

# I will be happy if... I have the courage to share!

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3)



## Goal

To learn how to give and to receive, measuring our own needs against those of others.



## How did it go?

At the start, there is a moment of welcome, wherein it is important to allow space for dialogue and the sharing of what each one has lived, the experiences made, and the difficulties encountered. To welcome means to make each one feel accepted and be at ease: creativity will help us find the best ways. We may recall the aims set at the last meeting: “How did it go?”



## Introductory activity

Viewing of the video clip and reflection on “THE POWER OF GENEROSITY” (ATTACHED)



**TIME:** Video clip 3’05”; with the reflection about 30 minutes

**MATERIALS:** devices for viewing the video clip; paper and pen for each sub-group; city map.

**PROCEDURE:** Before viewing the video clip, it is advisable to have a brainstorming on the concept of “generosity” in small groups (3/4). Based on their own experiences of generosity or that of others, each sub-group must agree on a definition and find the three most important characteristics of generosity (ex. free, universal, fruitful, etc.). The groups will share the results and eventual experiences derived from the group work.

**SUGGESTION:** The video clip presents the lifestyle of a generous person and opens the question of reciprocity in generosity: “What will a person, who is ready to share what he/she has, receive? To make the group reflect, the viewing can be interrupted after 1’49” and open a dialogue on what the person in the video clip will receive from this lifestyle. The end of the viewing will confirm or not the group’s prediction.

**CONCLUSION:** In conclusion, the group may identify the “places” of generosity in one’s own city, tracing the city with the help of a map. These are points in which this virtue is practiced and can be developed either by the citizens or by the youth in the groups.



