



from the **SALT** Office

## The ABUNDANCE vs SCARCITY Theory

Once upon a time...

There was a wise old man... was he young?... or was it a woman? I can't remember... anyway, a person, who had a gift, which he/she shared with everyone. I had the good fortune of meeting him/her on my life's walk!

The gift was 2 words: "THINK ABUNDANTLY!"

A simple enough message, a tough task if one becomes really interested!

I read, researched and tried to understand the philosophy, the principle, the basic rule. It's especially hard when one starts identifying some of the things you don't like when you know more about the "idea" behind ABUNDANCE vs SCARCITY.

I also reflected on and started identifying why some people are/were just "great" in my eyes – the kind of person who would cause the "child" in me to say "when I grow up I want to be like him/her" - somebody who made/makes me feel really good, and why others leave me feeling less OK, somebody I "don't want to be like"?

I thought of my own experiences. I remember someone in our neighbourhood who had a big garden full of fruit trees. Some of the apple, pear and apricot trees were planted next to the fence and the branches of those trees grew over the fence. My buddies and I used to ride past this garden on our way to school and sometimes, only sometimes, we used to stop, drop our bikes and see if we could "steal" some fruit. It was especially thrilling because this person, if in the garden, used to shout at us, and threaten us, especially me because I was known. The problem with this however is that I had been in this person's house and had seen with my own eyes that he/she had no more space to pack any more bottles of jam and preserved fruit – so what was the problem? – Why couldn't we take an apple or a pear or an apricot?

By the same token I remember another person whose front and back door was always open – as young people we could walk in at any time, there was always many bicycles lying in the garden – it was great going there because there was always fresh pie or cake, or shiny fruit to eat, and time. Time to sit and listen to our babbling and to answer any questions we had about life. He/she was not a pensioner who stayed at home all day!

I remember teachers (and people) who told me I was stupid, that my ideas and dreams would fail, and I remember teachers/people who allowed me to grow, who fed me brain food and lots of encouragement. "Teachers" who made me excel, and who supported my dreams. I knew and know people who are very successful in most things they try and I know others who aren't. I know people who pick themselves up after a failure, dust themselves off and try again and others who don't, and then blame others.

Saying that people are optimists and positive thinkers, is only a part of it – these people also "THINK ABUNDANTLY!"

So now I should introduce the theory!




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The abundance attitude is the belief that the universe provides enough of everything for all –seeing the glass half full rather than half empty – **thinking success and expecting nothing less!**

By contrast the scarcity mentality is a belief that there are scarce resources – that there isn't enough for everyone - The problem with the scarcity theory is that it is manmade and that it simply doesn't work!

**\* Remember that the comparison below depicts “extremes” and that everyone can, according to circumstances, move between these two beliefs!**

	<b>ABUNDANCE</b>	<b>SCARCITY</b>
<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>  <b>People and Company Culture</b>	individuality internal security anchored value system active  reflect – constant learning visionaries / see opportunity respect the law of harvest courageous / passionate give/do their best problem solvers serve others allow others to grow	seeks validation in groups seek external security flighty passive  blame external influences blinkered / see no hope practice instant gratification fearful / indifferent mediocre see/create problems serve themselves resent success/growth in others
<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>  <b>Organisations</b>	- markets/opportunities can be created cooperation/mergers long-term vision win- win / teamwork / agreement transparency	- limited resources within and outside organisation beat the competition short-term immediate thinking win-lose / conflict /adversarial distortion of information

Our attitudes affect our personal and professional growth - or stagnation. We impose our own barriers - and we will not go beyond them. What was it about Mother Theresa? Or the pilot who landed his plane in the Hudson and saved many lives? Or the man who raised millions for charity by going around the world, handicapped?



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People with an abundance mentality have a long term view of life, they are visionaries- they are able to see what many can't. They are not afraid of the unknown. They believe that everything is possible.

People with an abundance mentality are courageous. Remember that courage is not to absence of fear but the mastery of fear. **FEAR = False Evidence Appearing Real/ (Niel Donald Walsch)**. The courage to take action is one of the greatest attributes of great leaders. Courage is a consequence of the abundance mentality.

