

# Reciprocity: A Discussion

## Giving and Receiving Require Each Other

**Sustainable:** ethical, **reciprocal**, just

**Abundance:** full, radiant, present to the bounty everywhere

### Receiving

Think of the last time someone tried to give you something and it was not on a designated special occasion like a birthday party or the holiday season. How did you respond to the offering? Did you:

- Avoid them or the gift?
- Back away?
- Give it back and not actually take it? "Oh no no, I couldn't possibly accept that."
- Take it but make sure you did something for that person immediately?
- Be excessively effusive with gratitude?
- Receive it gracefully?

### Giving

What is your story about giving? Do you like to identify as generous? Do you feel good, powerful, helpful when you give? We had a mentor and friend Roger Burton. He once said, "control is the shadow side of generosity." It stopped us cold. We consider ourselves as generous people. We now had to consider the hidden motivations we had for giving at all.

Think of the last time you tried to give someone something when it was not a sanctioned holiday or special occasion.

How did they respond? What was it like to experience their reaction to the offering?

### Consider this...

We are constantly giving and receiving. We give life to plants. We receive life from them. Let's start right there. Human life is completely and wholly dependent on receiving life from all that is Mother Earth. Without the soil, water, air and trees, we quite literally do not get to be. This most basic reciprocity is at the heart of all life.

Nothing exists in isolation to everything else. Nothing. What would happen if you gave up telling yourself you do not deserve to receive? It is as preposterous as telling ourselves we do not belong. What if you gave up building an identity around being a giver? It is after all, only half of the truth.



## Re-Claiming Reciprocity

- Because we know that we are all in this together.
- Because your receiving is also mine.
- Because we are interdependent and can actually share.
- Because we weave social fabric through reciprocity.

## Continue the Discussion

Listen to our [Community Call »](#) where Jen and the participants discuss reciprocity within the context of sustainable abundance.

