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The forgotten Path to Abundance

By Sandy Penny

"There is only one happiness in life, to love and be loved."

—GEORGE SAND, AUTHOR AND POET

For years I've practiced "Prosperity Through Generosity," sometimes known as tithing or sharing the wealth. Whenever I receive money, I share it with others, even though I may not have a lot of cash at the

time. I have learned that, by continuing to share, the energy keeps moving, and more money comes in. I also tithe in time by volunteering work for no charge when someone can truly not afford it. This has given me the

opportunity to do many things I might not have done because of lack of funds. It's also a great way to make new connections.

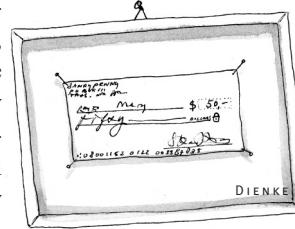
One day, while musing on the subject, I got a little hungry, so off I went to Enchanted Garden, one of my favorite Houston restaurants and regular hang-outs. When I walked in, my usual waitress came over and introduced a new employee, Mary. Knowing that I was into spiritual studies, they had a story and a question for me.

Mary told me how she had been out of work and down to her last \$43. Driving to a job interview she saw a woman holding a baby and a sign that said, "Baby needs doctor, please help." Being soft-hearted, she pulled over to the woman, reached into her purse and handed her \$2. Driving away, in the rear view mirror, Mary could see the woman clasping her hands and shouting, "Thank you, thank you, thank the Lord."

She thought, "Wow, a lousy two bucks makes her so happy," and she felt good about having given it to her, even though her funds were low. When she arrived at her interview, she discovered that she had given the woman two twenties. Now she only had \$3 left. She was kicking herself and couldn't believe she had given away her last \$40. The next day she got the job at Enchanted Garden.

I encouraged her not to be upset about the money, perhaps the woman needed that exact amount for the doctor and she may have been praying for it. Mary may have been the answer to her prayer. That one random act of kindness could have changed a life. "That's a good way to look at it," said Mary.

I excused myself and headed for the ladies room. I heard in my head, "Give her back the money." I protested that I did not get paid for two more days and I wasn't even sure if I had that much in my bank account. My inner voice was insistent, so I wrote a



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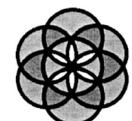
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BODY & SOUL

check for \$50 and wrote “prosperity through generosity” at the bottom. I asked the regular waitress to give it to Mary after I left.

That made me wonder about my bank account. I did not want a bounced check to ruin the gesture. When I balanced my checkbook, I found an extra \$500 that could not be accounted for anywhere in my deposits, and all the checks had cleared the account. Suddenly I had 10 times what I had just given away. It was a major sign for me, and a huge lesson, but the biggest lesson was yet to come.

A month later I received a letter from Mary. She said, “I don’t know if you remember me, but I just wanted to tell you that I never cashed your \$50 check. Money started pouring in from all directions. I framed the check and put it on my wall, and whenever anyone comes into my home, I tell them the story of your generosity.”

I still can’t tell that story without getting misty. I realized how many people were being affected by a single gesture. I will never know exactly how many people have been moved by that story, but for me, the lesson was a much better reward than \$500. Our random acts of kindness ripple out into the world and create all kinds of abundance, and it comes back in many forms.

These days, when we’re being told daily that the economy is terrible, and a fear of lack engulfs us, we have to help each other from the truth of our hearts, prosperity through generosity. That is part of the solution to our financial crisis.

As We Suffer, We Have Choices

By Debra Villalobos

As I write in the morning hours, a migrating bird lifts its voice into the rafters of branches, bearing new buds cast against blue sky. Swallows return to build their nests on the light under the eaves. Wind shakes up the bauble of spring tease. Lightning strikes the sky, thunder rumbles and wind blows snow, driving white flakes across our town. The view of the mountains is obliterated.

As I write, a friend lies dying. I cannot help but think of all the sorrow of the witnesses, those who love him, but also the unexpected exquisite joy, that accompanies and carries him through his journey of giving up the human body. He is rafting across the river. I have been privileged to be a part of his passing.

