

Abundant Thinking

Achieving the...

*Rich Dad
Mindset*

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Introduction

Abundant thinking is a form of positive thinking. It is about creating a mindset of positive values that allow you to perceive your life as one of abundance, not one of deficit. It teaches you to flip your mental attitude coin from negative to positive and appreciate how much you have in your life to be grateful for.

However, it does not suggest that our gratitude should cause us to stop striving for more and just accept our lot in life; rather it teaches quite the opposite: that by acknowledging how abundant our lives are already, our minds will embrace the concept that the good things in life are potentially unlimited.

Abundant means to be richly supplied; to be *over*-supplied. This means that we should have no fear of asking for more because we can be confident in its delivery. Abundance is a store that never runs out of its goods.

Abundant thinking is not just concerned with money, although there is a strong financial aspect that can be applied; it is a life philosophy. Where money is the issue, it is viewed as a tool that allows a better quality of life to be achieved – not just the material aspects, but most crucially the freedom to spend time doing the things that matter with the people that matter.

Similarly, being a rich dad, or a rich mum, may not relate to money at all. It can even negate the willful drive for extra finances, especially where that works against the more important aspects of life, such as love and family. We all know of rich, unhappy people. We read about them every day in the newspapers and see them on the television; people who have a clear abundance of finances but who are bereft emotionally.

Abundant thinking is all about changing how you view your personal circumstances so that you can change how you view the world at large. It is realizing that you have been the cause of your sadness and struggle in life through your focus on what you don't have, rather than on what you do have.

The Law of Abundance

The Law of Abundance is one of the Universal Laws. These are also referred to as Spiritual Laws or Laws of Nature. Universal Laws are those immutable principles that rule our world and our universe, governing how the entire cosmos continues to exist and thrive.

Whilst the very notion that these laws exist may prove too esoteric for some people, there is a sound basis in science for several of them. For example, the Law of Cause & Effect states that any action produces a result in exact proportion to the action which initiated it. This idea goes back to Biblical times. It says in Galatians: “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Some people think of this in terms of Karma. Others will use the phrase: “Goes around, comes around.” It all amounts to the same thing.

Universal Laws work whether we believe in them or not. Those who do not believe in them choose by default to believe that life is a random series of events that they have little or no control over, and that there is no purpose or underlying reason why things happen as they do.

The Law of Abundance states that the universe is continually and effortlessly producing, creating unlimited resources for us to take advantage of. You only have to look at Nature to know this is true.

Breaking any law is apt to cause problems. That is true of man-made laws and those handed down by the universe. Equally, misinterpreting laws can cause trouble. You may fully believe that there is abundance out there, as evidence by those individuals who appear to “have it all”, but you may be seeking similar abundance in the wrong ways. If your motivation for achieving more is to focus on what you do not have, you are not thinking in tune with the Law of Abundance. Abundant thinking is not about working more hours to accumulate more belongings, or becoming miserly with your money because you want your bank accounts to appear more abundant. These attitudes work in direct opposition to the Law of Abundance. These are reactions based on fear and panic, and Universal Laws always work in peace and balance.

What Is Abundant Thinking?

Abundant thinking requires that you appreciate what you have in life, rather than bemoaning the things you lack. It further asks that you focus on what is possible, and that you reach for what you want in life. If this latter point sounds like something you are already doing and it is not producing the goods, it is because you have not established the former mindset – the one that makes you always appreciative. In contrast, scarcity thinking focuses on what you don't have, what you want more of, what you might lose, and what has gone wrong in your life.

People who think abundant thoughts are happier than those who don't. It stands to reason. Abundant thinking is positive thinking. That does not mean they are unaware of the areas where their lives might need improvement, they are simply able to approach those areas with a positive frame of mind, confident that they will have no difficulty bringing about the necessary changes. This is because they choose to believe that there is an abundance of whatever they need just waiting for them.

Our thoughts dictate our lives. Our thoughts can attract good things into our lives, or repel them. This is another Universal Law – the Law of Attraction. One of the common sayings in positive thinking methodology is: “Whatever the mind of man can conceive of, and believe in, it can achieve.”

That is not to say you simply have to sit at home thinking good thoughts. That is obviously not enough. You will still have to take actions to back up those thoughts, but those actions will work infinitely better when they are backed by positive thinking, and abundant thinking.

The Law of Cause & Effect deals with this as well. The fewer or smaller things you cause to happen, the less effect they will have. If you want another quote from the Bible, it says in James: “Faith without works is dead.”

