

The meaning of generosity depends on the context. More specifically, it depends on religion, scale, material or immaterial, individual or group, culture, society, ... . Generosity consists of layers, and functions like a game of dominoes that affect each other when the first one is set in motion.

The discussion started with the questions 'Can you be generous toward yourself?' 'What would that look like?' and 'At what point does generosity toward oneself become selfishness?'. Alex emphasized the blurred line between these two. Some people consider generosity as something that stands in direct contact with sacrifice of own needs or happiness. We agreed that generosity toward yourself and your mental wellbeing can influence how you treat others. To give a short example, if you feel insecure or inferior you may be submissive to others.

Where does generosity come from? We can start from the question if generosity is something rooted in our nature, or has it been taught to make the world more pleasant? During our conversation, we discussed if animals can be generous, and if so, if this behavior is mainly due to human influence? And can robots also be generous? Is generosity a learned behavior? And how did it evolve over time?

We put these questions aside for a moment and focus on the motivation behind generosity. Some of us thought that the motivation behind generosity was the most important factor, while others put more value in the outcome of generous behavior. Vera, for example, thought the motivation was most important, but she emphasized the difference between motivation coming from within yourself or coming from an imposed rule that must be followed (due to religion or cultural beliefs). For Vera, the second one has nothing to do with being generous at all.

When we further discussed generosity that arises from religion, we quickly noticed a contradiction. In many religions, generosity is an important aspect. To this end, they give us certain "rules" to live up to in order to be generous. Admittedly to be a good person with the reward of having a pleasant stay in the afterlife. A major problem with religious generosity is that it is often conditional. Religions are usually not generous to other religions. We are more generous to our own "group" and we are not or less generous to the "other".

For the next session, I would like to look at the theme of generosity from a different perspective, specifically the perspective of movement.

Recently I have been working on a study of classical dancer and choreographer Pina Bausch. The way she searches for new forms of movement and expression intrigues me greatly. For her, it doesn't matter how the dancers move but what drives them, what's behind the movement. She applied this search during her rehearsals in which she let the dancers start from certain situations, for example: how do you move if you have lost something but you have to catch the train in five minutes? Afterward, she uses these movements to make a choreography.

I would like to use this method for the next session to move away from just words and translate the idea of generosity into movement.

Shuhrath, another participant in our group, sings and loves to be involved in music. I think it would be nice to work together and use her voice as a guide.

- Tuchila