

THE POWER OF GIVING

■ By Azim Jamal

GIVING IS ONE OF the most potent forces in the universe. The more you give, the more you create and innovate. The more you give, the more you tap into your genius and potential. Giving is a grace and it invites abundance.

Giving is not a burden or an inconvenience! We are all connected: when we give to others, we give to ourselves; when we hurt others, we hurt ourselves.

The power of giving is immediate

Think a good thought for about 30 seconds right now—how do you feel? You will feel lighter and happier! On the other hand, if you think a bad thought, you will feel worse. As you send out good thoughts, you invite goodness—it is instantaneous.

When you have too much on your plate and you need someone to give to you, it is hard to give. But if you lighten up and give even a smile, you will feel better. I was doing a seminar for a bank in India that employed 12,000 people, when someone asked me the question: “How do I give and be kind when I have already done that for 12 hours and yet another customer comes in?” I replied,

“You have two choices about how to treat the customer—either with a frown or a smile. A smile requires you to use two muscles, while a frown requires 63. You decide: how many muscles do you want to use when you are tired?” A simple smile is instantaneous and yet can have a lasting impact.

The power of giving is continuous

If you close your fist, you cannot receive. When you open your hand and give, you can also receive. When you stop giving, you stop creating!

The more in the flow of giving you are, the more giving flows through you. The more you are in the flow of abundance, the more



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Azim Jamal
is an international best-selling author, highly sought-after motivational speaker, author and coach. His dynamic and inspiring Corporate Sufi message has been heard by over one million people around the world and his work has been recognised by Deepak Chopra, Wayne Dyer, Jack Canfield, Brian Tracy, and Ken Blanchard.

abundance flows through you. Abundance can be in many forms: in wealth, spirituality, relationships, and health. It can be yours if you make giving an ongoing part of your life.

The power of giving is eternal

“Give when the season of giving is here so that your coffer is not empty when you die.”
— Kahlil Gibran

When you die, you do not take what you have, you take what you gave! An anonymous wise man appropriately said that a hundred years from now, it will not matter how big your house was or what car you drove or how much money you had in the bank, but the world will be a different place if you were important in the life of a child.

Giving to oneself

Sometimes we forget that receiving is also a form of giving. If there is so much joy in

giving then by receiving from someone we are also giving them a chance to experience the beauty of giving. Whom would you give to, if there was no one to receive?

Also it is important to give to oneself. When you look after yourself—your body, mind, and spirit—you are rejuvenated and are able to give to others. This is not selfish, but selfless. I recommend 20 minutes of meditation, 20 minutes of exercise and 20 minutes of uplifting reading every day. I call that the hour of power.

Corporate giving

Corporations are usually formed to create profits. Their mandate is not to give! However, surprising as it may sound, giving is still one of the key ingredients of corporate success. Corporations who give to customers, employees, community and environment

reap rewards in terms of customer and employee loyalty.

Thomas Edison, the founder of GE said “I never perfected an invention that I did not think in terms of service it might give to others.” Without the service [giving] element not much can be achieved with the customers.

The foundation of any business is giving to the customers. Looking after their needs, solving their problems, keeping them happy is all part of giving to customers that creates loyalty, repeat business and word of mouth. Enterprise Rent-A-Car grew from a small leasing company in Missouri into a \$9 billion global powerhouse. Their motto was to keep customers not just satisfied but completely satisfied!

It is becoming harder to find and retain talented employees. Also, harnessing the potential of employees is crucial as it is the most important asset any company has. To attract and retain good employees requires a giving culture. Looking after their needs, and providing an enabling environment, which fosters learning, growth and contribution, is part and parcel of that giving.

Companies such as UPS, Hewlett Packard and Starbucks, who have had some sort of employee ownership either by way of stock purchase plan or stock options, have seen great growth in their business. Giving a piece of the pie to their employees has paid off.

Walt Disney’s mission was “to bring a smile to a child’s face” and he was able to persevere through a lot of struggle and challenges to make his dream a reality. Of course there was a profit motive, all corporations have that, but notice the link to giving—bringing a smile to a child’s face.

Giving in uncertain times

In today’s uncertain times, many shy away from giving. They complain about lack of time and resources. They become busy working, commuting, and being caught in the activity trap. There is little time for exercise, relaxation, family, introspection,

A testimony to the power of giving

A friend of Azim’s gave away hundreds of copies of *The Power of Giving* [By Azim Jamal & Harvey McKinnon] to people in India. In response, one of the recipients wrote this note to him:

My dearest Ashokji,

It is with deepest gratitude that I write this letter to you. Thank you for sharing with me the wonder of the book ‘The Power of Giving’.

You are no stranger to the unfortunate circumstances, which befell my family a year ago. The passing of both my parents within a span of 15 days of each other was a blow that would have been very difficult to recover from if it was not for the love of friends like Sumanji and yourself. My wife Neha and I have been constantly inspired by your kind words and my interactions with you always leave me nourished, fulfilled and uplifted.

I am very pleased to inform you that the book you gave me ‘The Power of Giving’ has come to me at a time in my life when my most basic priorities have been questioned. Dealing with the loss of both heads of my family has made me value my place in the universe even more greatly. In particular the thoughts so beautifully expressed in ‘The Power of Giving’ have inspired the conception of a paediatric cancer centre in my parents’ memory. The Satish and Neera Metha Centre for Paediatric Oncology will shortly be opened at a brand new facility—The Society for the Rehabilitation of Children at Haji Ali in Mumbai. And you have played a vital role in making this happen. I thank you most whole-heartedly Ashokji.

I truly believe that things happen in life for a reason. There is a larger plan for us all—one that we are unaware of—but a plan that is deftly being guided by powers much higher than we are able to recognise. I believe the day you gave me this book was a vital cog in the larger plan of my life. The act of giving has brought me immense joy, and, in a sense, the peace that I have been looking for ever since the event of their passing.

My highest commendations to the authors of ‘The Power of Giving’ and my deepest gratitude to you Ashokji. I pray that the Almighty continues to enrich my life with the blessings of Sumanji and yourself. It is the relationship I have come to cherish very deeply in a very short time.

With warmest personal regards,
Pranay Mehta
Mumbai, India

meditation or financial planning. Stress and dissatisfaction are widespread.

The conventional solution is to work hard, work fast and concentrate on self. Is that working? Not really! There is lack of fulfilment, unhappiness, relationship challenges and negative energy. So what is the solution? Giving!

The more you give to your family; you will enjoy better relationships at home. The more you give to your colleagues, the better camaraderie you will have at work. This



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enhances your productivity and performance. The more you give to your customers, the better loyalty you will create leading to a better bottom-line. The more you give to the community, the better environment you will create for you and your family to live in.

The more time you invest in others, the less time you need getting things done. In addition, when you give you tap into your creativity, innovation and potential. Also, when you are gentle and give to others, you are also gentle with yourself. Thus the more you give, the more you have!

The best time to give is today! Today is a new day, a fresh beginning! Practising daily dose of giving to self and others rejuvenates you! Here are seven powerful tips for you to get started:

- » Give gratitude everyday
- » Shine your light and inspire others to shine their light

- » Be a loving human being and family member. Sometimes we forget the people closest to us
- » Give people the benefit of doubt—remember everyone is fighting a battle. Also, give every situation the best possible interpretation
- » Be a little bit better everyday in every way
- » Marry your audacious goals with living in the moment! Direction is important, however, it is execution in the moment that creates the results
- » Enjoy the ride—remember, the destiny is in the journey!

Giving is a grace. It comes to people who are blessed. Givers are spiritually kindled and understand the power of giving.



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