If this all seems a little otherworldly, here's an example of how this might happen: Let's say you are looking for work, but your attitude is that there are very few suitable jobs, and you'll never find one for yourself. In other words, your attitude stinks. You are thinking negatively. This may mean you take no action to find a job.

You don't compile a CV, you don't send email enquiries, and you don't go knocking on doors. And if by chance you did bump into the very person who could give you your dream job, they would not offer it to you because you would not be viewed as the positive individual they would want on board. A negative attitude can therefore be self-perpetuating, as it consistently produces negative results that further reinforce your negative attitude.

Abundant thinking opens up possibilities and opportunities that we could easily have missed by harboring negative thoughts and thoughts of scarcity. It causes you to take positive actions because you firmly believe and expect that they will produce the desired results. You take as your proof for this the fact that you are already more than blessed by the abundant gifts in your life to date. Abundant thinking is about focusing on what you have right now, and using that to build a brighter future. It does not let you dwell in the past, regretting mistakes and ventures that did not work out exactly as planned.

People who think abundantly do not suffer guilt for their desire to attain more. This is for two reasons: they are already grateful for what they have, and they do not feel that asking for more will deprive anyone else. Abundance means there is plenty to go around for everyone

Abundance Motivation

A key part of abundant thinking is abundance motivation, sometimes called appreciative-assertive thinking. This is the belief that we have more than the minimum necessary to get by. It says we have more than we need, and more than we could have ever expected. It requires that you dispel any assumptions about what you will receive in life, be that from God, nature, society, parents, peers, friends, or loved ones.

Again, this does not suggest we have to stop wanting more. It is simply about establishing the correct mindset. Knowing we have more than we need makes us feel happy and grateful. We appreciate what we have, and that means whatever else we get is a bonus. Thinking you deserve more, you are owed more, or expecting more, just leads to resentment when it doesn't show up. You have to remember how you came into the world – with nothing – and how you will end up leaving it – with nothing.

Creating a healthy attitude towards your existing abundance relies on focusing on what your minimum requirements *truly* are. If you have your health, enough food to eat, and a roof over your head, then you have sufficient to survive and lots to be grateful for. If you also have love in your life, you should be ecstatic.

Having any or all of these things, even at their minimum levels, still puts you far ahead of many millions of people in less developed countries who struggle every day for the basic necessities of life. Ironically, many of these people will lead happier lives than those of us who have plenty. It is all about expectations. The world does not owe you a living. It doesn't owe you anything. But neither will it deny you anything if you honestly believe its abundance is just waiting for you.

The key is to be realistic, and not be influenced by our modern consumerist society. Commercials will try to convince you that you need certain items to be happy. You must have the latest designer accessories, the best gadgets, a bigger house, a luxury car. You believe these messages at your peril. You do not *need* these things, but it is certainly okay to want them. This is because need is defined by a feeling of lacking something. Straight away, that means you are focusing on what you do not have. Think about the way different children around the world respond to receiving gifts. The key is not how much they actually receive, but how much they *expect* to receive. The toys you may throw in the trash would make some other child whoop with delight.

Abundant thinking may appear to be a strange and contradictory concept. It says you should be grateful for what you have, but it is okay to want more. It says you should be aware of your minimum requirements, but place no

maximum limit on what you can achieve because the world can always keep on giving you more.

It is okay to feel confused about this. Abundant thinking asks that you give up the bad habits of a lifetime, and those can be heavy shackles to throw off. You are not even being asked to do anything difficult instead, and this can be part of the problem. Anyone who has spent years struggling may find it crazy to be told they can more quickly achieve their goals by doing nothing more than altering the way they think.

At the very least, abundant thinking can help set your priorities straight. You may not want much more in life that you already have, but you also may not be genuinely enthralled by all that you do have. Abundant thinking asks that you take stock and realize how fortunate you really are. It can also help develop a healthier and more realistic attitude to those times in life when plans do not work out, and upsets occur. With abundant thinking, we are forced to ask the question: “Who said I deserved any better?”

What we have to remember is that abundant thinking does not guarantee anything. If we start believing that abundant thinking will definitely bring us wealth and riches, or anything else that we strive for, we have arrived back at expectations again. All you have to do is accept the good things in your life, be grateful for them, and know that if you do want more there is an abundance out there waiting to be tapped, and it is your positive attitude that will far more readily allow you to tap it.

