

Prosperity

By Linda Costello

In ancient days, a king had to be unblemished in order to rule, and upon being chosen as a worthy ruler, he was wed to the land to ensure the prosperity and safety of the kingdom.ⁱ

What do I mean when I use the term, prosperity? According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, prosperity is defined as: the condition of being successful or thriving; *especially* : economic well-beingⁱⁱ.

Given this definition, naturally I am referring to money, the agreed-upon economic exchange that we use in our culture. AND I am not just referring to money. I am talking about that which causes us to succeed and thrive, which, admittedly, in our culture, is usually money.

We all define success in our own ways. Merriam-Webster defines it like this: Success: a favorable or desired outcome; the attainment of wealth, favor, or eminence.ⁱⁱⁱ Of course, “favorable” and “desired” are both subjective words and mean different things to different people. What constitutes success for me may be something completely different for you. And what constitutes success for me today may be different tomorrow. However, even given the individuality of our definitions of success, I believe I can say with confidence that having more than enough money to meet all of my needs could be construed as some semblance of success.

Lately I have been exploring these ideas of success and prosperity, and I have discovered some crucial connections to the having and/or the not having of money.

I have discovered that my own feelings of lack are rooted in a poverty consciousness that was part of my upbringing, to some extent brought on by the Depression. I was born to parents who knew the horrors of losing jobs, being on food rations, and all of the other hard times that came about during that period of history. Growing up, it always felt as though we didn't have enough to make ends meet.

No matter how much money I have managed to earn in my five decades of life, I seem to continue to have that experience of not having enough. This is not to say I don't appreciate all that I have. I absolutely do. However, the net asset value hasn't changed much because as my income has increased, so have my expenses. I believe that I perpetuate that belief of not having enough because it was ingrained in me at such an early age. Can I change that? I certainly hope so. Should I?

Here we get to the meat of the matter.

I believe I should. I believe I should do everything I possibly can, as long as it benefits others as well as myself, to increase my wealth. I believe that, as the sovereign ruler of my own personal kingdom (or queendom as the case might be), it is my responsibility to be a fit ruler, and to ensure the prosperity of my kingdom. And, in doing so, I will have

more to use on lofty missions, more to donate to worthy causes, more to use to make this world a better place. I owe it to myself and the world in which I live.

Thus, I have begun to study and learn what it would take to increase my wealth.

I was fortunate enough to attend a 10 week Master Mind group based upon the book, *Think and Grow Rich*, by Napoleon Hill^{iv}. Napoleon Hill spent twenty-five years of his life studying the habits of the wealthy and successful businessmen of his time, and he discovered a few characteristics that they all had in common. One of the primary defining characteristics was a strong faith that they could and would succeed. Hill's book outlines the other characteristics possessed by men such as Andrew Carnegie, JP Morgan, and Charles Schwab, and how they made their fortunes.

These characteristics all indicate the existence of a Law of Attraction in which we attract the manifestations of our lives by our thoughts. Where you put your attention is what manifests in your life. It's an interesting paradox, because if you don't believe in it, then it doesn't work, and thus it IS working. It is not a new theory to me, but this time, it's been presented to me as a way of building wealth, which is novel for me. As I re-program my thoughts to allow myself to receive opportunities for wealth-building, so do I begin to see the results in my life. It is fascinating to watch it at work.

I can see the application of the Law of Attraction in my Druidic practice. As I concentrate on the virtues, I start to see evidence of their presence more in my life; evidence of hospitality, of fertility/creativity, of piety and integrity, and so on. As I learn and study about sovereignty goddesses and the prosperity of the kingdom, so do I see applications in my own life, to feel my own sovereignty, to see the need to ensure prosperity in my life.

Our beliefs are tricky. How many times have we heard, "Money doesn't grow on trees?" And yet, money is made out of paper, which comes from trees. How many times have we heard that "Money doesn't buy happiness?" This is certainly true – we don't need money to be happy, but neither does NOT having money buy happiness. It doesn't mean that we can't be happy if we HAVE money. Money and happiness aren't mutually exclusive. Another perspective is that money may not buy happiness, but it sure can make life more comfortable. Why do I deny myself?

In some ways, I think I am trying to make the best of a difficult situation. Yet, according to the Law of Attraction, every time I do that, I am asserting my current position in life and not letting myself attract the abundance I desire. I choose to engage in activities that are not income-producing. I choose to find reasons why I shouldn't want money – I judge myself for being selfish, or for being calculating, rather than recognizing that, to the contrary, I probably give away too much to others, and I am probably not shrewd enough.

How will I achieve my dreams if I do not change this way of thinking? How will I found a community based upon principles of sustainable living if I do not have the resources to obtain it? How will I make a difference in a way that matters to me if I don't have the

means to carry out my plans? How will I be able to grow both my local druid grove as well as the non-profit institution of which my grove is a part, if I don't have the resources necessary to do so? Oh, I could be content to build my own little homestead and live off the land in a sustainable way, but why not dream bigger than that? Why not share that with others?

Money matters. Resources matter. Prosperity matters. And it is up to me to prove myself to be the fit ruler of my kingdom, to wed myself to the land so that it may bless my kingdom with abundance.

In an interesting twist, I am finding my path leading me in two unexpected directions. I am training others on how to change their thinking so that they, too, can achieve the resources and success that they desire by running Master Mind groups in my area. I am even negotiating with my current employer to present such groups to some of our business clients.

Even more importantly, I am focusing my real estate practice on eco-friendly housing; in other words, I am seeking out energy-efficient housing to sell, seeking out buyers who want such housing, and consulting with interested clients on how to make their homes more energy-efficient. I am taking continuing education classes in real estate to be certified as an eco-broker. I am caring for the land as I build my business and helping others to live in more healthy environments.

I've felt quite encouraged by the talk about green building in Arizona these days. In fact, I recently found out that there are initiatives in Scottsdale, the city I have lived in for twelve years, to increase energy efficiency in homes exponentially in the years to come. I am also seeing that people are starting to take this seriously, and I am excited to be riding the wave on something that has been near and dear to my heart for so many years.

As I strive for my own prosperity, with the tenet that I am also helping others in the process, I am also helping to increase the prosperity of the land around me. What better way to dedicate my life and live in piety? With the help of the Gods, I will succeed and thrive, for Them, as much as for myself and my kingdom.

ⁱ Dillon, Miles and Chadwick, Nora, *The Celtic Realms*, p. 93

ⁱⁱ Merriam-Webster Dictionary online: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prosperity>

ⁱⁱⁱ Merriam-Webster Dictionary online: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/success>

^{iv} Hill, Napoleon, *Think and Grow Rich! The Original Version, Restored and Revised*, Aventine Press, October 30, 2004