

## Training Requests & Gift Economics

***For those interested in requesting a training with us, please read this document to get a sense of “how much” a training might cost.***

The East Point Peace Academy is committed to offering all programming as part of an ongoing experimentation in the Gift Economy. The Gift Economy is an alternative paradigm to the current market economy, which can be highly exploitative and, in our view, has contributed to an isolating and individualistic society, a culture of greed, the destruction of our environment and the biggest income disparity we have seen in modern history.

### **A Gift Economy is based on relationship, faith and the inherent generosity of people.**

While our commitment to the Gift Economy continues to be an experiment, here is some of what it means for us now.

1. We have never charged anybody a fee to attend any of our programs. This means that thousands of individuals have come through our workshops and trainings over the past 6 years, and not one of them had to pay a fee to attend.
2. We prioritize our mission and our relationships over funding. The vast majority of our work happens in communities who do not have the capacity to pay. This includes incarcerated people, youth and low-income community leaders. Many of our workshops and programs costs us money, and we do not wait to see if a grant or contract will come through before engaging in the work that we feel called to.
3. We do not take state money or most foundation funds. Too often, funding that comes from larger institutions come with too many strings attached or has too many administrative requirements that takes us away from doing the work. Our work grows through trusting relationships, not reports where we are forced to prove ourselves over and over each year. All of this means that we operate on a shoestring budget with very limited capacity and slow growth. For our work to be sustained, it is critical that individuals and institutions that we are in relationship with who have the capacity to pay more than what might be considered “fair market share” for our work do so. This is the only way that the Gift Economy is sustained – with the generosity of each party.

#### **A story about the power of generosity.**

Several years ago, we arrived at Soledad State Prison for our monthly workshop. We had been working in Soledad for years with a group of incarcerated nonviolence trainers that we had certified. At that point, over 700 men in that prison had gone through a two-day nonviolence workshop, led mostly by our incarcerated trainers.

When we arrived that day, the men handed us a check for over \$700. They had gone cell to cell throughout the prison, asking men to donate to support our work.

When they gave us the check, they said that “we want to make sure that people on the *outside* have access to these teachings.”

Men who make as little as \$2 a day for their labor made this gift, wanting to ensure that people *outside* of the prison had access to our programs. ***That*** is generosity.

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For organizations and institutions considering partnering with the East Point Peace Academy, we understand that it would be easier for us to present a “flat fee,” or even offer a sliding scale. However, these practices go against the principles that we try to live into. For our relationship to be truly relational, we ask each potential partner to gain some understanding of what the Gift Economy is and why it matters to us, to have a sense of East Point’s own finances, to look at your own financial capacity, and based on all of that decide on how much you may be able to give to support our ongoing relationship.

This will take more time than receiving a traditional project proposal and deciding whether or not you can afford it. And yet for us, this is what it means to be in relationship with each other. To get to know each other’s story and values.

Please note that in many ways, the work that we may end up doing with you has already been paid for by those that came before you. It is our past supporters who make it possible for us to continue to offer our work as a Gift. We therefore encourage you not think about what might be a good amount for you to pay as a “fee” for our partnership. Rather, ask yourself how much you want to give to support others in the future in accessing our work.

In helping to figure this out, we ask each potential partner for these four things before contacting us:

1. Read the principles of the Gift Economy, attached.
2. Read our financial statement, attached.
3. Read a short description about our current work, attached.
4. Have a meaningful discussion with your team about the values of the Gift Economy, the work that East Point Peace Academy is engaged in, to look at your own financial resources and figure out how much you are able to, and want to, give to support our work.



As Marshall Rosenberg once said, *“When giving is done out of pure joy, you can’t tell who the giver is and who the recipient is.”*

Take a look at the picture above, of the boy feeding a duck. Who do you think is getting more joy out of that interaction? This is how we would like for you to think about any “payment” made to the East Point Peace Academy.

Knowing that any gift you offer is going to support the spreading of skills and frameworks of building a peaceful culture, knowing that the majority of our work goes to supporting and empowering incarcerated peacemakers, young people and low-income activists from marginalized communities, knowing that we are contributing to building a powerful movement for justice rooted in love and healing: **what amount would make you happy to give?**

## The Principles of the Gift Economy<sup>1</sup>

### 1: Generosity

Pure generosity means giving without any expectation of some reward or exchange. The giving that happens is not part of a *transaction*; rather, it is part of the *transformation* of our culture and relationships. We give because the act of giving benefits and brings joy to both the giver and the recipient. In this way, all programs offered by the East Point Peace Academy is offered as a gift, regardless of a participant's ability to pay.