Abundant Thinking in Practice

Abundant thinking can be used to good effect in every part of your life. It allows you to be grateful for the good health that you enjoy, and to know that if your health is suffering, it could always be worse. We can also take the opportunity to be grateful for the good health we have enjoyed in the past, and for the good health that still exists in those people we care about. It is all about perspective; seeing the positives rather than the negatives.

So how can this be applied to an unsatisfactory financial situation? What about if you sign a deal with someone and that person then reneges and leaves you out of pocket? The normal way to behave is from a perspective of loss. This is perfectly understandable because loss is involved. However, this does not take into account the imperfect world we live in. We all know that people can take advantage and that there are some who are out to rip you off.

Having an abundant thinking habit ensures that you handle this situation with the minimum detriment to yourself. It means your intent is always to maintain an abundance of happiness in your life, which will serve to counter any negative feelings, none of which are helpful. The actions you will need to take to rectify the situation can be taken whatever your mood. Your negative feelings, harbored towards the other person, do not affect the other person. The only person they screw up is you, taking away from your feelings of abundance.

Abundant thinking creates a mindset that allows a better perspective on the situation. You will ask yourself: “Has this person stolen my happiness, or am I doing that to myself through my reaction?” And if the worst-case happens and you are seriously affected by what has happened, your belief in the abundance available to you will be your reassurance that the loss will be replenished soon, and then some. This provides a speedier recovery from its ill-effects. Abundant thinking allows the person to quickly accept life’s difficulties and move beyond them to better times.

In a business environment, abundant thinking focuses on the organization's strengths and what is possible, not on what may have gone wrong. This is crucial in hard times, like those we are experiencing at the moment. Many businesses have experienced huge losses and difficulties, and the temptation is thus to concentrate on what was and what might have been. This type of thinking is based on fear of scarcity. Leaders who take this attitude in business can instil negativity in their workforce and therefore exacerbate the problems that already exist.

How to be An Abundant Thinker

The first step is to take a good honest look at your current and past attitudes, and assess whether your thinking has been based on abundance. If not, then you have to gauge how far away from abundant thinking you are. You should ask certain questions: Do you routinely bother evaluating how your life is faring? If so, do you accomplish what you set out to do? If you have mixed results, do you know what is working and what isn't? Which areas need to be improved? Where does your attitude need adjusting to create a better life for yourself?

Once you know these things, the real question is whether you are prepared to do anything about it. This will make the difference between abundant thinking and scarcity thinking.

One thing to be aware of is how you talk to yourself. This can reveal a lot about how healthy your thinking really is. How many times do you use “could have”, “would have”, and “should have”? Although you may think that these are useful correctional phrases that mean you have understood your mistakes, they are nothing to do with abundant thinking. They are dealing with the past, and giving power to the things you feel you failed at. They are self-critical and full of regret. They remind you of the lack in your life; the chances you should have, would have, or could have taken. They are linked to feelings of expectation, and this is the enemy of abundant thinking. All these should be replaced with a simple “I want”. That brings our desire into the present moment, and that is the only way our brains register that an action needs to be performed *now*.

People who think in these negative ways make themselves victims, and this is self-perpetuating, especially when other people or outside circumstances are blamed for the hurt. Whenever you blame, you remove your responsibility to improve the situation. You are saying that there is nothing to be done to make things better because it is out of your control. You have denied the abundance in your life.

Here are some ways in which you can become an abundant thinker:

1. Identify your biggest bar to abundant thinking. Analyze why you have not embraced the concept before. Have years of negative conditioning made it difficult, or did you just not know about it?
2. Decide now that you will start to think abundant thoughts.
3. Count your blessings right now, and start being grateful for all the good things you have in your life.
4. Stop thinking of what you believe you don't have; you are concentrating on an empty space. Instead, begin to focus on creating the circumstances that will cause abundance to fill your empty spaces. Develop your interests, knowledge, and skills in areas that will help you achieve more.
5. Exchange “could've”, “should've” and “would've” for “I want”.
6. Don't feel guilty for wanting. It is your personal choice to strive for happiness for yourself and others.
7. You can want, but don't create specific expectations for yourself.
8. Better still, create zero expectations of what you will receive. Do not automatically assume that you will receive anything. Just know that anything is possible and invite that abundance into your life.
9. Be mentally prepared for the worst-case scenario. Think positively about receiving what you want, but do not take it as read. If you meet your goals, it will add to the happiness you already enjoy; if not, it doesn't matter because you are happy with what you already have.
10. Stop thinking the world owes you a living and that you *deserve* to receive what you want. Everything you receive in life is a gift. The world doesn't *owe* you anything, but its abundance is capable of *giving* you anything.