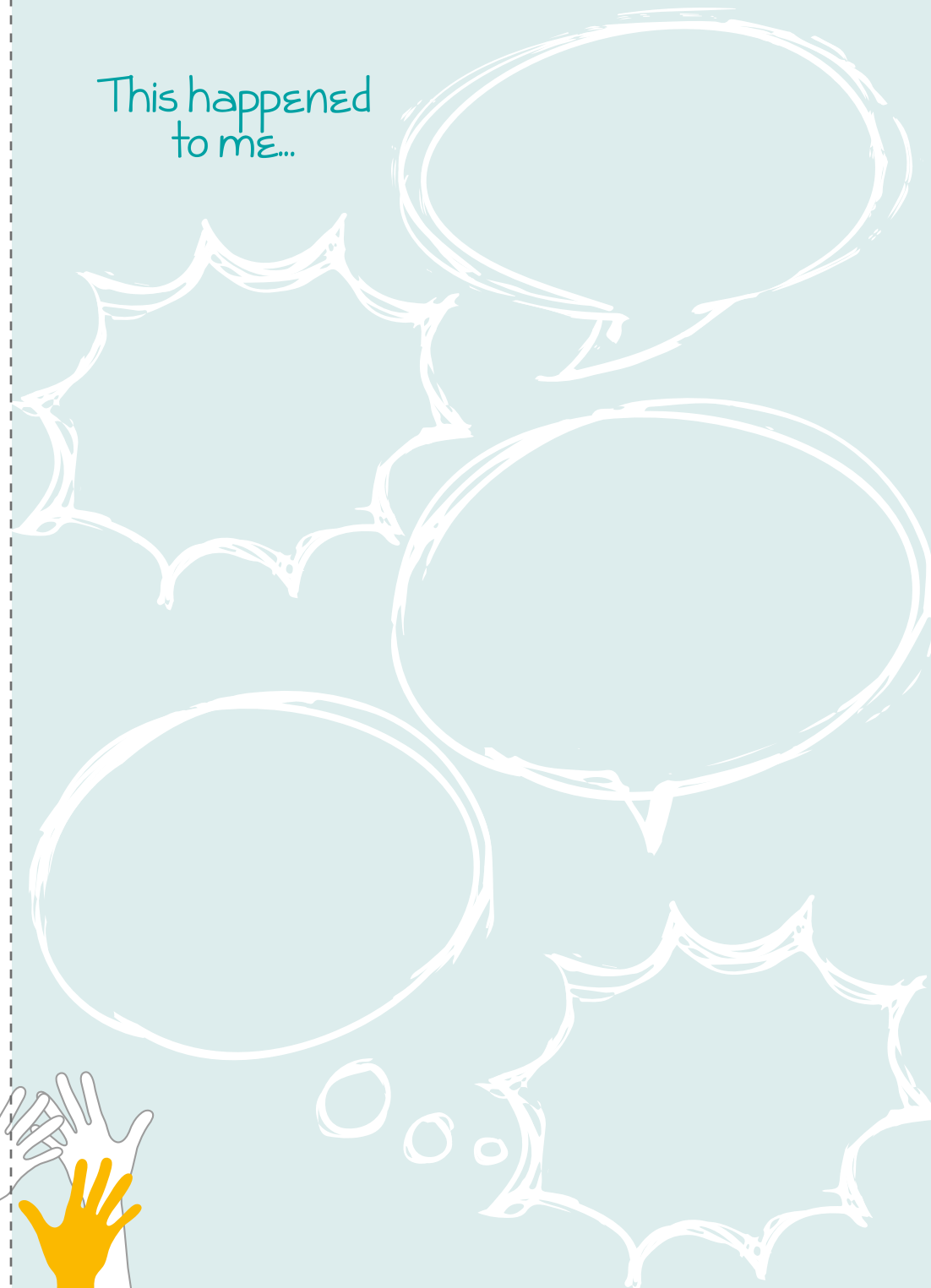
## We live this way

It all began one evening when in a meeting with some Gen 3 in a family with big economic difficulties, we saw that they did not have a heater. Going out of the house, we said: "Let's not rest until we can find one." One of us had an unused heater that the mother was happy to give. We went back amidst the traffic of Palermo to give it at once. Around us, many youth were hurrying out for their Saturday night's entertainment. For us nothing was more joyful than to hurry so as to make someone happy.

From this experience, we thought of a continuous action: Operation "bags". We gave out empty shopping bags to friends and relatives, asking them to give these back to us with food that we could give to the poor. After one week, we saw the bags return really full. Since then we have successfully repeated the activity. For the distribution, we are concerned because the list of families to help is getting longer.

*(Palermo – Italy)*

This happened to me...



I will be happy if...  
**i have the courage to share!**




## In depth

### TO GIVE, THE CHOICE IS OURS



*Vera Araujo (sociologist),  
The culture of giving – Supercongress 2002 –  
Youth Forum – Loppiano, May 28, 2002*

Can you tell us about  
the culture of giving? 

We can say that there are two existing cultures, two ways of looking at life. On one hand, there is individualism wherein each one seeks his/her own interest and comfort. The culture born from this individualism is what we may call 'the culture of having'. To possess, to desire things dominates the way of life of many persons and many youth. Their choices tend towards consumerism, to the uncontrolled desire to possess things. Do you know what is its consequence? Without being aware, he/she becomes aggressive, violent, a protagonist of conflicts and tension in society, because each one thinks only of himself/herself. Then one becomes a protagonist of war among peoples; wars are born from egoism, individualism. This is one type of culture: the culture of having.



But it is not the only one. We can become protagonists of another culture that is an alternative to the culture of having. It is the culture of a new person, of new youth, who are no longer individualistic but altruists, no longer possessors but givers. This alternative culture is the culture of giving. (...) But when you look at this culture in order to practice it, to make it our own, we must ask a question: in what way should we give? How should we give? You see, to give is not simple; it is an art, with its own style, its own attitude and behavior. So we must understand it and learn the characteristics of giving in order to give well; it is not enough to give, we must give well.

The first characteristic of giving is giving freely. We must give freely. To give is an act without self-interest. If you give in order to get something out of it, it is not true giving; if you give out of vanity, so that others will see what you have done, this is not true giving, Giving is free, this is its first characteristic.

Another quality of giving is joy; we must give with joy, in the fullness of joy. In the Gospel Jesus says: «There is more joy in giving than in receiving.» Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Nobel Prize for

Peace, said: «Whoever gives with joy, gives in the best way; he who gives with joy, gives more. God loves who gives with joy. There's a deeper joy in giving because what we receive is much more than what we give.» Therefore, joy, the fullness of joy is another characteristic of giving.

Lastly, a third characteristic of giving is abundance, to give abundantly, without counting. (...) Mother Teresa of Calcutta said something beautiful about this: «I ask you one thing, don't be afraid

I will be happy if...  
I have the courage to share!

to give; but don't give what is superfluous, give even what costs you. I don't want you to give what is superfluous; I want you to give something to me by depriving yourself of something». (...)



