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#### Spiritual Economics -2: Preparing for Plenty: Making Room for an Abundant Life

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In the mid to late 1800’s transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson penned the idea that “Abundance is not a result you create. It is an existing state you recognize.“

During this same time period, Phinneus Quimby, regarded as the father of what is now known as New Thought teachings, began to explore the relationship between the mind and health.

And over his years of trial and practice, he came to the conclusion that not only do our strongly held thoughts and beliefs create in our life experience, we can learn to have some degree of control over those thoughts and beliefs and

to the degree that we do so, our life experience will follow suit.

And so, the seed was planted: Abundance isn't something we need to chase. It's something we realize is already ours and we prepare ourselves to open to it and receive it.

Last week we began our exploration of the principles of abundance based on the ideas in Eric Butterworth’s book, Spiritual Economics. Everyone was offered a handout on your way in. If you didn’t get one, feel free to grab one on your way out. This will be your homework, should you choose to go a bit deeper with this material.

For those of you joining us today, we began last week with the foundational premise that there’s this stuff- this spiritual substance - that is everywhere present.

This universal substance is synonymous with what we call God, or The Ground of All Being. Synonymous with what the quantum physicists call the quantum field.

Regardless of what we call it, this spiritual substance is infinite, and inexhaustible and is what everything in the physical universe is made out of. Everything!

Do we know exactly what it is? No. We are still learning, and each new discovery seems to negate previous knowledge while opening new doors. The universe is still a grand mystery.

But at this point in our unfolding, this quantum soup, this spiritual substance appears to be an infinite ocean of conscious energy, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent, that is highly intelligent and creative and that it has its own inherent spiritual laws.

So, following along with Butterworth, the first step is recognizing and accepting that there is this infinite spiritual substance, and that it is everywhere present, and that we are made out of it, we are inseparable from it.

We are asked to cultivate the consciousness that we live and think and act with the absolute conviction that this God-substance is present right where we are and is in everything that we do.

Our next step is to understand that our life experience begins with us. We create our own lived experience from the inside out.

We have been conditioned to think that we are at the mercy of events outside of ourselves that are beyond our control. That someone outside of us has more power in our own lives than we do.

But Butterworth assures us that our lives are not governed by the fickle finger of fate or a whimsical entity on a throne in the clouds. The quality of our lives is determined by the quality of our consciousness.

And this doesn’t mean we must never say a swear word or adopt a toxic positivity where we deny ourselves the full range of out emotions. It means we align our thoughts and beliefs with the truth that we are immersed in universal spiritual substance and that to responds to us.

Once we are willing to accept the Truths that there is this spiritual substance that is everywhere present and that we can exert some influence over our life experience, the next question becomes how.

Enter visualization.

For our purposes today, perhaps it would be helpful to think of Substance as the spiritual Playdoh of the universe. And we are made of it, and we get to play with it.

This spiritual playdoh is just like the playdoh we played with as children. We can literally mold it into anything - it is unresisting, completely malleable. The possibilities of what we can create with it are **limited only by what we can conceive of.**

So, what are we going to do with it? Because we’ve been conditioned to live from the outside in, the first thing we tend to do is try to manipulate it with our hands to make it do what we want. But we discover that this doesn’t work very well. The playdoh doesn’t respond to force.

Ahh, we realize. This is magical Play-Doh. It responds to our beliefs and thoughts and our overall vibration. We can create with this spiritual playdoh using the power of our minds.

Both Ernest Holmes and Frederick Bailes, who were New Thought educators, teach that our beliefs are like molds - think of a candle mold, or a cookie cutter - that we form in our minds. These molds then go forth from us and this universal Play-Doh flows with ease into the mold we present it.

The same as the woman in the Bible story with the one pot of oil. The containers she poured into represented the mold of increased abundance that she presented to the universal substance. It then quite merrily poured itself into each of her containers until they were all full.

This is how visualization works. When we conceive of something we want to experience and then deeply feel it within, we create that condition in mind - or using our analogy we create a mental/emotional mold - and that mold is then infilled by the universal substance - the universal playdoh.

The confidence with which we create the mold and the restrictions, both conscious and unconscious, we place on it, determines the outcome.

For example, when I was in my teens, I wanted a VW bug in the worst way. But my mold was filled with doubt, financial lack and low deservabilty. I did eventually get my bugs - two in fact - but neither was the color I dreamed of, and they both had engine issues. They reflected my desire as well as my lack consciousness.

