

Paying It Forward

..... based on a true story (written and adapted by Amy Fox)

Dale Schroeder was a humble carpenter from Iowa. He worked tirelessly at the same company for 67 years. His friends described him as "blue-collar, lunch pail kind of guy" who went to work every day and lived frugally. Despite a modest upbringing and no immediate family, Dale managed to amass a substantial fortune.

When he passed away in 2005, it was revealed that he had been saving for a significant purpose.

Before his passing, Dale had shared his extraordinary plan with his lawyer. He expressed a desire to assist young people who, like him, might not have the opportunity to attend college without financial support.

In the end, Dale's legacy enabled 33 strangers to access higher education. This group, who is famously known as "Dale's Kids," have pursued careers as doctors, teachers, therapists and more, all thanks to Schroeder's incredible generosity.

Schroeder's only request for these individuals was to "pay it forward." While they can't repay him directly, they can honor his memory by continuing his legacy of helping others overcome financial barriers to education.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & PROMPTS

OPENING CLASS

When we think about generosity, most of us don't immediately think of an inner resource and tool for changing how we relate to ourselves, to others and the world around us. Instead we might think of generosity similar to how we think of kindness or compassion— qualities that are more tender and gentler. And in this way we tend to view generosity purely in terms of giving something up for someone else.

Generosity is more than giving something up. In fact, generosity generates its power from the gesture of letting go. Being able to give to others freely, without expectation that they'll say thank you or offer us something in return, shows us our ability to let go of attachments that can otherwise limit our beliefs and experiences.

Notice what you've arrived with today, whether there is space around your head and heart or if there is something you are clinging to.

Without expectation or prerequisite for your practice, start to deepen your breath here...

DURING CLASS

Before Telling the Story

Where are you holding onto expectation here? Where can you move into your heart and breathe into this space?

Expectation is born from should-ing, could-ing and would-ing. Expectation is tied to the past and future – things we cannot change or control.

But if we can let go of how we think things ought to be or where we think we need to be, we allow ourselves to open our bodies, minds and hearts so that we can give more freely.

After Telling the Story

How often do we give from a place of expectation— when this person does or says this then I'll do that...

How different would life be, this world be, if we showed up with conscious kindness, a simple desire to help others achieve or do what we were not able to do?

CLOSING CLASS

Generosity is the giving of living and when we approach the world and others this way, we pave the path forward for a more beautiful tomorrow.

EXTRAS

The key to true generosity arises from gratitude. Whereas generosity describes an attitude toward giving, gratitude is receiving with grace and joyful appreciation for the gift.

Turns out, you might be able to increase your generosity by practicing gratitude: In her TED X talk, [The key to true generosity](#), Rachel Chong explains that gratitude for our privilege and luck can motivate us to empathize with others who haven't been so lucky. We can then express this empathy through generous actions.