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#### Spiritual Economics -1 Carry-On Consciousness

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So something I learned something when I went on my last cruise: Being that I belong to the “pack the night before and shove it all into one small suitcase and a carryon” crowd, I was surprised to discover that there are folks who bring two huge checked bags, (while agonizing over what they still had to leave at home so they didn’t have to pay the overweight fees) AND a carry-on AND a large personal bag or backpack.

And they are packed two weeks before the cruise begins! That’s like people who start shopping for Christmas in September!

But regardless of where we fall on the ‘how many bags do we bring’ spectrum, we all seem to have similar practices. We start with the clothes - one outfit per day or two? One swimsuit or two? What’s the weather going to be like?

Maybe I should bring a sweater, and a jacket and I’ll need several pairs of shoes for evenings, for walking about, water shoes… flip flops! And an extra outfit just in case, and this shirt - it doesn’t go with anything, but I want to bring it just because I love it… and my blanket. Can’t go anywhere without my blanket, and my camera (maybe I’ll actually use it this time) and my yoga mat, and…

…a book or two or maybe my kindle into my carryon along with headphones, and an iPad for watching a movie or three and snacks.

And before you know it, you’re kneeling on your suitcase, no matter it’s size, straining to zip it shut, wondering if you really need that fifth pair of shoes or backup snacks for a three-hour flight.

We laugh, but it’s familiar because we do this in life too, don’t we? We cram, we stuff, we try to bring everything with us to feel “ready.” We search outside ourselves—packing in advice, money, degrees, things we feel we need to add to ourselves so that we’re better, or better prepared —all driven by that subtle anxiety that we won’t have enough for the journey.

But what if… what if everything we need... is already in our carry-on… and our carry-on is already within us?

For the next 6 weeks we’ll explore the principles of abundance based on the ideas offered in Eric Butterworth’s book, Spiritual Economics. Everyone was given a handout on your way in. If not, feel free to grab one on your way out.

This is your homework if you choose to engage the material more fully. Also, feel free to also read along in the book. If you search Spiritual Economics pdf there are a few online versions. We might also have a copy in our lending library.

One of the hardest things for me to really accept when I first began to study these teachings was hearing that no one could keep my good from me but me.

I thought, are you nuts?

AND my happiness and personal welfare were not dependent on what was happening in the world “out there.”

Soo not true, I thought.

AND that if I wanted a greater flow of abundance in all areas of my life, I had to accept full responsibility for my own thoughts and beliefs.

What??

But then, because, you know, homework, I began to monitor my thoughts. And lo and behold, I discovered an abundance of thoughts and beliefs that were not even remotely in alignment with what I was wanting to experience in my life.

Thank goodness that the next thing I was able to hear through the fog of my lack thinking was that spiritual substance will flow and express freely and easily if I’m not so busy frustrating or blocking it.

Spiritual substance? What is that?

Spiritual substance, or just substance, is an invisible energy, out of which all things are formed. We also call it “God,” “Infinite Spirit,” the Divine, the All That Is, qi, Allah, Great Spirit and many other names. It is what the quantum physicists call the energy verse, an infinite ocean of energy, or the quantum field.

This spiritual substance is infinite, inexhaustible, not limited by time, place, or circumstance. Like the air we breathe, divine substance is everywhere present, and we are immersed in it.

Which means that absolutely everything in the physical universe is made out of it, including you. Including me! Which means substance is present within and as us all the time. We can’t leave it behind. It’s in our spiritual carryon and that carryon is always with us.

Emily Cady, author of Lessons in Truth, writes, “God is not a being with qualities or attributes, but It is the good itself coming into expression as life, love, power and wisdom.”

What she is saying that God is not loving - an attribute - God is Love, everywhere present. God is not wise - an attribute - God is Wisdom, everywhere present. God does not dispense things, God is the ever-present allness of Substance in which we live, move and have our being.

This flies in the face of a god that sits up in the clouds handing out the goods. Our good is not separate from us any more than God or substance is separate from us. God is expressing as us, and since the allness of God is present everywhere at the same time, all the time, that substance is at hand.

And… this can feel a bit uncomfortable for us as we first begin to entertain these teachings because for many of us, this is a radical shift. Most of us have been conditioned to believe that the source of our good is “out there” - in our paycheck, our relationships, our connections, our employers, the stock market, the casino, the lottery…

And this makes sense, for even though we may not have been raised in a traditional faith tradition, most of us are familiar with “ask and believing, you shall receive,” which seems to imply asking someone or something ‘out there’ for what we want.

But modern Biblical scholarship is revealing that the word that was translated as ‘ask’ would have been better translated as ‘claim.’

And so, since substance is what we’re made of, and is with us all the time, we are learning to claim that which is already ours.

And how do we do that? By aligning our consciousness with our Good.