There’s another story that illustrates this well: a man, we’ll call him Bob, was hired as a salesman and his new boss was so impressed during their interview that he put Bob in the company’s best territory. Bob went out, did his thing, and earned $25K in commissions.

The higher ups were upset because that territory usually had business resulting in $75K in commissions. And so poor Bob was demoted to the poorest territory in the company.

And guess what he earned in commissions? $25K! But this was considered out of the ordinary crazy good for that particular territory.

So, assuming that Bob had figured things out, and found his stride, he was promoted back to the best territory where he again earned… $25K.

Bob had some limiting belief that would only allow him to earn $25K no matter what the external world around him had available.

In this way, Butterworth says: We see things not as they are but as we are. A greater abundance was actually all-around Bob in that rich territory, but what he held in his consciousness wouldn’t allow him to experience it no matter the confidence that his employer showed in him.

And it wasn’t that he was lazy: he had to work hard to make $25K in the worst territory. He just held a strong limiting belief that shaped the mold he placed in the cosmic playdoh.

So, if we are that powerful without our even knowing what we are doing, how might we influence our lives when we are aware of how this works?

We can begin to use this law consciously, rather than allowing our programming from yesterday to continue to create an experience we no longer want to have.

And so how do we go about doing that?

Many of us have at some point created a vision board where we clip pictures from magazines and paste them on poster board as a means to imagine what we want to create in our lives.

Butterworth frowns on this, calling it a gross misrepresentation of a beautiful spiritual law. When we create in this way, our focus is placed on the outer rather than the inner.

Making a vision board doesn’t change our consciousness, it just focuses our attention on things in the manifest world.

We can only imagine that which we already know. We cut pictures out of magazines that already exist and put them together in forms that already exist. This doesn’t allow our consciousness to shift giving us the opportunity to be open to something new that we’ve never thought of before.

Also, most of us don’t know what is lurking in the depths of our subconscious in terms of limiting beliefs and this can influence what we can manifest. And so, attempting to create in this way can be discouraging because our consciousness doesn’t change by focusing on a material thing.

Visualization, on the other hand, has us see from a consciousness of always present substance. This consciousness will draw to us the things that we want or need without them becoming the focus of our existence.

Visualization allows us to open to something completely new, something totally unexpected. It opens the door to work that we could have never conceived of - jobs that had no job description before we came along, partners that are never what we imagined, but with whom we have a relationship that exceeds our every expectation.

Butterworth encourages us to see from a consciousness of ever-present substance. As we focus on God consciousness, we ultimately project that consciousness as the way we see every situation.

We release our old ways and see the abundance everywhere present in our lives. This “right seeing” is one of the most important aspects to demonstrating Truth in our lives.

We keep ourselves so strongly centered in the consciousness of affluence that we literally exude it and we see it all around us. Quantum physics tells us that our thoughts and intentions fueled by our feelings actually radiate out into the unified field. This is how we manifest abundance in our lived experience.

Now at this point the how diverges. One point of view says to visualize exactly what you want down to the color and detail and then infuse that vision with emotion.

For example, you do want that bright red Ford F250 pickup truck, and you visualize right down to the hubcaps with yourself happy and smiling behind the steering wheel and place that mold in the universal substance.

And the other says to be more open and fluid. To center ourselves in an abundance consciousness and work more with the feeling, trusting the universe to know more than we can with our limited thinking about what is perfect for us.

To my knowledge, both work. People have shared with me that they get the material things that they want, and I’ve read stories about this as well.

I’ll be honest and say that the first method doesn’t work for me. It’s not that I can’t attract things, it’s that I often find that the thing doesn’t satisfy in the way that I thought it would.

Here’s a true story that was shared with me that illustrates this. A person thought they wanted a red Mercedes. They visualized that red Mercedes convertible down to every detail: leather seats, push button everything, powerful engine, top of the line extravagance.

And they got the car.

And a month later, they were back to feeling dissatisfied. Yes, the car was nice, but they realized that it didn’t fill whatever hole or need they thought it would.

And because they were a practitioner of these New Thought spiritual teachings, they knew to reflect on what that hole might be. What did the car represent to them?

After some internal exploration they discovered that what they were feeling was powerless, and they wanted to feel powerful.