As I write, a part of my heart breaks, like the concrete plaster of the planters outside our door, left pummeled by heavy snow, dripping water turned to ice. How many pieces of the heart are left after a lifetime of breaking? Edges crumble leaving a softer profile.

But through all this, I find hope in the wise words and knowledge of Allannah Elizabeth Walker. Thirty-two years ago, she sat encased in fear, as a doctor, who was also a friend, delivered the dreaded messages. Terminal breast cancer had metastasized to her



quite what to do. I based my decisions to have chemotherapy and surgery on my experience of a nurse’s training years before. It is unfortunate that I didn’t get to hear Allannah’s full story, or I might have chosen a different path. Hindsight is a valuable tool.

The morning of my mastectomy, I witnessed the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The death and survival of the people of Louisiana was spread across the news of the nation. I shifted my fear to gratitude; I was only losing my breast. Perspective. I had done a lot of homework to achieve responsibility in the decision making for my treatment. I had many friends in lower Louisiana who were dying. I had known and danced with the Houma Indian women, who were not only wiped out, but were not even recognized as a valid Native American tribe. There was no help for

liver. Three months to live.

“I will explain the procedures available to you. This is my duty as a medical doctor,” he says.

“Time stops in certain instances of life,” Allannah writes. For more than fifty years, time has begun and stopped in Taos.

She holds up her hand, and he stops imparting his Western medicinology. Her decision, despite the agonizing moments of fear ... moments that last for days, filling each second following such a diagnosis ... based on years of practice of meditation and yoga, was made. She had nothing to lose by choosing to heal herself. She had already survived three months of living through appointments with doctors and diagnostic procedures.

For six months, she followed a daily ritual of visualization, body brushing, rest and more rest, exercise (cancer cells cannot live in excess oxygen) and teas, herbs, fresh vegetables, fruits, and more visualization. She exposed herself to the sun for Vitamin D. Six months later, she was cancer free.

I read past and present in Allannah’s book, “Cancer Wise, Terminal to Healthy,” in collaboration with Alicia Clyde. Practice is key to detoxifying “cellular confusion” which is caused by fear and stress. I have lived in fear that cancer will return. I got the diagnosis just before my fiftieth birthday. I turn fifty-four next month. Whether the diagnosis of cancer is a gene-driven given or the manifestation of the baggage packed up and left over from childhood, it still burdens you. Following Allannah’s simple and direct program can change your life and way of thinking about dis-ease. After all, our nation and the world is in “cellular confusion.”

When fear overwhelmed me after my diagnosis that left “time standing still” (and still does on occasion), I haven’t known

humans suffering from thirst, hunger, and most of all, grief; a breast was a small thing to lose. I had lived in lower Louisiana, fished, cooked, loved, danced and given a bit of my heart to it. It was being obliterated from a map. But I was not.

Reading Allannah’s book the second time around, I realize I must not be daunted by the thought that her extensive experience and knowledge in alternative practices of wholeness overrides mine in medical training or physical fitness. I take an inventory of strengths and weaknesses. Not only can I count these lessons of detoxification of body, mind, and soul, but I also take inventory of past fears and the fear of getting cancer again. I can carry her practices into my daily life, piddling as they may seem and continue to practice detoxification of my body, mind, and soul to stave off fear.

Allannah counseled her friend Alicia through her daily program. Alicia had been diagnosed with cervical cancer, but has been free for several years. Alicia hopes to use her home in Lama to help others along the path of healing or dying with choice and dignity.

As the night draws near, there is hardly a moon at all; I put myself to sleep with these thoughts, praying for those who fight the causes and effects of toxic disease. We drop on our knees before our father, mother or priest. I pray that the wise ones teach us how to take responsibility and open our minds to ideas that conventional practitioners shut out.

“Time stops in certain instances of life.”

The sounds of new birds in spring remind us how our feathery friends gather up refuse—twig, cloth and pain—and fly up under the eaves to build their nests. Perhaps we, our friends, and fearful others, will hear Allannah’s song.



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Debra Villalobos

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Debra,
I have no adequate words to thank you for all you have shown & taught me this week.
It has been a fantastic journey and I thank you.
Mary

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