11. Stop feeling cheated, and like a victim. Take control and take responsibility for your own happiness.

12. Know that your past does not equal your future, and your current unfavorable situation does not have to last if you choose to make it better. You are not your condition.

13. Accept that you will make mistakes. Don't beat yourself up when you do; regard that mistake as a moment on your learning curve that will help take you to new heights. Learn from it and move on. Don't dwell. Some of our hardest knocks teach us our most important lessons in life.

14. Think of a physical reminder that will help you keep your thoughts on track. Every time you feel you are drifting back to thoughts of scarcity, perform your little physical action to realign yourself with abundance. You could click your fingers, snap a rubber band on your wrist, or simply join your thumb to your forefinger as people do in meditation.

15. Develop a mantra that you repeat every morning and evening out loud, and in your head whenever you need a boost. You could try: "Abundance is mine right now and always." Remember that whatever you say, keep it in the present tense. Saying that "Abundance *will be* mine" causes the brain to keep abundance in the future.

As a starter exercise, think of one situation in your life that you believe *should have* turned out better because your expectations were so formulated. Try and find a way to see the positives in it, how you may have learned from your "failure" to meet your expectations, and then let go of those expectations. Rephrase your expectations into a request for abundance. This is one piece of deficit thinking that is now abundant thinking.

How to Be a Rich Dad

Having a rich-Dad mindset is about focusing on the financial aspects of abundant thinking, rather than just the psychological. This involves analyzing how you view certain pertinent financial questions, and swapping a scarcity or deficit thought for an abundant thought.

1. “I can’t afford” becomes “how can I afford?” when abundant thinking is applied. This is because saying you can’t do something closes down possibilities and tells the universe that this option no longer exists for you.
2. “My kids make me poor” becomes “I want to be rich for my kids” with abundant thinking. This is not focusing on the expense of having children, but on the duty to create a more secure life for them.
3. "I don't care about money" becomes "money is power" when abundant thinking is applied. The idea that money is somehow “dirty” is exchanged for the acceptance that money allows a person to have more choices in life.
4. "Don't take financial risks" becomes "take calculated risks" with abundant thinking. This is about trying to put your money to work whilst mitigating the risks involved.
5. "Pay myself last" becomes "pay myself first" with abundant thinking. This ensures that there is finance available for investments so further returns can be possible.
6. “The state will provide for me” becomes “I take responsibility for myself” when abundant thinking is applied. This counters entitlement thinking by teaching financial self-reliance.
7. “Academic literacy is important” becomes “academic literacy *and* financial literacy are important” with abundant thinking. This provides a firm grounding for the real world.

8. "I work for my money" becomes "my money works for me" with abundant thinking. This is about removing yourself from the “rat race” and accepting that you are responsible for your own destiny.

9. “Making money is important” becomes “managing money is important” with abundant thinking. This concerns the ability to establish financial education that lasts a lifetime.

10. "My house is an asset" becomes "my house is a liability" when abundant thinking is applied. Although this may seem the wrong way around, this argues that anything that drains your finances is a liability, as a mortgage does.

The Alternatives to Abundant Thinking

Deficit Motivation/Entitlement Thinking

Deficit motivation is the opposite of abundance motivation. It is also known as entitlement thinking. This is how victims are made.

Entitlement thinking has already been discussed to a certain extent. It is that awful feeling that says you have been cheated out of your just desserts, your rightful inheritance. It is how people think when they set specific expectations for themselves that are based on their belief that they deserve more.

Entitlement thinking can create the narrow miss that causes a little grimace, or a headlong plunge into an empty chasm. The latter happens when delusion is largely responsible for a person's expectations. Think the tone-deaf crowd in the first round of "American Idol".

This sort of thinking takes many forms. It may make you think you deserve more money, a better job, more praise, a more attractive body, better opportunities, skills, friends, partners etc. It covers the whole gamut of disillusionments that can cause our lives to be so miserable, and our emotions to be so fraught and charged with anger and resentment.

These emotions are caused by the belief that you have received less than you expected or less than you deserve. It is setting too-high minimum expectations. This is down to often arbitrary personal assessments that have no basis in reality, and that have been bolstered over the years by well-meaning but ill-advised encouragement from others. Think the relatives of the tone-deaf crowd in the first round of "American Idol". On the other hand, entitlement thinking may be based on a sound assessment of a person's skills and abilities, which makes missing the mark even more annoying. Either way, however, the stumbling block is the same: expectations. These are what cause the unhappiness.

