Generosity Worksheet

Please use this list to write down material things you possess for this exercise. In composing the list, consider items that have some value to you, with the most valuable first on the list; as the list progresses, add items of lesser value.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

9)

10)

After filling out the worksheet, go to the following page.

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Beginning with item #10, review the things you listed in this manner:

* How does this thing reinforce my self-image?
* How does craving and clinging make this thing valuable?
* How would I feel giving this away?
* How would I feel if it is stolen?

The benefit of these contemplations comes from insights into how a material thing creates a sense of self, and how much that sense of self needs to be gratified or defended. The practice of generosity can be cultivated through intentionally giving something of value away. The practice also can be used to resolve the distress and confusion resulting from the loss of some thing, either through forgetfulness or through having the thing stolen.

As the contemplation approaches number one on the list, the benefits increase, depending upon the degree to which you might be open to the discomfort from no longer possessing the thing. The things we own have no intrinsic value; their value comes from cultural conditioning, specifically related to one’s own personal history.