

The Energy of Money: *Get Into the Flow!*

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Actors, healers, artists and musicians have long lived with the notion that poverty leads to spiritual and artistic advancement. This assumption could not be further from the truth yet many of us have become victims of this perception.

When I was studying to be an actress, I thought the more I subjected myself to struggle, the better performer I'd become. I would put myself through the most ridiculous situations that only led to pain and suffering. I was caught up in this predicament for years—and still, on occasion, I suffer bouts of temporary insanity when I think this is the reality for a writer. No more.

Haven't you seen successful writers and actors and musicians? Haven't you met successful massage practitioners? Don't you know in the depths of your being that you can achieve not just prosperity consciousness, but prosperity itself—with all its joys of independence and freedom—by removing this veil of ignorance?

Until you change the vibration of your thoughts and join the collective consciousness of financial abundance and personal power; until you come from a place of higher awareness, integrity and professionalism, you will continue to spin around on the wheel of poverty. Visualize prosperity

The good news is that there are many ways to change this cycle. For instance, today, this moment, see yourself as successful and begin to act, move and speak from that place. Sit down every morning before you start your day and create a visualization. See yourself as the abundant person you see in your dreams, and then act as if you are that person. Don't do this out of ego, but with the knowledge in your heart that you are here to help people; that your service is vital to the health and well-being of many; and that you are a channel for this divine energy to move through. As a result of coming from that pure place of light, God-awareness, consciousness, angelic presence, Buddhi or whatever you choose to call it, the universe will provide you with the money you need.

Name that source of personal power, embrace it and bring it into your daily visualization. Offer your work to this source. When you move out of the place of "doership," this source can work through you to guide you to actions that will manifest the best results. Continue to offer your practice, your gifts and your financial situation to this source, and then move out of the way. You will eventually attract the clientele you wish to serve.

One of the wealthiest men I know, a commodities trader on Wall Street, explained to me how to make all trans-

actions fair. He told me this secret when I began a new business venture and asked him what I should charge clients. I wanted to be fair to my customers but also didn't want to undercharge for my services. "If it's fair to you and fair to the other person, it's a good deal. If it's not fair to one person, it's not a good deal," he said.

I took his words to heart and before long discovered that the more I circulated money, the more money came back to me. I began to get into the flow of this circulation and realized that it didn't only occur when money was exchanged, it occurred when there was an energy exchange. "I'll give you a neuromuscular treatment, and in exchange, you give me \$65"; "I'll give you six Trager treatments and in exchange you design the first three pages of my Web site"; "I'll give you a reiki session and you give me \$60. Oh, you can't afford \$60? That's

OK, how about giving me \$25 and cutting my hair?" s

In other words, there's always a way to circulate money (energy) and have it work both for you and for the person you are having the exchange with. If you can define this paradigm for yourself and truly understand that money is about giving and receiving and that there are a billion ways for this energy to be exchanged, you'll never have to feel guilty about discussing money with clients, or asking for or receiving money again. Think of all the possibilities that would open up for you when talking to clients who perhaps can't afford your ser-

vices. It's beyond barter. It's energy in exchange for energy.

The Lakshmi principle

Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth in the Hindu tradition, is most often portrayed sitting upon an open lotus flower. Lakshmi brings growth, generosity and abundance to whatever is life enhancing. We often see her with one or two of her hands fully open, from which shower gold coins. (When one hand alone is pouring

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coins, the other is often depicted with an open palm facing outward, poised in the gesture of blessing that means "fear not.") This gesture might serve as a reminder that the stream can stop, should our invocation and honoring of these gifts cease to flow from us with sincerity and devotion.

How can you keep Lakshmi flowing in your life and massage practice? Here's an interesting story that might help plant this message in your heart:

There was a successful orthodontist in Northampton, Massachusetts. Rumor had it that Dr. Rutherford (not her real name) was by far the best orthodontist in all of New England. She had three offices throughout the state, and there were children on waiting lists at all three. I was a single parent, starting my own business, and could not afford braces for my son, although he needed them badly. So I made an appointment with Dr. Rutherford. (I figured I might as well start with the best.) I explained my situation and asked if she would consider bartering since I was starting my own public-relations firm. Without

pausing, she invited me to lunch. I couldn't believe it. We met at a lovely restaurant the following week and she explained how she'd been thinking of ways to connect all three offices. I suggested creating a newsletter that would involve all the children she served. They could submit articles and jokes and poems, draw pictures of themselves before and after the braces. We could have a contest to name the newsletter. She loved the idea and we shook hands. It was a great deal.

I produced the newsletter, *Brace Yourself*, for three years on a bimonthly basis, and Dr. Rutherford took care of all my son's orthodontic needs. It was a fabulous exchange. It became no surprise to me why her practice was so successful. I must have told 50 people about her generosity and several of my friends ended up going to her.

Here's another story for you. Joseph Brunetto, a certified hypnotherapist from Westchester, New York, usually receives his established fee, \$55-65 per hour. However, he will make an exception when the situation warrants it. "There are times," he says, "when a client can't afford my service and I will accept a trade. Last year, for instance, there was an artist who was out of work and recovering from a serious operation when he was recommended to me. Our understanding was that we would engage in a barter arrangement. So I worked with him for several sessions and afterwards received a work of art in exchange.

"Everything worked out fine," he adds, "but I do limit these situations; otherwise, they can get out of hand."

Joe Miglierie is a chiropractor from Northfield, New Jersey. His practice, Peak Performance, uses an honor-fee system (or "the box on the wall"), which allows patients to determine a set weekly payment based upon what they can afford. This concept has been in existence for more than 30

years and was used exclusively when chiropractic work was a cash-only business and, in some places, illegal. Miglierie feels it is the purest form of payment, and allows an entire family to come for spinal checkups on a regular basis, no matter what they can afford.

"Chiropractic care," Miglierie says, "should be made available to every human being, so they can express life to their maximum potential."

This honor system is not designed to be a charity or a bargain, nor is it to be taken advantage of. Miglierie explains that it is a privilege—and an obligation—to pay in this way. Patients who participate must come to the office at least once a week; pay the weekly fee that they determined on the first visit; and refer others to Miglierie's office. If a patient's financial situation changes, it is his or her responsibility to adjust the fee accordingly.

You matter

If Miglierie didn't feel worthy of receiving a just amount from his clients, he would starve. If he didn't have the attitude of gratitude, he would not attract people who were thankful for his unique billing system. What are the thoughts you are putting out there?

Joe Lubow, executive director of the Sarasota School of Massage Therapy, in Sarasota, Florida, told me an interesting story. He said he knew a therapist who charged \$120 for a 10-minute session. Someone asked the therapist how he had the nerve to charge such an enormous amount of money for so little time. The therapist said, "I charge \$10 for what I do and \$110 for what I know."

On the other hand, there are practitioners who determine a set price for their clients and stay firm. They do not barter and have made the decision to offer charity through other means.

Decide what works for you and