They thought that having a powerful red expensive sports car would give them that feeling of power. And it did, for a hot minute - from the outside - but it didn’t stick. What needed to shift was their consciousness.

And when that happened, they felt more powerful. They ended up selling the car and buying a pickup truck and felt powerful whether they were behind the wheel or not.

What I’ve learned for myself is that being more open and fluid and focusing on what I want my life experience to feel like, things, people, opportunities and situations show up in my life experience that I couldn’t have imagined.

For me, when I describe what I want to the universe down to the tiniest detail I feel like I have handed this vast infinite universe of infinite potential, that is delighted to give me my heart’s desire, a straw and told it, “And this is the only way it can come to me.”

But when my visualization is more open and fluid, filled with feeling, it almost happens faster than I can handle it, and in ways I didn’t imagine. For example, when I bought my last car, I thought I wanted a different make and model. I looked every day but couldn’t find one. I was focused on the outer thing.

And then it occurred to me to visualize what I wanted in a vehicle, but not limit it to a particular model. I wanted a car that would fit my tall self with comfortable seats, a stick shift (gotta have a stick shift), a car I would count on - it was reliable, and it had good gas mileage. When I thought about such a car, I felt expansive, excited and joyful.

A few days later, a friend of mine invited me to sit in his car. It was one of the more comfortable cars I’d ever sat in - head room! And he told me it was reliable and got good gas mileage.

I started looking online and lo and behold, there was one stick shift Kia Soul in Washington state, about an hour and a half from me. It was so much better for me than the cars I had initially been limiting myself to.

The universe usually can see a bigger picture for us than we can see for ourselves. We typically limit ourselves by what we have already experienced, and by what we’ve been able to have or accomplish to date.

Friends of mine visualized having a vacation in a beautiful warm location, that was relaxing and novel for them. They didn’t decide on a place or even really to start making plans, just held that lovely vague vision that was full of good feelings, good food, fun and beauty.

One day a person they knew approached them and offered a one week stay in their condo… in a warm, beautiful location… for free.

The condo was more beautiful and better located than they would have gotten if they had booked the vacation themselves. And talk about being in the flow of abundance.

They didn’t need to wait for money to arrive in their checking account. Abundance doesn’t always show up that way.

Regardless of whether you choose to create specifically or generally, emotion is key. When we have an emotion, that emotion vibrates at a particular frequency creating energy molecules that leave our bodies and connect with similar molecules outside of ourselves.

It is this activity which draws or links us to our lived experience. And the stronger the emotion, the more energized or powerful the molecules.

When we tell the universe, “My joy can only look like this,” the universe is happy to oblige and fill that specific mold, but when we say, “Bring me joy that feels like this,” I can almost imagine it rubbing it’s hands with glee and saying, “wait until you see what I have in store for you!”

Butterworth tells us, “There is no way that you can really being to understand SE or to make it work in your life until you are free from the sense of God “up there” and are on fire with the awareness of the Presence.”

When we are on fire with the Presence, we know with a profound faith that we are immersed in universal spiritual substance and we can impress upon that substance a mold of our desire and it will come to pass. It is spiritual law. It is how the Universe creates: things are thought into being.

Butterworth’s definition of faith is “Consciousness centered in the universal source. The whole universe of innate substance is centered in you. There is nothing you can do to add to that or take away from it.”

But note that faith does not make God work. Faith simply aligns us with the divine flow that is always present. I think of faith as having absolute confidence that when you turn the light switch, the light will come on.

You don’t even give it a second thought. You just flick the switch and expect the light to come on. There is no doubt. Imagine having that level of confidence that when you align your consciousness with something, it must reveal itself.

The universe responds in direct proportion to how powerfully and confidently we know that “we are spiritual beings, living in a limitless spiritual universe, endowed with the whole potential energy flow of the universe.’”

Butterworth affirms for us, “Right where you are, in your present level of development, there is a limitless, resource of wisdom and guidance, ability, and creativity, and of substance and supply through which you can do, and do superlatively well, all that needs to be done… **If** you can let go of limited self-identification… **If** you can believe.”

I’ll end with a quote from Rumi:

“The Source is within you,

and this whole world

is springing up from it.

The Source is full,

its waters are ever-flowing;

Do not grieve,

drink your fill!

Don't think it will ever run dry--

This is the endless Ocean!”