But we can ask another question: *what must we give?* Above all, the goods that are more important, which are the spiritual goods. The first gift we must give to others is the gift of ourselves, our love, our friendship, the gift of peace, of acceptance, of listening, the gift of ourselves, the spiritual gifts. Once Chiara said: «We have much wealth to put in common even if we don't think so, because someone might say: "But I don't have anything".» Instead Chiara says: «You have much wealth. For example, we have physical and intellectual strength, we have love in our heart to give, we have friendliness to express, joy to share,

time to put at the service of others, our prayers, and inner wealth to share by talking or in writing. Sometimes we also have material goods: bags, pens, books, money, and things to share».

If we practice this culture of giving, it creates in us a new mentality, *a new way of thinking and of seeing things that enables us to overcome the culture of having I practical ways.* It enables us to overcome the desire to possess and the thirst for power. Above all, it enables us to build a society that practices sharing and the communion of goods among all to reach the communion of the unity of hearts. We can build a new world where youth, together with adults, are leaders because they are builders, not only observers, but builders. We can say that with the culture of giving, a new world is possible. 💡



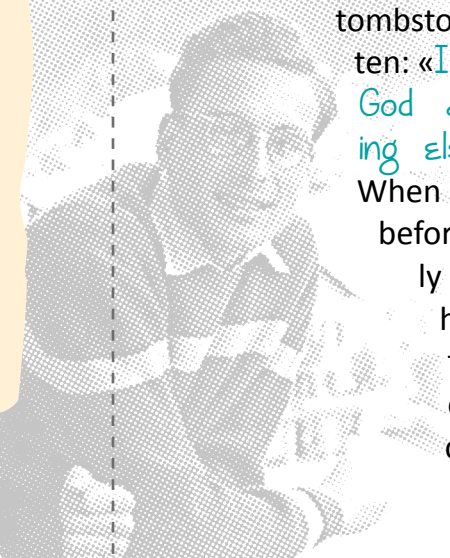
## I CHOSE GOD ALONE

*Chiara Lubich,  
Word of Life,  
July 1979*

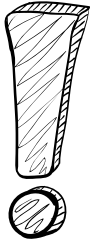


(...) They called him Eletto. He was a tall young man, handsome, intelligent and rich. When he felt the call from God to follow Him, he did not hesitate for a moment. He did not look back. For him, it seemed that wealth did not exist at all. He gave up everything. While doing an act of love for a young boy, he drowned in a lake at only 33 years of age. There, on a tombstone, it is written: «*I have chosen God alone, nothing else besides.*» When he appeared before Jesus, surely Eletto did not hear this said to him: «It is easier for a camel to pass

by the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven.» (Mt 19:24) (...) Does this sentence of Jesus shock you? Let's see the true meaning of these words. Jesus does not condemn wealth in itself but the rich person who is attached to it. Because everything belongs to God and the rich person behaves as if wealth is their own. What then is the attitude for one who possesses something? He or she must have *a free heart, completely open to God,* and feel they are only an administrator of their goods. *The earthly goods are not to be despised* because they are not evil by nature, but *they must be used well.* It's not the hand but the heart that must be kept away from them. It's a matter of knowing how to use them for the good of others. 💡



*I will be happy if...  
I have the courage to share!*



## I will try!

Chiara entrusted to the Gen 3 the spread of the culture of giving to the youth. How will you transmit this reality to the Teens for Unity in your city? Consult also the secretary and the animators of Teens for Unity, and prepare an event or an action to do together with the youth in your city. The following are some good practices to find **SHARING** as the source of happiness:

1. Make the “bundle” or check whether we have accumulated superfluous things among what we have, which is needed more by others. Put these things into circulation in the community, or among the needy.
2. Identify a family or a classmate in difficulty to help concretely.
3. Do we need others, youth and adults, to join us? In some regions, they made a private FB account where each can put in common what he/she wants or express a need either personal or of somebody else.



