

How good are you at receiving?

It is that time of year again when so many people are rushing around madly buying gifts for other people who certainly don't need them and probably don't even want most of them. This year this annual pre-Christmas frenzy has got me thinking about the whole dance of giving and receiving. I am blessed to know a lot of truly wonderful individuals – so kind, so generous, so loving! However, I have noticed that many of my lovely friends are really good at being kind to others, but not nearly so good at being kind to themselves or at receiving kindness from others.

For example, my wonderful cousin Sarah recently had one of her hips replaced and she tells me that she is finding it really difficult to accept a lot of caring help from her husband and from kind neighbours who are bringing cooked meals around to their house. Now the weirdest part of this story as far as I am concerned is not my cousin's reluctance to receive so much help, but the fact that she is old enough to need and get a hip replacement.

I still think of her as being only 7 when I was already 8. I clearly remember insisting that we had a 'midnight feast' of raw jelly cubes and biscuits whenever I went to stay with her during the school holidays. Many years later, she complained that we always overslept and so ended up eating our 'midnight feast' at around 7 a.m. before having to force down a full English breakfast just one hour later. But she now has the last laugh by being a whole year younger than me in our old age.

Anyways, where was I? Oh yes, my core message for this December is all about rethinking our reluctance to be on the receiving end of any kind of generosity from others during this festive season.

So please just pause from time to time this month to notice how you feel when someone gives you an unexpected gift, including the offer of any kind of help. If you are anything like me, you will feel at least a twinge of resistance or embarrassment whenever someone does you a favour or offers to help you even in quite a small way.

Why do so many of us have such difficulty in graciously receiving help or gifts from our dear friends or from strangers? Well I suspect that deep, deep down

we just do not feel worthy enough to be loved and cared for by others. We live in a world in which we were socialised into believing that we had to try really hard to be 'good' in order to be loved or valued by others. So now, we never seem to feel quite good enough to deserve any loving care, any acts of generosity, or any warm, sincere compliments that come our way.

According to Louise Hay, *'Often what is missing in a situation is our ability to receive. The universe always provides, but we have to be open and receptive to see this'*. So how can we become better at receiving this month? Well first of all, we can remind ourselves that if we do not graciously receive what others are generously trying to give us, we are robbing the giver the chance to experience the joy of giving.

It is really rather self-centred of us to feel embarrassed to receive others generosity. Maybe, rather than focussing on whether we feel as though we deserve a gift, we can simply choose to focus instead on being truly grateful for the loving intention of whoever is offering us help or kindness.

We might also like to remind ourselves from time to time this month that if we constantly give to others without being able to receive anything back, we may eventually end up feeling resentful. We may think that we are acting selflessly when we are extra generous with our money or our time. However, if we are really honest with ourselves, we may well detect that beneath our selfless behaviour lies a need to 'people please' in order to feel more secure in a challenging world.

We need to understand that there is a big difference between needily trying to please others by giving 'generously' to them and genuine selfless behaviour. The first behaviour stems from our wounded egoic-self whereas the second kind of generous giving comes from our true-self. But this true-self also knows the joy of receiving endless gifts from an abundant universe because our true-self knows nothing of scarcity, fear of lack, or unworthiness.

Our true-self knows that although it appears in this world that there are two separate groups: givers and receivers, ultimately, everything is just one infinite circle of Love Energy. From this high spiritual perspective, giving and receiving is one endless circuit of love energy, rather than two separate and contrasting acts.

So this month whenever you feel even a twinge of discomfort as someone gives you a generous gift or offers you help of some kind, please pause and gently remind yourself that giving and receiving are totally intertwined aspects of one incredible circle of loving kindness. In truth, 'giver' and 'receiver' are not two separate entities, but two equal aspects of the same love.

Moreover, the better we all become at being gracious receivers of love as well as generous givers of love, the greater will be the flow of true love and abundance in all our lives.

This December, let's all do our very best to rise above the commercialisation of Christmas and the ridiculous excesses of food, drink and material gifts at this time of year. Let us all just pause from time to time to really celebrate the gift of loving kindness, whether we are the givers or the receivers of this oh so needed and wanted priceless present.

Gloria and I thank you from the depths of our hearts for being part of our Radiant Living community and we wish you and your loved ones oodles of peace, love and joy throughout this festive season.

Peggy Foster
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