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Episode IV Economic Order - Crisis - and The Wheel of Opportunity.

Dagne: Welcome to Episode IV of the Infinite Potentials Series. Also, this is our first video web cast. So, Adam, experts say that the current economic collapse is the worst since the 1930's. Experts say nothing of this size has ever before happened in the US and world financial markets. Many of those who have money are terrified by their losses and the rest are worrying about how they are going to survive. Can we discuss how the ordinary person can meet the challenge of this mind blowing crisis?

A: You and I have also been hit incredibly hard. Maybe we should first find out if we are going to survive economically before we give advice.

D: We've done the arithmetic. We think we are probably going to make it. Although, we have had to go from plan A to plan B. We have even discussed a back up plan C.

A: I hope we won't need to implement it.

D: Before we get into some ideas about what to do now. Can you say something about what you think is actually happening? I don't think most people understand this crash yet. In fact, I think an awful lot of people are in denial about it and don't realize how big it actually is.

A: I'm thinking about it as an evolutionary economical liminal moment. Something old is dying and something new is being born. Of course, at times like this everyone wants to find out who is responsible and punish them. But I think we are all to some degree responsible. Some more, some less. Reminds me of the old Pogo cartoon. "We have found the enemy and he is us". But looking at the bigger picture it seems to me that globalization is inevitable and there is no turning back. But globalization grew so fast in recent decades that it has outrun our international and national financial institutions. A rapidly emerging tsunami is sweeping the earth and it is a new world order. This collapse and rebirth of the world wide economic system is a necessary step. Kind of like discovering that wagon wheels are torn to pieces if you attach them to a powerful car and try to drive it 120 MPH. Historians will look on this economic evolution as necessary to create much better economic institutions. But right now, I think you really have to want to survive economically and be ready to work hard at it or chances are you are toast.

D: So we need a transformation of financial institutions - an evolution. But what can folks do now to survive and make lemonade out of these lemons?

A: Downturns and periods of instability are times of enormous opportunities for those who can think in new ways.

D: Where do we start? With the basics?

A: When in trouble always get back to the basics. For 15 years or more we have been discussing a concept called Economic Order. Those who were living according to the principles

underlying economic order are generally in better shape now than those who were not. Economic Order is one of the areas we focus on in the MindFitness Training. Economic order of some kind is critical to mindfitness and quality of life including happiness.

D: We have mentioned The MindFitness Training several times but haven't said much about what it is. Could you explain a bit?

A: I assert that a substantial percentage of ordinary people are living extraordinary lives. We discovered some strategies which have worked well so far for us. So we made a study to see if it is possible for others to benefit from what has worked for us. Furthermore, the more individuals unfold their own potential the greater the consciousness of the electorate and a more conscious electorate is the best, fastest way to meet the current crisis, evolve our country and contribute to the evolution of the world. So like many others we set out with the intention of understanding how to bring oxygen and fuel to what we see as a flame of awakening spreading throughout America and the world. Being physically fit is fashionable and easier to do than ever before. It occurred to me that just like physical fitness there are particular, relatively easily learned strategies and principles which can build mind fitness just like physical fitness. So, we registered the term MindFitness® and set out to make those strategies and principles available to as many as I can as inexpensively as possible. That means doing research to discover better ways to learn to enhance mindfulness - quality of consciousness including creativity, sub consciousness, unconsciousness and supra consciousness. We founded the International MindFitness Foundation and the Infinite Potentials Series is one way to share these treasures (these notions, principles) with others.

D: Our intention is to bring encouragement - good news to those who can use it.

A: Yes. It is fun and besides it helps us unfold our own potentials.

D: Could you describe the MindFitness Training a little more and then we can go back to Economic Order?

A: I have been thinking about what people can do to reduce the negative effects of the economic crisis and maximize their ability to seize the opportunities. And, you know the basic mindfitness training itself seems to address the challenges amazingly well even though it was developed during a time of unprecedented prosperity.

A: One way to describe The Process or Mindfitness Training is to use what I call **The Wheel of Opportunity. (Show full wheel)** The challenge is not so much availability of information but motivation - the energy, the passion, the vision to take the next usually simple and basic steps. So I envisioned a Wheel of Opportunity which might clarify some of the primary categories of concern and opportunity applicable to most of us. These can be thought of as areas or strategies or principles that can be used to get started. Note they all lead to the same place - the center which represents Infinite Potentials. When coaching an individual I can start with the area that (s)he is most interested in at the moment. Success in the first area can lead to the next step and so forth. Of course, everyone has to start with **Mind**. (go to blank wheel of opportunity and add

mind) Because only mind can generate the energy and focus necessary to begin work on the first area of primary interest (challenge) whatever it is. Of course, if we are working with a group we all work on the same area at once. Logically the next focus is on **Stress Science**. Reducing unhealthy stress conserves energy and allows mind to quiet itself which can bring economic order. It takes energy and mental quietness to go to the next step **Exercise**. Exercise further builds energy required to improve economic order and take on the incredibly important principle of enhancing **Attention**. Even small increases in attention can produce outsized results. Some of the best teachers have said that increasing the ability to attend is probably the highest priority self actualization strategy we can apply. Attention goes way beyond concentration.

The Breath Work - learning for oneself how to maximize breathing efficiency through all of the stages of life is common to all of the other episodes. However breathing requires careful (special) attention in order for most to gain the enormous benefits hidden there. **Sleep Science** is another misunderstood and enormously under utilized opportunity for bringing about extraordinary improvement in day to day quality of life.

D: Next, we come to **Economic Order**. Please define it.