In a market economy, all goods and services are assigned a monetary value, and therefore creates a financial barrier. When things are given out of generosity, there is no barrier.

### 2: Access

Assigning a monetary value on all goods or services not only diminishes the true value of our gifts, but also creates a barrier to access. We are committed to practices – financial and otherwise – that allow for the full participation of as many people as possible.

In a market economy, because a monetary value is placed on goods and services, not everyone is able to access them. In a Gift Economy, all are welcome regardless of their ability to pay.

### 3: Interdependence

Unlike the market economy which encourages autonomy and self-reliance, the Gift system is a reciprocal system that acknowledges the interdependent of all people - what affects one directly affects all indirectly. A Gift system only functions when we are all giving in support of each other. The responsibility to meet our needs are held collectively, as opposed to each individual being mandated to pay some set amount.

Because giving in a market system is transactional and motivated by a desire to receive something (either payment or a particular good/service), the exchange only benefits those directly involved. In a Gift system, because giving is voluntary and made out of the desire to support others in a “pay-it-forward” approach, that gift will go onto support those you may never meet.

### 4: Intentionality

Rather than living with an assumption that constant growth is always positive, we make all of our decisions with intention. As Gandhi once said, the world has enough for “everyone's needs, not everyone's greed.” This means having conversations about how we want to relate to money: how much we need, who we take money from, what kind of growth we want, etc.

In a market economy, the constant growth mentality of “bigger is always better” is pervasive, even in nonprofits. We take a different approach, and do not always assume that having more funds and growing larger as an organization is better.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the work of the East Bay Meditation Center

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### 5: Equity

We acknowledge that a cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all approach to economics can perpetuate disparity. We work to honor the story, ability and capacity of each person in the room in order to create equity. The Gift system only works when those who have the capacity to give more than their “fair market share” give more than those with less capacity.

The market economy conditions us to always be on the lookout for the “best bargain,” to pay as little as we can and get the most “bang for the buck.” This approach does not always meet the needs of all parties. The Gift system looks at the ability of all parties, and reframes us to think about collective responsibility to meet everyone’s needs.

### 6: Transparency

We work to counter a culture of security and secrecy with trust and transparency. In order to empower each person to make decisions that are right for them, we are committed to a culture of radical financial transparency.

Unlike a market economy where personal and organizational finances are held as tightly guarded secrets, East Point shares our finances with our community on a regular basis, uploading our current financial statements to our website each quarter.

### 7: Faith

Rather than relying on strategic plans and fundraising strategies, we rely on relationships and a faith that if our work is meant to exist in the world, then our community will come together to sustain it. Rather than living in a scarcity model and pouring resources into fundraising, we try to live into the abundance of our world and focus our resources on our work.

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*“And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.” ~ Paulo Coelho*

## **Training Requests & Gift Economics**

### **East Point Financial Statement**

Below is our financial statement from calendar year 2018, our most recent complete fiscal year. More recent quarterly statements are available at [www.eastpointpeace.org/budget](http://www.eastpointpeace.org/budget).

Going into 2020, we were alerted by our biggest funder that after five years of funding, we have “maxed out” of our opportunity with them, and we will not be receiving a grant from them next year. This means that we have to make up \$25,000 in funding in 2020.

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### 2018 Financial Statement

