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I am Jim Natichioni of RightLivelihood.com and I have written the inspirational book: **Finding Your Path, Tales of Right Livelihood**. This excerpt is from Chapter Ten: “People Skills and Prosperity” and relates to clarity of values in sending a congruent message and prosperity consciousness. To read more please visit RightLivelihood.com.

Finding your path and right livelihood: This chapter has two parts. The first concerns those who chose to influence people in order to earn a living through perfecting people skills, the second addresses those who wonder if following a path with money as the central objective is too costly a price to pay. Either way being considerate of others is always part of right work. Understand your values clearly and if your belief system does not align with your career consider a change. The key is to send a congruent message. We want prosperity but wonder if we should seek it. We wish to align with the ever-present substance but buy into the concepts of scarcity and lack. We want to think positively but the vast majority of the pictures held in mind are negative. And finally, although there are fewer of my experiences in this chapter please remember: in most cases the amateur and I are often one and the same.

How to influence people:

The number one teacher of the art of public speaking was a man named Dale Carnegie, a man who came from a background of poverty and failed at nearly everything he tried--including speaking--until he stuck with it so long that he had to succeed.

Carnegie’s How to Win Friends and Influence People became widely popular. He did a thorough job interviewing hundreds of the most successful people of his era; and in addition he taught classes in public speaking to thousands of students. His book includes perhaps the largest breadth of information available in his genre. And what trade secret did all of this insight into the Western psyche reveal? In the words of Carnegie’s favorite industrialist and master of the art of persuasion, Charles Schwab: *“Be hearty in your approbation (approval) and lavish in your praise.”* To these two experts, sincerity and tact in making people feel important serve as keys to success.

Mary Kay Ash: Pretend that every person you meet has a sign around his or her neck that says “Make me feel important.”

Communication skills and body language:

Studies made at the Carnegie Institute of Technology showed that, regardless of the type industry, eighty five percent of a person’s financial success relies on their mastery of people skills. This is not just sales we are talking about. Communication skills include the mastery of phraseology, tone, inflection and body language. Business training experts recommend that you learn the vernacular and scripts of sales in general and your business in particular. Tom Hopkins recommends you don’t wing it; practice your delivery, ask

discovery, leading and alternative advance questions and never dead end ones that lead to 'yes' or 'no' answers. Also, don't sell logic--arouse emotions, and pick your closing words carefully. Hopkins goes on to say that motivating people to get on board is all in the words, the delivery, and the passion behind both. Personally I like to wing it, hate the scripted or rehearsed jargon, find leading questions insulting

Clarity of values sends a congruent message:

I can personally attest to the validity of what Robbins claims, although his style is not my style. He swears by the technique of modeling or mirroring the physical and mental qualities of the other person or of those you admire and would emulate. I say why be like the politician who shifts his personality depending on which demographic or type he or she is trying to woo at the moment, why act like someone you are not? He also says that the key corollary to physiology is congruency, and then suggests that you should be enthusiastic and emphatic in your physiological representation. The problem is: communicating emphatically is not for everyone. I have paid part of my tuition by acting too assertive or too timid, too powerful or too weak, too smart or too naïve. None of these attempts have helped me, because none of it represented who I am. Robbins' presence is commanding; his power comes from that demeanor. To me power comes not from overpowering someone but from yielding to them. If you know the message you wish to convey and deliver it in a unified way, people will be drawn to you.

If you have made up your mind to follow your heart's path, then you must learn how to make up your mind. After years of experimentation I finally understand my values clearly. My belief system does not align with the classic sales approach tantamount to 'leading the witness.' It is more in line with the Taoist attitude of action without interference. With no complex motives, no calculation, I try to peacefully find my way around obstacles, knowing that often not acting makes for the wisest course of action. I settled on a *congruent message* that utilizes my assets.

My Self Realization Fellowship lessons say to: "Anchor your mind in God so you can smile that million dollar-smile." My message, then, is what SRF calls a "strong smile of balanced recklessness." I try to smile deeply and from my heart, speak softly and kindly to overcome my high-pitched voice, and look sincerely into people's eyes. Instead of becoming tense and worrying about my performance, I simply talk naturally, pat the person on the back, or slightly bow out of respect--in essence make the experience a joyful one--and if anything goes wrong at least we can take that bond with us. This has not made me a top producer but that is not my goal, actually I don't really have a monetary goal; all I know is that I am always provided for and am 'jiggy' with that.

Prosperity consciousness and manifestation:

Does having to *win* friends and *influence* people feel more like a chore than following your bliss? If you are not willing to adopt the philosophy behind such interpersonal skills as those mentioned above by Dale Carnegie and others, you can still do just fine in the real world. You simply will not do very well in the world of sales or entrepreneurship. If being an entrepreneur is not the answer, what are you willing to do to make enough money to keep pace with the current standard of living or is that the path you really want? If the thought of prosperity causes as much consternation as the thought of sales the Zen way offers an interesting alternative.

