



A fair energy exchange

It's not all about money, but there's got to be a fair energy exchange in all business dealings,
writes Paula Hines

In the world of business across multiple industries, there has been a steady increase in the expectation of people to work for free, and the business of yoga is no different. For those businesses holding this expectation I have a genuine question:

Why would you expect someone's best work if you are not willing to pay for it?

(For clarity, I am not talking about charities or donating one's time and skills to a good cause.)

Think about how you've felt in any job you have done where you feel or know that you are not being paid your worth. Then think about how that feels if you are being asked to work for free. However conscientious you are, even if your work is good it is still highly likely that psychologically you are not bringing your very best to the work, and it is not even intentional. I notice a different energy comes through when I am paid (fairly) for my work monetarily or receiving what I deem is a fair exchange. Having spoken to many people about this, I am far from alone.

In the brilliant Yoga is Dead podcast, Indian-American hosts Tejal

and Jesal discuss 'Karma capitalism', clearly explaining the difference between householders vs. people who renounce everything: "... Householders still have to make a living and that money is not considered evil – they still need to provide for themselves.... and take all of that out of the context of India and bring it into the West where there is no social structure of giving to yogis. If a man dressed in orange robes came to your door and asked for food you'd probably think he was crazy and call the cops."

I would add that as much as we want to serve it's hard to do that from a shaky foundation. As Michael Bernard Beckwith so astutely said on this subject, "It is not about greed but basic survival. You can't be the light of the world if you can't pay your light bill."

If you're a business approaching anyone about working for free, please question this. If you're truly not in a position to pay or offer an energy exchange that is agreeable and mutually beneficial to all involved, then should you be asking at all? Just think what value your business would receive if you paid people fairly.

In the end a fair energy exchange yields better results for everyone. ☸