Now we might think our Good is a bright red Ford F250, or a closet full of clothes from Gucci or Armani, but Butterworth cautions against attempting to simply attract stuff and things. If we do this, they tend to fall away after a short while because we have not cultivated the consciousness to sustain them.

Instead, if we cultivate a consciousness of abundance, the things will come of their own accord and they will stay with us, because they are ours by right of consciousness.

Interesting to note that ‘Affluence’ means ‘an abundant flow’ and is not related to things at all, and “wealth” originally meant ‘well-being.’

I’m sure you’re all familiar with the story in the Bible about the widow and her one jug of oil. While on the surface, it appears to be a story about oil, it’s actually a story about consciousness. She had been left with nothing when her husband died and when asked what she had in her house, she said “only one pot of oil.”

She was frightened and anxious and her consciousness was firmly in lack, revealed by her words “**only** one pot,” just in the same way we might say we “only” earn x amount of money. When we think this way, we are aligned with “only,” or lack.

Butterworth reminds us: “Prosperity is a way of living and thinking, it’s not just money or things. Poverty is a way of living and thinking, it’s not just a lack of money or things.”

The prophet Elisha advised the widow to borrow some more pots. He was actually telling her to expand her consciousness. She was aligning with her fear rather than the divine flow and this was expressing in her life as ‘only.’ So, she borrowed some pots indicating she was willing to align herself with an expanded consciousness of abundance.

And so, when she began to pour oil from the one pot she had, she was showing trust in the law, and so was able to fill all of the pots she had borrowed. When the last pot was filled, the oil stopped. She had filled all the pots that she could believe she could have.

If she had borrowed two more pots, the oil would have stopped after the two were filled. If she had borrowed five, same thing. The additional pots were just representative of her expanded consciousness.

And so it is with us. There is a flow of abundance of all things, and it responds to our consciousness. If we are holding out a thimble, that is what we can have. If we are holding out a bucket, that is what we can have.

So, our goal is to expand our consciousness so that the infinite supply will flow forth as needed. And we do this by changing our beliefs. We do this by constantly reminding ourselves of the activity of God ever present in and as us. We do this by reminding ourselves that we are made of divine substance and our supply, being ever present, is always with us.

We do not make something happen. We don’t force the law to work, no more than we force gravity to work. We don’t get out of bed and tell ourselves, “Stay down! Don’t rise!” Gravity is already working just as the substance is always flowing in perfect harmony with whatever consciousness we are holding.

We don’t really even “allow” it to happen other than that we do so by getting out of our own way. Better to say we align with the flow of substance which is always moving into expression.

When we align with love, wholeness, abundance it expresses as such. When we constrict, the flow lessens. The flow of the divine is delighted to fill either our thimble or our bucket or our bathtub- whatever we hold out to it.

Where we are in consciousness influences our thoughts and choices.

For example, at the outset of the pandemic my daughter was working as a bartender at a local restaurant. I had a gut feeling when we shut down, that it wasn’t going to be for a short period of time.

When I shared this with her, my daughter decided to release her attachment to that job, and open to the flow of abundance trusting that the right job would show up.

We chatted a bit and decided that grocery stores would remain open throughout the shutdown, however long it lasted, and so she applied to a local Natural Foods Coop. Before she had the opportunity to apply anywhere else, they called her and hired over the phone during that call, and she started her new job two days later.

While others who worked at that restaurant struggled to get unemployment and did without while anxiously waiting for the restaurant to reopen, my daughter ended up with full benefits and more income than she had made while bartending. When she shifted to an abundance consciousness, the world responded.

Butterworth writes: “You do not cause economic conditions, though we all share in the cumulative consciousness that is the cause; but if you give them reality by your negative thoughts or conversations about them, you become synchronized with an energy flow which has as swift an influence on your life as the light that bathes the room when you throw the switch.”

When we know this, when we allow and practice this presence of God as being in and through all things including us, this knowing, this cultivated consciousness will guide us to make choices and decisions that are aligned with that which we are wanting to express - abundance in all things.

Prosperity doesn’t begin with circumstances—it begins with consciousness. Prosperity is not something you get—it’s something you express.

In closing, are you waiting for something external - that baggage conveyor belt- to deliver your good? Waiting for the perfect job, the right partner, the next break—to arrive on the luggage conveyor belt - that thing that will finally prove you’ve arrived, that you’re safe, provided for, blessed?

Or are you ready to shift into the consciousness that your good is with you all whole time? Your consciousness is your spiritual carry-on—what you believe, expect, and affirm determines what you experience.

That’s the shift—from outer dependence to inner awareness. From waiting to awakening. Your supply travels with you, because it’s you.

You are the steward of a divine carry-on—packed not with fear, but with trust in principle, in spiritual law; packed not with lack, but with limitless love and supply.

You don’t need to chase the next job, person, bank balance, or opportunity—you need to recognize and activate what’s already present.

You’re already equipped. You’re already sourced. You’re already enough.