A: I like the term because it gets away from the notion of being rich or poor. Economic order is different for everyone. Perfect Economic order as I see it is having the resources that allow an individual to do what (s)he loves to do 100% of the time.

D: 100% of the time? What about things like chores and housework and people who are trapped in a job they don't like but are afraid to leave?

A: Well, in that sense economic order is relative. I think if people can do what they love 10 or 15% of the time they are usually happy campers. The key is to make a beginning.

D: If one love's something (s)he gets better at it and probably improves so much that after a while he can do what he loves 20 or 30% of the time and so on. And so becoming stronger, happier and more grateful.

A: Right! One builds from there towards the 100% mark. Of course, there are chores and stuff that may not be easy or fun like working out, paying bills, doing the dishes etc.

D: Changing diapers isn't necessarily pleasant but it is part of doing what one loves. The Process of all this changes one's consciousness so that even the chores and tough stuff can become fun. Sort of back to the physical fitness model. The work out might hurt but somehow it hurts good. And you feel so good and energized afterwards...the shower can be delicious.

A: Dean Martin was driving into the Beverly Hills Country club and he ran into Jack Benny coming out. So Dean said , "Jack, how was golf today?" Jack answered in his classic dead pan way, "Well, the golf was so-so but the towels were wonderful".

D: So, how does one achieve economic order? Lower one's economic goals?

A: I'd rather say, one must set wise economic goals and learn to practice voluntary simplicity. (create a slide for this).

D: Voluntary Simplicity is definitely the place to start in this economic crisis. Don't you think? How would you define voluntary simplicity?

A: OK, but first I'd like to look into a hidden challenge that most of us have when we think about economics. Our culture conditions us to an economic, mental double bind. On the one hand we are conditioned to want to compete and make money and live lavishly. The commercial forces hammering on our brain to buy, buy, buy and conditioning us to judge ourselves based on our economic success and physical attractiveness and popularity are overwhelming.

D: It takes awareness, wisdom to free oneself from this kind of conditioning. Mindfulness?

A: Right. On the other hand we are often taught that the meek will inherit the earth and that there is great virtue in not wanting a lot for yourself, giving to others, living simply. See the double bind?

D: When I was growing up after the New Deal era many people believed that if you got rich you must be stepping on someone and the true salt of the earth is the working class.

A: So first thing is to break through that kind of polarizing cultural mythology and eliminate inner conflict because it drains energy. So thinking in terms of economic order rather than rich or poor seems to help many of us rise above the double bind...the cultural trance.

D: You were explaining voluntary simplicity.

A: John Naisbit, and other futurists report that voluntary simplicity is one of the ten top trends worldwide..at least in the developed countries. One of the interesting things about voluntary simplicity is that it seems to have begun or at least gained momentum among those who are what the Value Added Survey calls Actualizers. Actualizers are the more educated segment of the population - people with more discretionary income and time. From a psychological perspective they tend to be people who are less conditioned, less disassociative, more mindful.

D: Can you give an example?

A: Well, typically a person decides to begin practicing voluntary simplicity because he has come to a realization that he or she is working too hard, commuting too far, the kids are becoming latch key kids and relationship with the spouse is deteriorating. So, a decision to change is made which often means quitting a good job or at least making major changes in the way work gets done. Actualizers tend to have marketable skills so they can continue working from home or close to home. They are willing to earn somewhat less money but have a more satisfying life. Interestingly, those beginning to practice voluntary simplicity often do earn less in the start up period but in time they often wind up earning more.

D: Because happier people are more creative and productive? Happier people tend to spend less because they are already satisfied with life. Over consumption is a sign of discontent. An attempt to fill a void.

A: Exactly. People discover that buying only what is really needed is a more efficient, healthier, a more fun, much freer way to live. So, they begin to generate savings and learn how to invest, manage their portfolios, and earn and spend in tax efficient ways.

D: Some wealthy people probably disagree.

A: Sure, but we are focusing on people who need to improve the economic order in their lives. Rich people are more likely to focus on other areas of the Wheel of Opportunity. But many wealthy people are increasing their consciousness and quality of life by simplifying as well. In fact the Voluntary Simplicity Movement is often led by people who already earn a decent living.

D: Now the ecological movement, inflation, higher fuel and food prices are adding even more momentum to the notion of buying only what we really need.

A: Exactly. So one must begin with simplifying one's economic life. Paradoxically it takes a lot of creative thinking and energy to actually make this happen. It can feel like a campaign, a crusade...taking heaven by storm.

D: We've been doing this for nearly 50 years and find it a lot of fun and even addictive in a healthy way. How does one get started?

A: Practically, this usually means that one must do a careful evaluation of what one's actual resources are. Everyone that I know of who understands how to do a (carefully) meticulous listing and evaluation of personal resources has realized that they have more resources and much more freedom to make changes than they realized before they did the math. That's the first step. The next step is to find out what one truly loves to do. Then start doing that in one's spare time. So far as I can see this pattern almost always leads to increased economic well being.

D: What if what you love to do is drink or gamble?

A: Plenty of people who love to drink and gamble have reasonably good economic order. If any of us goes too far, lives unhealthily, lose balance then hell emerges.

D: But the more you do what you love the better you get at it which leads to more time and resources to follow your dream - do more of what you love.

A: That's the principle and strategy. It's a very old idea which has to be rediscovered within the context of each individual's present circumstances. Many people do not yet realize that thinking in these ways is critically important.

D: Friends, time is up. We will continue with Economic Order and how to get it in Episode V. Thanks for being with us.

