

DANA

Dana is the practice of generosity. It is the first of the Three Pillars of the Dhamma that the Buddha taught. Our hearts/minds develop fully from the practice of each of these pillars:

1. Dana – Developing a generous heart thru sharing
2. Sila – Developing harmony thru wise action and wise speech
3. Bhavana – Developing the mind/heart thru meditation

The practice of generosity gives us the opportunity to express our gratitude, to develop qualities of compassion and equanimity, to experience the joy of sharing, and to cultivate non-attachment and greater awareness.

Through a conscious practice of dana, we use wise reflection and compassionate intention. We consider our giving in a very thoughtful, careful, and respectful manner. Otherwise, we may give in a hurry-up unconscious way, through habit, or just because it seems to be the custom. When we practice sincerely, it elevates this very important action from a place of mere unconscious habit, to a place of more evolved conscious intention.

In this way, we begin to understand with more self-confidence that there is compassion and wisdom developing in our hearts. Through compassion we benefit others, and through wisdom we know that we are also benefiting ourselves by nourishing our highest aspirations of spiritual evolution.

It is important to know that our teachers have no umbrella organization that supports them. They devote their lives to cultivating and offering the Dhamma, and are primarily supported by dana from those who are grateful. From that support, they give back to the community. Since ancient times, there has existed a tradition of inter-supportive connection between those who offer the Dhamma, and those who receive it.

The Teachings are priceless. No amount can be prescribed for dana. We reflect wisely on our own gratitude and the value of the Dhamma in our lives. And then we offer what we can to support our community's Dhamma teachers so that they are able to live their lives with ease of wellbeing. In this way, they are able to continue giving back to the community. Through helping others, we are always helping ourselves... that's how it works.