

~ **Abundance** ~
(November 27th, 2005)

In this world with so much emphasis on “possession”, “materialism” and ways to make more out of what you already have, it is so easy to associate “abundance” with labor, money... physical things.

For me, abundance is not a physical thing. It is a source of consciousness and energy, manifesting itself as every physical thing. It is a challenge to be concise about such an abundantly rich subject, but I will try... Rumi wrote:

"Everything you see has its roots in the unseen world,
the forms may change yet the essence remains the same.
Every wonderful sight will vanish, every sweet word will fade
but do not be disheartened, the source they come from is eternal,
growing, branching out, giving new life and new joy.
Why do you weep?

The source is within you and this whole cosmos is springing up from it."

It is very difficult to be abundant when there is no intrinsic joy or love in the work we do and the way we live our life. Love and joy align us with our heart and spirit, and open the door to plenty. Although we may not think we can change our work or life, we can change our attitude to it, and choose to bring more of our true Self – our spirit – to it. We cannot control abundance – control actually blocks it – we need to open up to intending to let it flow in our lives. Abundance walks hand-in-hand with surrender. Surrender to the moment, surrender to “being”. Abundance starts with allowing ourselves to “be”, feeling good about who we are, that our soul, our being is worthy to be seen, to receive love.

I see the following analogy. In French there's a saying "C'est le Ton qui fait la Musique", which basically means "The Music is in the tone"... as a musician, you can play the notes, the rhythms, the tempi... all of which are pretty much fixed... but then there's the tone, which very much, if not totally, depends on interaction. That's where the magic happens. In a sense it's a short love affair between the musician and the audience, him of herself and listeners. If it "clicks" the sum will be more than its constituting parts, if not, it will be a truthful representation of the notes on the sheet music. Just like how some paintings or drawings are a truthful representation of a scene, nothing more nothing less. But some paintings or photographs seem to "glow", as if there is some magic in it that reaches out and touches you somewhere deep inside. Maybe it is a stack of stones, in the right place, at the right moment... or a row of footsteps in the sand. The abundance arises when you feel safe to surrender to the moment.

In a sense, these are all forms of relationships, you with yourself, you with a stranger or even you with somebody that plays an important part in your life. It is a dialogue, and a dialogue needs two parties to participate actively. A true dialogue needs listening in an open, non-judgmental way and responding in a respectful way, both to you and the other party. Two monologues don't make a dialogue.

Abundance starts to flow when the quality of all our relationships, our dialogues, in our everyday life increases. It is hard to feel abundant when we are competitive, judgmental, if we feel like a victim, if we feel that we are missing out some way or another. The core of all relationships is the one with ourselves, and by increasing the quality of this relationship, we empower ourselves, we allow abundance to start flowing and attracting the respect we deserve. This strong relationship with ourselves will help us when our feeling of abundance is put to the test in hard times. In the words of the Dalai Lama

“When unfortunate things happen in our lives there are two possible results. One possibility is mental unrest, anxiety, fear, doubt, frustration and eventually depression, and in the worst case, even suicide. That's one way. The other possibility is that because of that tragic experience you become more realistic, you become closer to reality. With the power of investigation, the tragic experience may make you stronger and increase your self-confidence and self-reliance. The unfortunate event can be a source of inner strength.”

An open, respectful relationship with yourself will open your senses and allow you to see hope among ruins. That is the “investigation” the Dalai Lama referred to. I recognize those feelings of fear, doubt and despair in my own life, after multiple moments of darkness and trial. You would have to be the Dalai Lama or Thich Nhat Hahn not to be thrown of balance initially. But I do recognize that power of connecting to your core and how adversity can change into a source of inspiration.

Finally, I would like to share this poem by Mary Oliver with you. For me it powerfully illustrates the journey of creating that flow of abundance within oneself:

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice--
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
"Mend my life!"
each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.
It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.
But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do

the only thing you could do--
determined to save
the only life you could save.