

Living the Abundant Life provides a framework to release the fear, negativity and unforgiveness keeping you from the prosperity you desire. Creating more love, joy or income uses the same process of releasing and opening to positive energy. Each chapter contains an idea to work with through exercises and journaling. Whether used in a group book study setting or individually, practicing these truths will reveal areas for growth and provide tools to work through them.

Living the Abundant Life: A Step-by-Step Guide to Realizing Prosperity

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A Step-by-Step Guide to Realizing Prosperity

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Chapter 6

Accept Your Good

We've all heard the Bible quote "Ask and ye shall receive." It sounds very simple, and it's true. The Universe operates to give us what we ask for. Whatever we hold in mind, we draw to us. When we focus on something, we get more of it. Hence the truism "Be careful what you wish for." Good or bad, we attract what we put out.

We have worked for several weeks on opening up our inner restrictions to the river of abundance. With a smoothly flowing river, we still might not be seeing the abundance we had expected. What's the problem? As Rosalind Russell says as Auntie Mame, "Life's a banquet and most poor suckers are starving to death." Life is a banquet, the table is groaning with all the wealth, happiness and health that there is to offer. However, there is no table service. If you want to be waited on, all you will get is waiting. You have to serve yourself.

Claim your abundance. Sometimes all we need do is open our eyes. During one abundance class, a woman named Rita stated that what she wanted was a bicycle. The next week, she came to class and said that the most amazing thing had happened. "I pulled into my garage, and right in front of me, one foot away, was a beautiful bicycle. I looked at it and said to myself, 'That's a brand new bicycle that has been sitting there for three months for my godson to pick up. I wonder if he still wants it?' When I called him, he said that he didn't want it and that I could have it. And I saw it for the first time when I said, 'I want a bicycle.' I didn't realize it was in my headlights every night for

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the last three months." What an example of the abundance that is all around us, if we just look.

You may find this hard to believe, but many of us actually refuse our abundance. It happens more than you might think. Maybe we were even offered money. There is a great scene in the movie *Defending Your Life* in which the main character is approached to invest in a big Asian company before it becomes wildly successful. Looking back, it is easy to see that even a small investment would have yielded big rewards. When we set our intention and open ourselves up to all the abundance there is for everyone, the Universe responds by giving us opportunities. We have to approach the banquet and serve ourselves.

Turning down your Good might be easier to see in others first, if you can't see it in yourself. Perhaps you may have offered something to someone who needs it, only to be turned down. "No thanks, I can do it myself," your friend may have told you when you offered to loan a tool to make a job easier, or offered to set up her computer. After turning down your offer to help, your friend may have struggled with the job or computer, wondering, "Where is all this Good I've been hearing about?" The friend turned down her Good in the form of your help.

You may have heard the story about the person whose house was in the path of a flooding river. The water was up to the door, and the National Guard came with a bus to evacuate the neighborhood. "No, thanks, God will save me," said the homeowner, staying put. The waters rose, and a boat came by. "Can I give you a lift out?" said the boatman. "No, thanks, God will save me," was the reply. The homeowner was forced up and out onto the roof to stay dry, and a helicopter came. "Can we move you to safety?" the paramedic called from the helicopter. "No, thanks, God will save me," was the response. The water kept rising, and the homeowner was worried. "God, why

aren't you saving me?" he cried into the air. "I sent you a bus, a boat and a helicopter. What are you waiting for?" was the response.

How many of us have ignored offers of help, ideas that keep coming back, plans and dreams, hunches and intuitions? This is our Good, knocking at the door. Don't tell it, "Go away, I am waiting for my Good." It's here! Open up, use the Good to make your intentions manifest. Welcome all the ideas and thoughtfully consider how to use them to make your dreams come true. You might have to do some work to get the idea into a working model. As the saying goes, "When you pray, move your feet." You may have to provide the elbow grease to get the job done, but prayer and meditation will guide you in the right direction.