## At what point are we?

*To reach a goal, we must practice daily and keep note of the positive changes and the difficulties encountered.*

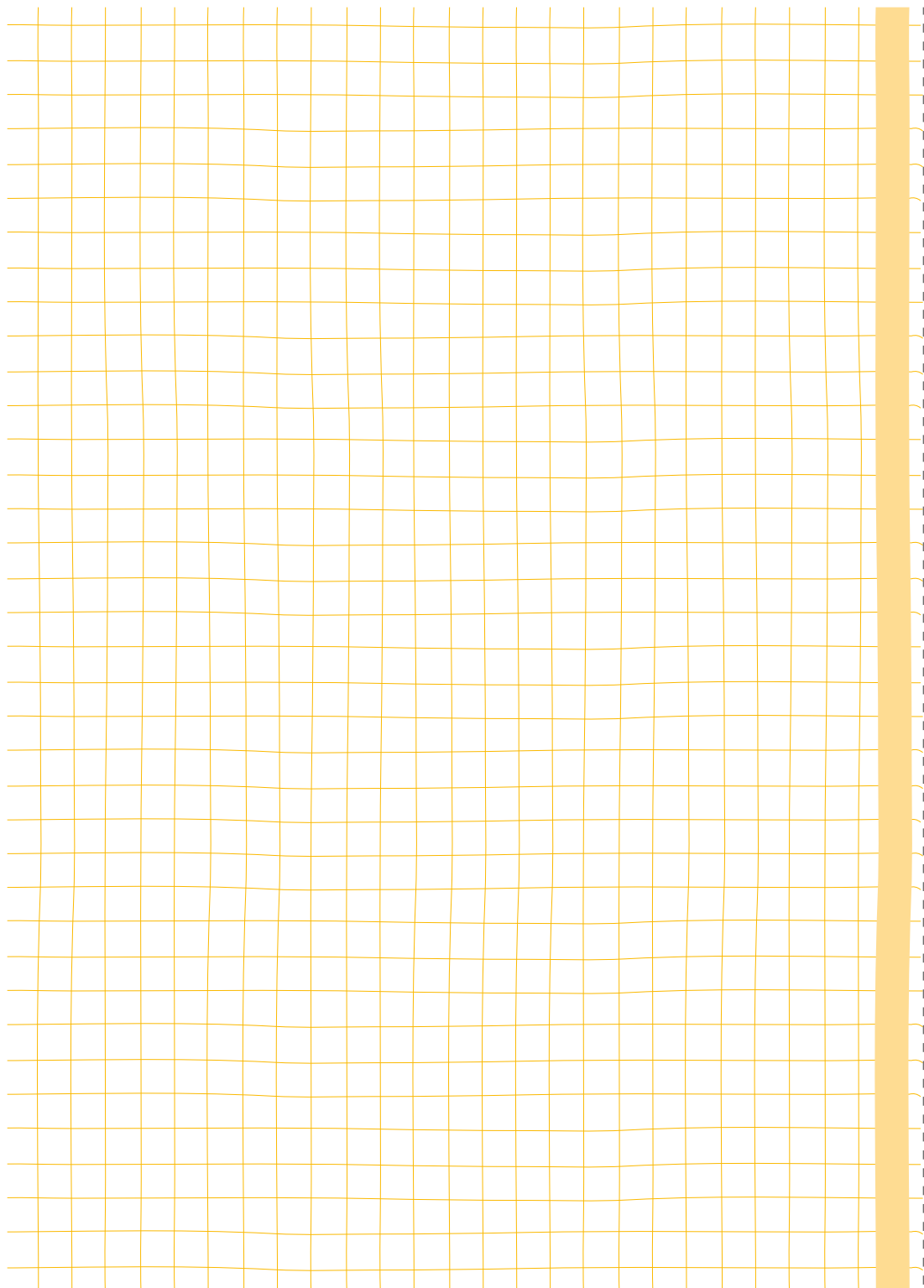
*This will help us until the next meeting when we shall allot time for sharing our experiences.*

Did I succeed in living concretely the culture of giving?

With whom?

What did I share?

What has changed in me and around me?



**For the gen assistant**



### Evaluation after the meeting

- Did the proposed activities increase the youth's interest for this beatitude?
- Has a particular area emerged from the Gen 3 in which they feel it is difficult to become poor in spirit?
- What commitment have they taken to live it? Aim at accompanying and supporting them in their commitment until the next meeting.
- Do I consider the topic finished or is there still something to discuss at the next meeting?
- Did difficulties arise? What must we keep in mind to improve next time?