

MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY

Money and spirituality .. a tricky topic, we shouldn't be talking about it, complete opposites, uneasy bedfellows, one is pure and the other is dirty, you shouldn't even be thinking about it, blah blah!

So many spiritual folks have problems with money .. they either don't have enough and need some in order to survive but don't know how to go about it, or they have too much and feel guilty about it but are too scared to let it go and let it flow, or they don't want any because they're too spiritual (but really they do want some, in fact they do really need some, but won't let themselves receive it). Some spiritual folks believe that spiritual people (and especially spiritual teachers) shouldn't be concerned with money, others believe that spiritual people shouldn't have any at all and somehow be magically taken care of, others believe that money is the root of all evil, others believe that they should have money but not show it, and yet others are just plain confused and don't know what they believe. What a mess! What a viper's nest of unexamined beliefs!

We love it, we hate it, we want it, we need it. We've even got our identity mixed up in it. A common belief - especially in western cultures - is that our self-worth is tied up in money. If we don't have enough money, we believe there's something wrong with us. We're not open to receive, we don't feel worthy enough, we're blocking the flow of abundance, we're in denial of our earthly birthright, or maybe it's karmic and we did something wrong in a previous lifetime (maybe we didn't use it wisely, we abused our power, or we just didn't appreciate it and now we need to learn the harsh lesson of deprivation) .. the self-concerned mind goes on and on. And so we may spend a lot of money to learn how to receive money. We go on courses to become more abundant, to learn the law of attraction, to heal our wounds of unworthiness, to clear our past karma, to open our chakras .. the incomplete egoic self seeks to complete itself. Or we stick our heads in the sand and live a frugal life, calling it a spiritual life when it's really an avoidance of getting our hands dirty in the muck of life (in other words, having the resources to build a home or pay our taxes or manage a business or take care of a family, and so on).

But dear friend, there's really nothing dirty about money.

Money itself is neutral. It's what we imbue it with that makes it a source of problems or a source of solutions. Money is a conduit for our state of consciousness. We can use it for evil purposes, to accumulate power, destroy, corrupt, feed the greed of an aggrandized ego. Or we can use it for love's purpose, to create beauty, innovate, help others, grow and thrive in order to serve humanity. Whatever we believe money is for, whatever meaning we assign to it, that's what it becomes. It's a clear reflection of who we believe ourselves to be, personally and collectively. It's neither spiritual nor unspiritual. It's neither evil nor good. It's not a reflection of our worthiness, nor a reflection of our power. And neither is it a reflection of our ability to attract things to us just because we want them.

Money is a river of energy. It can flow freely, or it can get stuck in a whirlpool. It can be polluted by fear-based beliefs and actions, or it can be cleansed by the purity of our hearts. It's the energy of transaction, a way of giving and receiving, a way of honoring and valuing, a way of showing gratitude and commitment. Money is a tangible symbol of our relationship with each other, with all things in the world, with dreams and visions that create the becoming-ness of humanity, with the down-to-earth reality of our human experience.

It's time we got clean about our relationship to money. It's time we took a good look at the superstitions we wrap around it, the shame we carry because we don't have enough, the envy of those who have, the pity of those of who have not, the judgments on those who should and those who shouldn't. It's not money that's dirty, but our own beliefs that are erroneous. And as long as these remain unexamined, then money will always be a murky topic.

Dear friend, let's start with this ... take it lightly, play with it, let it flow. Let it come, let it go, hold it lightly but not carelessly. Respect what it can do without making it a sacred object, use it wisely but not tightly. See it as an expression of life's boundless creative impulse, just as holy as every other manifestation, but don't chase it as if it was the holy grail. Let it come, let it go, hold it lightly .. let it flow.

Do not possess it or find yourself in it, it does not belong to you or to anyone else. Do not make a trophy out of it or a monument or badge of specialness. Like all other manifestations, it is impermanent. See it as a temporary movement of energy entrusted in your care while you live in an earthly body and then it is gone, given to the hands of the next caretaker and the next, and on and on it goes. Neither make it your god, nor make it your devil, do not impose any meaning on it.

Let it pass through you freely, without superstition and without judgment, and it will be cleansed by the purity of your heart. Dear friend, take it lightly .. let it flow.

~ Amoda Maa
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