As Georgiana Tree West puts it in her famous *Prosperity's Ten Commandments*,

Loosing the problem and letting God solve it does not mean that we are entirely released from all responsibility concerning our affairs. Jesus' illustration of the lilies of the field ... has been much misunderstood. The lazy type of mind, the mind that is always looking for a chance to shirk responsibility, interprets it as meaning that one only needs to pray and then do nothing whatever toward helping oneself. As a matter of fact, the lilies of the field are constantly busy at the business of growing and producing blossom and seed. ... Every lily is being true to its own inherent nature and doing exactly what is expected of the lily idea of Divine Mind. When we can learn to be true to our own inherent nature and do only those things that we are intended to do, we, too, will find that our needs are beautifully met without struggle and competition. (1996, p. 59)

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Good comes in many forms, not just checks. Financial prosperity can be directly impacted by money coming in, but also by ideas or assistance that will bring in money in the future. Start the Good flowing by asking how you can serve others. Who knows where it will lead? You know that you have to start the flow yourself by giving, then have faith that your needs will be met, too. By now you will have experienced the joy of giving. Give freely and joyfully, and it will be returned to you many times over.

So, are you fully participating in the flow? By that, are you experiencing the full cycle of giving and receiving? Some people are very good at giving, but have difficulty receiving Good. Are you one of these people? Do you give constantly to your friends and family, but when they want to give something to you, do you say, "I don't need anything"? Everyone needs something. I have a friend, Aggie, who is always there for others. People flock to her to help them solve their problems. Often, she helps simply by listening and adding them to her prayer list. I appreciate her so much, and recently asked how I could support her in prayer. She said thank you, but she didn't need any prayers right now. From this and other conversations, I know that Aggie has difficulty accepting help from others. She is unfailingly generous, but doesn't allow others to give to her, so she doesn't get the full benefit of the circle of generosity.

Remember that it takes two to carry out a gift transaction. There must be a giver and a receiver, one who offers and one who accepts. Until that which is offered as a gift is accepted, there is no consummation of the transaction. ... At any period of our existence we manifest as much or as little as we are willing to accept of God. (West, 1996, p. 115)

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Can you admit that you need help? Do you think it's a sign of weakness? Do you allow others to help you? I'm not talking financially, but personally. If you are not able to accept even prayer help from others, you are holding something of yourself back from the relationship. Take a moment to reflect. Do you have people you would consider friends from whom you are hiding a part of yourself? (This is common, so don't be ashamed.) Consider why you do not share that part of your life. Is it because you feel like you will lose control of the relationship? If they find out your deepest secret, will they have a hold over you? If this is the case, your relationship cannot become very close. Often times, what we consider shameful – an addiction, a youthful indiscretion or an instance of bad judgment – may be more easily understood by others than we think. Give some credit to your friend. He or she may have a similar shadow and embracing both your shadows can be very healing. You can find support to work through your issues together.

If the reason you are holding back is not about control, is it because you can't admit that your life is not perfect, that everything is not going well? Are you so concerned with what others think that you will hide your needs and desires, rather than giving others the chance to help you fulfill them? My former neighbor Anna is an amazing woman. She is a single mother and has her own business. She loves both of these parts of her life. Yet, she lives paycheck to paycheck and sometimes struggles to get by. Many of her friends are wealthy and have no idea that Anna has any financial concerns. She is a wonderful friend to them, and helps them out, hosts parties and goes out of her way to do them favors. They in turn will give her tickets to shows or other items, nice gestures, but they do not help her pay the bills.

How can they reciprocate in a way that is helpful to Anna if she works so hard at hiding her financial problems from them? What kind of a relationship can they share when so much of her is hidden? By

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showing only the surface of her life to others, Anna only gets superficial help. Ask the Universe for what you want. Be vulnerable enough to let the Universe know how to help you, and you will be abundantly blessed.

Neutralizing Negative Thoughts

Do you ever say “Nothing goes right for me” or “I never have enough money”? What energy do you think these ideas carry? Any Good that was coming your way will be deflected by these ideas of lack. “Ask and ye shall receive” applies to bad things as well as good, and these ideas advertise to the Universe that you don’t want Good. Since you get what you ask for, you will attract negative experiences and repel money. Mind your thoughts and words, for they are powerful.

Don’t be afraid to be vulnerable. Secrets put distance in a relationship, the bigger, the more distance. If relationships are part of your feeling of lack, then you should consider your part in your lack of closeness. How much of yourself do you share with others? While you don’t want to blurt out all your intimate thoughts on the first date, do you ever get to the next step of sharing a part of you? Do you ever get to the step of sharing your whole self? Often, we hide the parts of ourselves that we feel are unlovable. Then, we start to think that we are unlovable because we have shameful pieces. Only by bringing the shadow parts of ourselves to light can we let our whole selves be loved and healed.

