

THE CURRENCY OF FREEDOM

An interview with Brian O'Donnell

This summer, experienced Pathworkers will have the opportunity to explore the topic of money, finances and investing in depth with Brian O'Donnell of the Great Lakes Pathwork.

Brian has been studying the Guide's "rich tributary of wisdom" on this subject and leading a number of workshops on it both here and abroad. His five-day retreat as part of the Summer Institute will be a chance to go more deeply into this area which is so central to our lives.

In the following interview, Brian provides a glimpse into the valuable learning this topic offers.

You have opened up an interesting line of inquiry that you call the "Currency of Freedom." Tell us about this title and why you choose it.

The title of this program, "The Currency of Freedom," arose spontaneously after pondering this vexing arena of life for a number of months. To many of us, our relationship to finances is one of fear and bondage. Whether we have too much or too little, we feel bound up and unfree. It can feel like a burden and often creates conflict in our relationships, our choices about work and ultimately our connection to Source.

Yet I see that there is a real possibility of opening TO the flow that money is, so that instead of it being something we work for, or try to rise above, it can be a genuine expression and conduit of what we hold most sacred, both in how we earn it and spend it.

What have you learned that most surprised you about your own relationship to money and freedom?

What I am learning in exploring this domain with myself and others is how much shadow there is around money. There is a profound level of conditioning in our families and culture in general to look the other way and to not ask basic questions about our beliefs around money. There is an elemental belief or misconception in scarcity, which shapes our behaviors and attitudes with finances.

This primary misconception is a foundational belief of the dualistic state of consciousness. As the Pathwork Guide mentions frequently, a false idea creates suffering and tends to confirm itself. If we can open to the true concept of "enoughness," this can dramatically alter our lives in all aspects of our being, not just finances.

In teaching and working with people on this topic, what has struck you the most about our ideas and beliefs around money?

I also have seen, in teaching this topic, how much variance there is between our values and our behaviors when it comes to finances. In my own life, I've recently become aware of how at odds I am with what I say I value and yet how this wasn't connected to how I invested my money. I have a strong reverence for the environment yet I had money in the stock market that was supporting companies that were in direct opposition to what I profess. I hadn't put this together and in fact didn't want to see this disconnect as it would mean risking what I imagined as loss of investment.

Tell us what you mean by true wealth? How we can begin to open to that?

I'm often asked what I consider to be true wealth. The Guide gives us great pointers to answer this question throughout the Lectures.

First, he wisely reveals that we can have whatever we want as long as we don't fear its opposite. So to have abundance we need to accept, in the right spirit, lack or poverty. This is done while we explore the real reasons for lack, the cause being our misconceptions, defenses and guilt.

We need to consider that the True Nature of life is "overpowering abundance" and that this consideration will lead to risking giving to life, even if we feel empty or depleted in the moment. This isn't done from a place of sacrifice or even as a commandment, but more as a movement in trusting the fundamental ground of life, which is generosity. The emphasis, in true wealth is in giving and not getting or accumulating. Real wealth is a free, liberated and joyous spending ourselves into life. Of course the more we give to life freely, the more life will bestow on us.

Ultimately, the real recipe for wealth is the transition from the ego state to the love state. Releasing our egoic identification with the separate self and opening to the fundamental unity of all of life. Here there is no fear, no scarcity; instead, we can as the Guide suggests "make use of the unlimited funds available in the universe for our benefit."

The opportunity that exploring our relationship with money provides is inestimable. It can liberate us in other seeming unrelated areas of our lives. The relief and openness of investigating these intriguing questions, with like minded souls, who are dedicated to the cultivation of the soul can be an invaluable investment.

To learn more and to register, please contact Renee Whatley at 215-868-3558 or visit <http://www.philapathwork.org/pathwork-summer-institute/>.