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# ***Dāna***

Dāna is the Buddhist word for generosity. It is a practice of giving which points to a subtler spirit of giving.

Once a man had a pair of gloves he loved. Wearing them made him happy. One morning, standing in a subway car as the doors were sliding closed, he noticed a familiar looking glove on the station platform. Glancing down he saw he only had one glove – he must have dropped the other while boarding the train. The subway doors were closing too quickly for him to retrieve his glove: it was lost to him. So he flung his remaining glove out the closing door. A single glove would be of no use to anyone. But now, whoever found the glove would have a pair that might delight them.

That is the spirit of generosity. It is more than lack of attachment. It is the wellbeing that arises out of inner freedom. This freedom and joy are the foundation and the fruition of Buddhist practice.

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The retreats, classes, and other events offered by Easing Awake have expenses. They have been covered before the event begins. They are offered freely out of a sense of joy in being able to share these teachings.

A dāna bowl is present at our events so you can give if you so choose. There are no strings attached. We know your resources are finite and you must manage them wisely.

At the same time, the dāna bowl is not an empty exercise. While current expenses are already taken care of, what you offer is

a kind of “paying it forward”: it allows us to continue to offer these teaching to others. Our teachers have mortgages, car payments, grocery bills, and other living expenses like all of us. What you offer allows them to continue to teach.

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Many Eastern cultures measure wealth by how much a person gives. Western consumer economies measure wealth by how much we accumulate. So a dāna bowl in a Western society may create a dissonance inside you as your generous spirit clashes with cultural messages – your draw to freedom and joy bumps against cultural messages about safety and protection.

Therefore, dāna is a practice – something we do over and over in an attitude of exploration. If we give more than

is right for us, we may quietly resent it, which can interfere with the teachings. If we give less than what is right for us, we may feel we're secretly getting away with something. That too can interfere with the teachings.

So we hope you'll be kind with yourself, six-R, relax into the feelings, open your heart, and cultivate your deeper intuition. Be wise with your resources and at the same time keep an eye toward that sense of inner freedom and joy. Let all of this guide you.

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Please know that whatever you offer is received with deep gratitude. It will be used to further these practices and teachings about freedom and joy.

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*Easing Awake is a non-profit religious organization dedicated to deepening kindness and wisdom in the world through cultivating and practicing the Buddha's teachings on meditation, compassionate service, and increasing wellbeing.*

[www.easingawake.org](http://www.easingawake.org)