How many times do you find yourself censoring what you say to guard your secrets? How much effort do you put on making the appearance of perfect health/relationship/ finances/success? What would happen if you let people see the real you? It probably wouldn’t be as bad as you think. And you just might get some help with your problem or support in getting through a tough time. You might say, “But that child abuse happened to me in the past. I don’t need to tell

anyone about it now.” If it still impacts your current thoughts and relationships, you haven’t let go, and it affects everything you do.

If you absolutely can’t see yourself telling people about your issue, is it because you don’t really want to do anything about it? This is a tough one, but think about it anyway. If you cannot tell people about your addiction, for example, is it because you don’t want to do anything about it?

Thinking, Feeling, Writing

If you are not feeling close to your friends, or think that they don’t know the real you, journal about this: I am afraid of telling people about _____ because _____. List all the things that you don’t want people to know, and admit to yourself when you are not willing to work on some issues. By acknowledging where you are closed, you know what you need to work on. At the right time, you will work on these issues, too.

How can you take one small step in opening to others? **Find one secret that you are willing to share. Share this with a trusted confidant and see what happens.** I think you will find that your confidence is respected, and your burden lighter. When you open up, step by step, you will find the joy of being loved for your whole self.

Opening up also means being open to receive. Allow others to help you. **This week, when someone asks you if he or she can help you, say yes.** The harder this is for you, the more you need it. **Find a way to accept the help that is offered.** When the greeter at the store asks if she can help you find something, say, “Yes, where is the _____ department?” When the waiter asks if you have any questions, say, “Yes, what is your favorite dish?” When you are frazzled and your good friend asks if he can help, say, “Yes, I need to talk to someone calm” (or sane!), and get some support. When an acquaintance asks,

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you might say, “Yes, I could use a smile” (or hug, prayer, cappuccino, whatever works for you). Take one more step in opening yourself to the Good that can come from others.

By letting others help you, they get to experience the joy of giving. They get to express who they are, help another human being, and get a feeling of accomplishment. They are important – they helped someone. They feel valued, and you feel worthy of their time and attention. Accepting help from others is a gift to yourself and to others. Open up by saying yes.

What are you resistant to? **Make a note of each time this week that you would normally say “no,” “not now,” or “not me.” Turn it around by taking that next step and saying “yes,” “thank you, I will,” or “I’d really like a hug.”** Accept the Good that is being offered to you right now, because you are drawing it to you. If the Universe is not offering what you need right now, state your desires. I find that frequently, when I state a desire out loud, it manifests. (It annoys my mother, because as soon as I write something on a Christmas wish list, it shows up in my life, making me a difficult person to shop for.) **This week, be sure to ask for something you really want from another person.** Good energy is coming to you. Accept it and keep the energy flow going. You are putting out a positive flow of energy to receive a positive flow of energy. Accept what is being offered, and ask for your desires. Your Good is on its way. Thank you, Spirit.

Three weeks ago you looked at how you normally spend your time and money. How have your behaviors changed since you evaluated or focused your priorities? You can use the Appendix to guide you through another evaluation. Do you see yourself moving closer to your goals?

This week’s denial: I never say no to my Good.

This week's affirmation: I open myself to perfect abundance. I say Yes!

Tips and Tools

There is a lot of Good out there for you. On the Internet, you can search on “money saving tips” and you will find many blogs and newsletters about how to save money. I find some good tips myself. A word of caution about Internet use, however. Please be careful about the information you provide via the Internet. There are a lot of scams out there. I use the Internet to read about topics and to purchase items, but I tend not to give out my information unless I know the store and feel comfortable about the site. Identity theft is a major concern these days. Be especially careful about sending financial information (such as online banking) when using a wireless connection.

Speaking of financial information, one tool you are offered is a free annual copy of your credit report from each of the three nationwide consumer reporting companies. You can complete the request form at www.ftc.gov/credit and mail it in. Do not contact the credit companies individually (Equifax, Experian, Trans Union). There is also more information about improving your credit score, protecting against identity theft, and what to do in cases of identity theft at the FTC website.

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