Recognizing entitlement thinking is easy. It is feeling that we are in a hole and trying to climb out. It is the sense that we are constantly struggling to keep our head above water. Although these situations may be true now, they should not become who you are. A better way to think of things is to realize it could be a lot worse: the hole could be your grave that you never get out of; and at least your head is *above* water and you're not drowning. With these new interpretations, it instantly becomes apparent that you have a lot to be grateful for.

Deficit motivation can cause serious harm to an individual. It can make them aggressive and negative to be around, even with those people closest to them; or especially so. It can provoke a reckless attitude to life, where dangerous and uncalculated risks are taken. Or it can cause a person to feel so sorry for themselves that they withdraw and give up, which can lead to depression or worse.

The really sad part of deficit motivation is that it can cause people to miss some truly outstanding opportunities because they do not completely conform to the individual's preconceived ideas of how their main chance will appear to them. By the time they realize that they may have misconstrued the situation, their window has passed.

To defeat entitlement thinking, we must ask ourselves exactly why we believe we are entitled to anything at all. Mostly, it is because we have been born into a society that promotes the idea that anything is possible. This is the selling of The American Dream. Yes, almost anything is possible with abundant thinking, but we have not been schooled in the workings of abundant thinking, we have been taught that we are *entitled*, and this has created expectations.

You have to separate the ideal of entitlement from the reality of what you can honestly expect. We all believe we have the right to life, the basic entitlement to live our lives peacefully, but try telling that to the have-not who intends to join the haves by using a gun on you. Nothing can be taken for granted, and once we realize this we can truly begin to be grateful for what we do have, because we will understand that it is all a gift.

Over the centuries, and recent years especially, our notion of what we are entitled to has changed beyond all recognition. Perhaps we feel we are entitled to foreign holidays twice a year, but that's only thanks to the Wright brothers a hundred years ago. Before that, trips abroad were far more arduous and expensive affairs. Luxuries have become necessities, and our values have been screwed up. We no longer look at the simple things in life that used to make people grateful, we notice instead all the things we are lacking. We are teaching ourselves to be unhappy, and to feel that we are victims of some awful fraud.

Deficit thinking can even create paranoid thinking; that we are being “robbed” of what we deserve. We can start to view other people negatively and with deep suspicion. Anyone we perceive as having the things we want becomes the enemy. We cease looking inwardly for answers and instead focus on who is to blame for our deficit.

Scarcity Thinking

Scarcity thinking is the opposite of abundance thinking. This happens when people focus on what they do not have in their lives. They take what they have entirely for granted, show no gratitude, and choose instead to focus all their energies on being resentful at the “gaps” in their lives.

People who live by thoughts of scarcity are creating the very circumstances that will cause further scarcity, because they are convinced that there is a shortage of the things they want in life. They do not embrace the concept of abundance, and thus do not invite it into their lives through a positive attitude.

Scarcity thinking can also produce more far-reaching negative repercussions. It can cause people to take things they don't need, or too much of what they do need, or can make them hoard which stops them giving. Those who think abundantly, on the other hand, are happy to take only what they need, because they know that there is a limitless supply should they want any more.

Conclusion

The concept of abundant thinking can be puzzling if you do not understand the message that lies at its heart.

To summarize, abundant thinking is about being grateful for what you do have rather than focusing on what you lack. It involves having no hard and fast expectation of what you will receive based on some egotistical notion of what you deserve out of life. It says: be happy with what you have because it is all effectively on loan to you whilst you are here, and if you want more then take the appropriate actions to achieve more, but remain happy in the knowledge that it may not happen as you expect.

All this serves to produce the correct frame of mind to ultimately accept the gifts that the universe has waiting for you in abundance. This is where some people may struggle, because this asks that you make a leap of faith and believe that there really is an abundance out there. The only way to get round this is to realize that the alternative view is that there *isn't* an abundance, and that you will have to live your life in scarcity. The choice about what to believe should then be clear.

Think of it this way: It's your birthday. It's not written in stone that you are entitled to gifts, so whatever you receive is a bonus and you should be grateful. However, you are more likely to receive better gifts the nicer you are, and nice people tend to have positive attitudes. A negative attitude means you are not so much fun to be around, thus fewer people will show up at your party and they will likely hand you their unwanted gifts from the previous Christmas, or come empty-handed and just drain your booze cabinet.

Which would you prefer?