

## The Power of Enough: Global Sufficiency By Miriam Hawley

As one of the founders of the group that envisioned and created *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, I learned some valuable lessons that can serve our world today. By seeking information for ourselves, we saw value for all women, and we found that we could make a difference. In the context of the growing women and women in health movements, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* altered the global conversation about women's health & sexuality. We didn't set out to transform the global conversation about women's health and sexuality, and that is what we did!

At this moment in history there are powerful shifts occurring that open up the possibility of a world sourced by Sufficiency; a sustainable world created by people like you and me who are concerned about the future of our planet, our country and our way of life.

John Ehrenfeld, author of *Sustainability by Design*, declares a powerful possibility...the possibility that human and all other life will flourish on the Planet forever. Yes, we need to address global warming and carbon emissions and all the rest, but in order to “adopt a new story that will change our behavior such that flourishing rather than unsustainability shows up in action,” we also need to be radical in our thinking; we need to engage in a new conversation.

In order for the earth and all species to flourish, we must use the opportunities opened to us by the current global economic crisis which compels us (says Lynne Twist, author of *The Soul of Money*) to “confront not only the financial crisis, but also all other crises which stem from the same root—Scarcity”; a crisis that invites us to completely rework, or even create for the first time, our ideas about what is enough.

Lynne asserts that we are in a trance fueled by the toxic lies of scarcity:

- Lie #1: There is not enough—  
Not enough to go around—not enough food, water, air to breathe, money, time or love. Everything we do is in the service of overcoming this sense of lack.
- Lie #2: More is better —  
More money, more time, more business, more travel, more stuff — and yet...has the money or the stuff brought us the happiness we seek or a purpose that gets us out of bed every morning?
- Lie #3: That's just the way it is —

If we are committed to a sustainable world for ourselves, our families and communities, and our businesses, we have to give up our resignation and separation, our acceptance of these lies, and get to work! – get down to the business of waking up to the underlying truth of Sufficiency - and the Power of Enough.

So what *is* Sufficiency? If you look in the dictionary, the meanings include “adequate” and “enough”.

So what is *enough*? The answer requires contemplation: we need to ask ourselves:

1. What is enough food?
2. How many clothes do I really need?
3. How big a house is adequate?
4. What is enough time?
5. What is enough money?
6. Is the quality of enough present in my relationships?
7. Do I feel like I have enough love?
8. Do I think I do enough?

The definition I am using is originally from Buckminster Fuller, one of the world’s first futurists and a global thinker, who taught that the distinction of sufficiency is not an amount, but an exquisite experience of “enough”. Sufficiency is an experience like satisfaction. We have to train ourselves to experience sufficiency and satisfaction because we are trained to always want more, and to never be satisfied.

Sufficiency must be distinguished from Abundance. If scarcity is not enough, abundance is more than enough – more than we need. Scarcity and abundance are actually two sides of the same coin. Sufficiency is present when nothing is wasted.

#### **To Review:**

1. Sufficiency is a declaration we make - from which we operate and encourage others by our example - that we *have* enough, and that we *are* enough
2. Sufficiency is a way of being—peaceful, calm, related to people, the environment, nature, the planet, and for some, connected to the spiritual and part of a spiritual path.
3. Sufficiency overlaps with other ways of being that you are familiar with—satisfaction, generosity, to name two. It is in contrast with both scarcity and abundance - it’s not a point on that continuum. It’s a shift in mindset.
4. Sufficiency is not a destination; a place to get to...it is a lively, ongoing process, practice, and a continuing conversation.

5. Sufficiency is eternally available. It is an open secret that you can discover over and over in a community of practice.

Coming from Scarcity—where there is never enough, more is better and that's the way it is—will never create sustainability in business or in life as a whole. This is the time to adopt new meanings for words such as POWER; this is the time to cultivate “power with” rather than “power over” people and nature. Isn't that what green business ventures are committed to creating? - An appropriate and life-giving relationship with nature, with the planet, with our home, and with our fellow human beings. Indigenous peoples the world over know that we are all connected, we all are one. We are catching up.