Marshall Sahlins wrote the book, Stone Age Economics. He says that scarcity, or the tension between wants and means can be reduced from either the supply (industrial) side or by reducing demand. There exist two opposite routes to satisfying wants, producing a lot or desiring little. Our current economy is obviously based on producing a lot and consuming a lot, more so than any society in the history of mankind. The Zen way to happiness involves simply adopting a lower standard of living and forgetting all about excessive wants and limited means. When our expenses run low, the pressure of earning a high income eases off; after many years of seesawing between the two extremes of high and low profile occupations I have settled on a Zen-like path because it leaves me freer to pursue other pleasures. The metaphysical Christian concept of prosperity is an equally compelling example of a path worthy of note.

Is the love of money a bad thing?

Most people would agree that the love of money can easily get out of control and send one cascading into a spiritual funk. But do money and spirituality mutually exclude one another? The Essenes were the most spiritual sect I know of, and they were so prosperous they could share their wealth with their townsfolk. The Shakers were a highly spiritual group of Americans, and they were considered wealthy by any standards of the day. Is the pursuit of money an obstacle to your right-work and is it worth seeking?" My friend Gary Brand is a renowned astrologer who has struggled over this question. Gary is extraordinarily good at what he does yet does not prosper from his work.

As we sat and talked during Gary and Marianne's annual Christmas holiday visit, I asked, "Why haven't you applied these principals of intention to prosperity in *your* work life?" "Well," he said, "that is a good question. I am afraid of money, afraid that I might spend it too selfishly if had a lot, afraid of what I would have to sacrifice in terms of ethics to make it, afraid it is not the spiritual or environmental path. I prefer to live simply rather than to pursue money." "But you would like to have money in an account to protect against a rainy day and medical issues, to buy a house, to take trips or to contribute to your favorite causes, right?" "Yes," he replied, "but how do you quantify that as a specific amount?" I asked if he could see a certain inflated amount in his account. "No" he answered emphatically, "I want to believe but my belief has not caught up with my affirmation. I can't even visualize how I could save that much money."

Investor Hollis Norton: Broke is a temporary condition. Poor is a state of mind.

Make no distinctions about money:

According to the Taoist (that author John Blofield) called Ocean Cloud Recluse there is no need to label money or circumstance as either evil or good saying, "Life brings what it brings and we learn to accept it's gifts and withdrawals with equanimity," Unlike one who has turned into a cynic by an uncompromising world, "the recluse's heart is a placid lake, unruffled by the winds of circumstance." The Chinese word 'shun' signifies *glad acceptance of what is, what has been, and what will be*. Serenity may be expressed in these three words: *make no distinctions*. Of the opposite of serenity, distress, the recluse said that "the bulk of that comes from the disease of categories; our labeling this or that desirable or loathsome." On the other hand, most people do not think like

Taoists. They place great store in categorizing their bliss and grief by “weighing gain against loss. As though there could be nothing in the universe that’s not ours already.”

Spiritual economics: Aligning with the ever-present substance:

Unity Church Minister Eric Butterworth is a recognized authority on visualization and abundance. He certainly would not have approved of the line of questioning I posed to the beleaguered Gary Brand. He says that imagining bags of gold or ‘treasure mapping’ for desired objects subtly misleads us into the worship of material things. Dialing for dollars, spinning the wheel of fortune, and visualizing houses and jobs is a “gross materialization of a beautiful spiritual law.” The key to abundance, prosperity, visualization, not seeking and everything else this book represents is what Butterworth calls: “*seeing from a consciousness of ever-present substance which will become the magnetic force that draws things to you without becoming the object of your life.*” If you want to write down the wisest phrase in this book that is probably it. Why limit ourselves to such petty goals as seeking money when we can have the universe?

When there are bills to be paid we do not visualize moneybags, pray for succor, or go to the racetrack. In an orderly universe you cannot get something for nothing. After all ‘There are things to do.’ You can work consciously; as the Quakers say: “When you pray, move your feet.” Butterworth says the goal should not be to work simply to make money or acquire things, but to “achieve the consciousness through which ‘the substance’ will flow forth as you need it.” So before you raise money, raise your consciousness. By raising our collective consciousness up and out of a lack consciousness, our civilization can become mentally, physically, and spiritually prosperous.

Butterworth also says that if your self-image is faulty, you project its limitations into all of your experiences. “Many inadequate job situations are the result of inadequacy being impressed on the job experience.” If you have decided that you want abundance and ‘right livelihood’ in your life, then you must learn to overcome your feelings of limitation.