Expenses		Income	
<b>Administration</b>		<b>Contracts</b>	5,910.00
Bank Fees	49.58	<b>Crowdfunding</b>	2,588.26
Business Registration Fees	1,024.00	<b>Foundations / Grants</b>	28,750.00
Equipment	43.67	<b>Individual Donations</b>	17,047.56
Fiscal Sponsor Fees	3,521.99	<b>Merchandise Income</b>	573.00
Internet	20.50	<b>Sustainers Monthly</b>	13,450.26
Office Supplies & Services	631.18	<b>Workshop Contributions</b>	26,252.71
Payroll Services	700.00	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 94,571.79</b>
Phone	207.13		
PO Box Fee	122.00		
Rent, Parking, Utilities	2,125.00		
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$ 8,445.05</b>		
<b>Development</b>			
Services & Events	429.00		
<b>Total Development</b>	<b>\$ 429.00</b>		
<b>Personnel</b>			
Core Team Member 1	47,500.08		
Core Team Member 2	23,999.97		
Bookkeeper	3,192.50		
Taxes	6,251.74		
Worker's Compensation	867.76		
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$ 81,812.05</b>		
<b>Programs</b>			
Digital Services, Prog	876.40		
Food, Programs	872.05		
Honorarium & Stipends	3,970.62		
Manual Fees	185.00		
Printing & Copying	942.24		
Staff Development	320.50		
Supplies	756.77		
Support-Sogorea Te Land Trust	967.50		
<b>Total Programs</b>	<b>\$ 8,891.08</b>		
<b>Travel</b>			
Flights	4,711.39		
Housing	1,251.87		
Meals	635.41		
Transportation	2,309.15		
<b>Total Travel</b>	<b>\$ 8,907.82</b>		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 108,485.00</b>		

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### East Point Peace Academy Current Programs

**Peace from Within:** This program facilitates nonviolence trainings in various correctional facilities across California. East Point currently has certified over 100 Kingian Nonviolence facilitators in three different facilities (minimum of 100-hours of training), including two state prisons and one county jail. These incarcerated facilitators run regular workshops for other incarcerated men, with several hundred individuals receiving trainings each year.

At the Correctional Training Facility (CTF) in Soledad, our incarcerated trainers have facilitated a two-day workshop for over 1,000 inmates. This prison has recently experienced increased violence, with a war between two prison gangs resulting in multiple riots since last summer. Our training team is one of the few groups who are able to have conversations with both sides of this conflict, and have been putting their safety at risk trying to bridge the divide.

Our training team in San Quentin State Prison is also the leadership body of the Day of Peace Committee, a group of incarcerated men who organizes the annual Day of Peace, the only annual, day-long peace festival to take place in a California prison. Each year, thousands of inmates celebrate the Day of Peace with speakers, musicians and performances, as well as a one-minute moment of silence at noon to honor all victims of violence. The Day of Peace was created as a response to a race riot that took place in San Quentin over a decade ago.

In addition to these institutions where we have regular programs, East Point is often times asked to do workshops and trainings in other facilities, including Juvenile Halls and women's institutions.

**Dojo:** This is our public offering, with trainings in everything from nonviolence to mindfulness to movement building. Our oldest workshop offering is the Introduction to Kingian Nonviolence, which introduced the theories of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Since our founding in 2013, we have offered this in the Bay Area dozens of times, with thousands of participants. Our newest offering, Fierce Vulnerability, has been incredibly well received and has long waiting lists each time. This workshop brings in trauma healing and restorative practices into nonviolent direct action work. Our other regular trainings include the Gandhian Iceberg which is an introduction into the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, and More Than a Protest, a workshop on building social movements.

Other trainings that we have offered or are currently developing include Deepening Through Conflict which is a skill building workshop on conflict engagement, From Woke to Awakening which is trying to transform the toxic "call-out" culture of activism, Beloved Community and an Awakened Sangha which combines the teachings of Buddhism with that of Nonviolence, and many others.

All of these workshop are offered on a Gift model, with no fee.

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**Capacity Building:** This program allows us to partner with other organizations and institutions, to offer our trainings to even more populations. Through this program, we have partnered with countless nonprofit organizations, youth groups, high schools, colleges and universities, churches and Buddhist meditation centers, government agencies and others to design custom workshops that fit the need of those organizations. We have conducted meditation workshops, restorative justice circles, organizational development support and much more.

**Yet-To-Be-Named Network:** Our newest program, this Network is a collaborative effort between East Point and many other organizations and individuals from across the country. The Network is a decentralized constellation of small, autonomous teams engaged in nonviolence direct action at the intersection of climate justice and racial healing.

East Point will serve as the California hub of this network. This network is where we will be putting the vast majority of our organizational resources in 2020 and moving forward. We believe that addressing the climate crisis must be a top priority for any organization doing social change work, and we are therefore changing gears and investing heavily into this work. For more about the YTBN Network, visit [www.tinyurl.com/networkannounce](http://www.tinyurl.com/networkannounce), or check out the Network Zine at [www.eastpointpeace.org/network-zine](http://www.eastpointpeace.org/network-zine).