You do not duck out of and avoid difficult conversations. You pause and

offer a kind word to someone in many of the moments in your day when you might rather just go on and keep to yourself. You let someone else go ahead of you in a queue or in a parking lot, you hold the door for someone. You know that your little acts of generosity can have a big positive impact.

You know that your little acts of generosity can have a big positive impact.

You also give of your *spirit*. You offer a smile to another person even though you might not be feeling well. You give them the benefit of the doubt in how you view them. You are willing to take the risk that you might be taken advantage of or pushed aside because you want to assume that others are kind and honest even if you suspect they might not be. You don't keep track of wrongs done to you by another and you don't carry a grudge.

You *take the risk that you will be rejected* or even ridiculed. You accept that others might be offended by your generosity, taking it as an insult, rejecting you with a glance or attitude that says, "Look, I don't need your help." You don't let that deter you or wound you in a way that prevents you from being generous in the next encounter. You remain humble. It's hard to be truly generous if you aren't humble, if your pride leads you to give only because of the puffed up sense of self-importance that you feel.

Similarly, being generous in a humble way leads you to *step aside and allow others to shine*. Like when you have poured your heart and soul into an organization for many years. You enjoy the power and recognition that you have earned through your service. But you know others would like to have a share in that too. So you allow them to take over and you give up your position. Maybe you stay involved in a supporting role. Maybe you just move on to

another project. It's okay, your service was not based on the power and recognition you gained from it. You did it in a spirit of generosity and because you cared about the mission of the organization.

Your *forgiveness* is another form of generosity in spirit. As we will discuss ahead in being kind, it doesn't mean that there are no consequences to bad acts, but you don't treat someone like a pariah just because they did you wrong somewhere along the line. You give them another chance. You treat them with dignity. You might even engage with them and try to help them understand the hurt you experienced, giving them the opportunity to say they are sorry and make amends. We see this often in mediation. It is an act of generosity for someone to take the time to sit with a person whom they consider a bad actor. Good things often come of it. But also we see how people often, understandably, would rather just write someone off and have nothing further to do with them. It's easier that way, right? Being generous means you prefer to engage in a relational way rather than just walk away.

You give your efforts, your energy, your ideas, your knowledge, your power. There are so many ways you can be generous. When you do a job, you strive to do it well. You don't cut corners or just try to do the minimum. When you are involved with others, you bring energy to the group. You are engaged. You aren't a lump on a log or a wet blanket. You don't withhold your ideas and knowledge from others. You share them even if it means stretching yourself to overcome shyness or hesitation. As a winner you have power,

As a winner you have power,
you give it to help achieve positive
outcomes for others.

you give it to help achieve positive outcomes for others, and you generously choose not to use your power when you can

see that to do otherwise would not be kind. You do that because you care for both yourself and for others. That is what being relational is all about.

Being Generous is About Connectedness

Ultimately, your generosity isn't motivated purely by self-interest and your knowledge that giving to others, in the end, will benefit you. Rather, your care and generosity comes from the way that you view others in relation to yourself. Living relationally, you don't view them as competitors or anonymous actors who, by necessity, you have to deal with in your efforts to get what you want. Being relational means that you feel a connectedness to others. What affects them negatively or positively affects you in the same way.

What does this connectedness feel like? **Here is an exercise.** It helps to *think of some group of people* who you already have connectedness with and go from there. It might be your family, your tribe, or your church. For us, as for most, the most powerful connection is with our family. Now *think about a relationship* that is particularly important to you and that you are actively involved in right now, not sometime in the past. In the family context it might be your spouse, partner, parent, your child, your brother, or sister. Don't think about a relationship that might be broken. Think of one that is healthy and strong now—today. If you can't think of one, then you have work to do in becoming relational or you might just need to “look harder.”

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Are you generous with that person? Stay grounded in reality and look harder at yourself, your actions, your motivations. *How* are you generous with them? Think of the ways. If you can't be generous with someone who you are in a strong and healthy relationship with, it is hard to think about being generous with others.

With that person, what **motivates** you to be generous in all of the ways we have discussed? Make a list. Don't stop at one or two. List at least 10 motivations.

Here is ours—thinking of our daughter Paula: We are generous because . . .

- We love her
- She is truly flesh of our flesh
- We feel responsible for her well-being
- We have known her forever
- We know her heart is good
- We admire her, she's smart and kind and beautiful
- She is kind and good to us
- We want her to always be kind and good to us
- She is a fun person to be around
- We want her to be happy
- We want her to have a good healthy life
- We want to inspire her to be good
- We trust that she will make good use of whatever we give her
- She is grateful when we give to her
- We are hopeful for her future and want to help her
- When we give to her, it makes us happy
- We want to model generosity for her so she might also find joy in giving

- We want her to be happy with herself so she will attract and choose a good person who is happy as well to spend the rest of her life with

Look at the list you just made and start to think about another person close to you. Are there motivations in your list that might apply to that person? Are there other motivations? All *these motivations are your experience of connectedness* to that person.

Now think about people not as close to you—from people you know well to strangers you encounter in the course of your day. Think about in-laws, ex-spouses, and ex business partners. Think about the clerk at the supermarket or the homeless person on the street corner in the city. Are there motivations that might apply to them? Being relational means that you *look for these motivations*; you are in touch with them as you decide how to interact with others. You may have to **look harder**. From a place of centeredness, groundedness, and clarity, you find a motivation that you can tap into, increasing your feeling of connectedness to that person, increasing your desire to be generous, and knowing that your generosity will make a difference.

Questions for Your Consideration

In exploring Being Generous, consider the following questions. If you are not sure about your answers, go back and visit the chapter.

- How often are you generous with people before you know if you are going to get something from them in return?
- What are the risks for you in being generous with your time and resources?
- When do you give without asking for anything in return?
- What is your approach to negotiation in business for yourself? On behalf of others? Can you leave money on the table?
- Looking harder at yourself, what motivates you to be generous?
- What is the American model for generosity, and how could it be different?
- When you are in a position of authority with employees or otherwise, what is your approach to being generous in response to their needs?