People with an abundance mentality have an internal security based on a principled centred living (Stephen J Covey). Their value system is self-anchored. They seldom need the affirmation of others to feel good about themselves. They are not too worried of saying/doing the wrong thing because they ordinarily talk from a point of truth. This frees their mind to bigger/better thoughts because they have nothing to hide. What they said yesterday is what they will repeat today without contradiction. This internal security allows them to enjoy personal and professional freedom. They can choose what they want to do. By contrast people with a scarcity mentality seek their validation from groups. They will rarely want to take action on their own. The group must validate what they do.

People with an abundance mentality allow others to grow. ***If you are good at what you do, the only place those who want your job can do is push you up.*** Abundance believers seek out those who are better than them! A scarcity mentality resents success in others. My success would not be what it is without those who have helped me on my way and I thank them. People with an abundance mentality know when to stop doing something. I stepped out of some jobs and projects as soon as I realized that I was no longer giving or doing my best. Some of us stay in jobs too long but my advice to professionals who do not enjoy what they do is simply this: Prepare for your exit and go!

A personal example: I have lived and worked in many countries. I never believed there would be a scarcity of opportunities and seldom did my nervousness become an intervening fear! I have had to rely on my inner sense of security to keep moving forward – experience the new. I think my CV is interesting and diverse but someone else may look at it and think I am unreliable and unstable. I believe there is something better out there waiting for me to discover.

People with an abundance mentality are not moved by peer pressure.

Professionals with an abundance mentality treat whatever they take on as a project with a start and end date. 2 Industries that have been the victims of change and technology are the auto industry and banking! More retrenchment has been seen in these sectors than any other I know, and this is only the beginning! We should stop thinking of ourselves as permanent employees. Repeatedly we have been shown and especially now, with the global economic crisis affecting all of us, we should start thinking like project and change managers.

People with an abundance mentality are problem solvers. They are the ones that mostly get promoted. They are able to separate people from the problems. They seek a third alternative (Stephen J Covey – “The 7 Habits of highly successful people”). They attract others. The scarcity mentality on the other hand tells us we should not stick our necks out and should remain as passive followers.



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People with an abundance mentality are passionate about everything they do. They live in greater harmony. They are ordinarily positive about life and this seems to produce a self-fulfilling prophecy of success. They see opportunity where others see no hope. **An instructive story: “two shoe salesmen were sent to Africa to see what opportunities there were. One came back saying he was disappointed that there was no market for shoes because the natives do not wear shoes. The other came back saying there was a huge opportunity because the natives do not have shoes!”**

People with an abundance mentality understand and respect the law of the harvest. They know that you will reap what you planted! If you put a pumpkin seed into the ground you will get a healthy pumpkin if you prepared the ground, weeded, watered and tended the seed. An abundance mentality reinforces the law of the harvest. The scarcity mentality fools us that we can cheat the law of the harvest – it practices instant gratification – it short cuts - it never works!

People with an abundance mentality seek solitude and enjoy nature. Working with people I have noticed that most successful people I know take time out to reflect and regularly attend courses.

People with an abundance mentality keep their minds and bodies tuned through learning and exercise. Most successful people are in sync with what is going on around them. They are up to date. Without mental and physical fitness we cannot survive the challenges of everyday life! Or shall I say they are more difficult to deal with? Much more.

People with an abundance mentality serve others. Service enhances internal security and energises, which fuels the abundance belief which in turn fuels the time needed and opportunity to serve others.

The restaurant business discovered the Theory of Abundance years ago! Have you ever watched what happens when a new McDonald's opens up? You can bet your last euro that it won't be long before there is a Burger King, then a Kentucky Fried Chicken, and a Nordsee ...and a Scitzelhaus and a Pizza Hut etc. Counter-productive, you say? NO! The marketing teams in each of these chains realize that when that part of town becomes known as "restaurant row," more customers will be drawn to that area every day. Only when the customers get there they decide what they feel like and which restaurant they should go to - and in the end, all the restaurants will profit from the increased and steady traffic.

I need to pass on the gift given to me a once upon a long time ago as I am convinced that there is a place for it, especially now.

“THINK ABUNDANTLY!” – Hester L Wyhlidal