

I recently read an article about Max Planck, who won a Nobel Prize for his work with atoms. After years of study and research, Planck eventually said that he could only know one thing--that some invisible force holds together energy to create this minute solar system, and he must assume, based on his research, that some higher intelligence is behind this force.

I was born with some understanding that the world was made of energy. I didn't buy the story that kept showing up in front of me, whether it was my parent's story, my schoolteacher's stories, or the stories in the news. I just didn't buy it. I saw the world as energy. And I actually saw that the only thing that was really important was the joint flow between human beings and how that energy was working and processing.

And what I saw in the eyes of everybody I looked at as a kid, until I got older and met some people with wisdom, were people who were looking to take energy from others. The reason for that, I thought, was that most people felt a big void within themselves. I love the fact that the word “a-void” means to turn away from something. We all spend our lives avoiding the void. And in truth, the void is us. It's us at our purest essence. It's us in the silence; it's us in the quiet. That was something I kind of lived in; I lived in the void. But then I'd come out and see these people who were miserable, wanting and lacking. They weren't producing anything in their lives; they couldn't get enough money, they couldn't get enough of anything no matter how much they stole, borrowed or tried. They couldn't get enough into their lives.

I also recently learned that the root word for money in the Hebrew language is flow. That really blew me away, because it was something that I'd thought for much of my life. There is nothing you can do to create money because money is just a flow, and it's the flow of energy that is the root of capitalism. Capitalism and money in and of themselves are just neutral. There is no inherent action to either of them.

There is nothing we can do to create energy either, as the only thing we can really do with the flow of energy is allow or block it from coming into our lives. When I talk about energy, I often use the metaphor of a laser. While sunlight in its natural form is a source of warmth, it doesn't have much power because it's spread out in so many directions. But when it's focused and concentrated through a magnifying glass, it suddenly becomes far more powerful. And when the power of light is condensed to a much greater degree, it becomes a laser that can cut through steel.

So if everything is ultimately made of energy and this energy is just kind of fluttering around, what focuses that energy? Attention focuses energy. But most of us don't have control of our attention. Most of us know what we want, but few of us know what we want to give. And our attention has to be grounded in serving based on our unique creative expression in order for it to have power. That doesn't mean you can't have money, but I can show you plenty of people that are miserable and have more money than they know what to do with. So for us as a society, the measure of money as success is really our own fault.

I'm going to bring this back. Some people have intentions that serve the world, and others don't. Then there is everyone else. And what happens to our energy if we have no vision for ourselves? We get swallowed up into people around us whose intention is stronger than ours.

Marianne Williamson, although it is often credited to Nelson Mandela, has a quote in her book, *A Return to Love*, that talks about the fact that we all play too small. On an energetic level, when we play too small, we give our energy to others around us who want it. And believe me, people want it, because they're trying to accomplish things. It's just happening at an energetic level where we're not seeing it. So we follow along while someone else has a vision of the world that doesn't suit ours, whether it's people on Wall Street, in the government, or whatever. And if we're just witnesses, we fall in blindly and give up our intention to the people that have a vision for the future that they want.

At the surface level, we can't see this going on, but on an energetic level it's happening. And that's why so many of us feel drained and filled with void. Because we literally have had the energy sucked away from us so someone else can realize their vision and goal.

My financial firm is based around a model I've been teaching for several years called the Four Pillars of Success. These pillars are relatively simple, but if practiced with sincerity can have dramatic results.

PILLAR ONE is that we have to have some practice rooted in silence. I don't care what it is. I stand for all religions and spiritual practices: whatever it is that allows you to get in touch with your Source. Because in my mind and on an energetic level, it's almost like we're an electrical appliance, or a hybrid car; one of the old ones that you had to plug in. At some point in the day we've got to plug in. I recommend at least 5 to 15 minutes every day. I don't care if it's sitting in the shower if that's the only place you can find any quiet, because that's actually where I get mine. Fifteen minutes every morning in the shower with the water running, in the quiet, because I have an autistic child that starts talking at 6 AM when he wakes up and doesn't stop until 10 PM when he goes to sleep, and that's about the only 15 minutes of silence I can find. So we have to have a practice rooted in silence, and from a scientific measure, we're just recharging our energy. Otherwise we go out in the world and have nothing to share.

PILLAR TWO is that we have to have an idea of what our unique creative expression is in the world: i.e. what each of us feels we have been placed on this earth to do. Are you pursuing a career that truly represents what you feel you are here to do in this world? If not, pick something, literally, that you sense is your unique expression, and seek to build a life around it that offers something to the world.

Enacting our unique purpose in the world is a greater source of fulfillment than the possession of any object. But most of us spend our entire lives waiting for someone else to tell us what our unique expression is, or kind of intuitively knowing what it is, but waiting for someone to come and reinforce it. *Trust your intuition.* It knows. Your intuition is the compass that will lead you towards the life that you are here for and meant to live.

PILLAR THREE is that we have to have a forward vision, three to five years out, of what our unique creative expression looks like in the world. Our thoughts are the foundation for the results in our lives; therefore we must learn to focus our thoughts in the direction we would like to see our lives and careers go. Some people might think that sounds silly or too new-agey, but I'm not asking you to take my word for it. The only way to see if this is true is to put it into practice with sincerity and for an extended period of time, and see for yourself if it is actually so.

The way I teach people to do this is to have a two to three minute movie that you can play in your head all day long, especially as you go to bed at night. A two-minute movie of you and what a day in the life of you looks like: the house you live in, the car you drive, where and what you do at work. What does that vision look like three to five years out in a perfect day in the life of you? And then give it up to the Universe because in all likelihood that vision, while it may come true, will find reasons to change and grow as you make it bigger and better. We need to give our energy a direction to move in. It's critical that we do that. Otherwise, we flounder. It's like getting in our car without a navigation system and driving around with no idea where we're going.

PILLAR FOUR is that what we do has to be grounded in service. There is nothing to get. If I can leave you with any message, it's that. There is nothing to get. There's no money to get; no love to get; no sex to get; no happiness to get. There's nothing to get that isn't already in us. The world shows up and reflects what we are. If we have lack in our life, it's because we're holding on to lack within ourselves. If we're seeing things we don't like, it's because we're seeing things within ourselves that we don't like. There is nothing outside in the world that we could possibly get that could fulfill us except to fulfill our own dreams of who we are.

So what is success? If I had to give a definition, I would say success is to be aligned with our unique creative expression in service to the world as much as possible. I'm going to say that one more time. To be successful is to be aligned with our unique creative expression as much as possible in service to the world.

We're obviously not there yet and I'm not saying we shouldn't get out there and vote, or speak out against things that aren't appropriate, but if we're not aligned with our unique creative expression and bringing that to the world in service, then we're not transforming the world. The world again is literally a reflection of us, and if we don't know what we're doing, and feel filled with void and lack, is it any wonder that the world shows up like that as a reflection? It is my hope that these ideas will leave you thinking about you, what you're doing here and how you're aligned with your energy. It's my sincere belief that this is what will truly change the world.

For more information please see:

Beyond Success Consulting
www.BeyondSuccessConsulting.com

Gitterman & Associates Wealth Management
www.gawmlc.com

Adapted from Beyond Success: Redefining the Meaning of Prosperity
© 2009 Jeffrey L. Gitterman - All rights reserved - Published by AMACOM Books
www.amacombooks.org - A Division of the American Management Association.