

SAMOAN BARISH
Money Makes the World go Round, or Does It?

About two years ago, a beautiful twice divorced woman in her mid thirties with an adolescent daughter, walked into my office and, soon after, all my previously held righteous positions about money came into question. Ann was from a poor working class family and had recently become engaged to a multi-millionaire, whom she subsequently married. Certainly, this was a dramatic change in her social class, resulting in privilege and power for her in short order.

The exposure to Ann and her sensational rise in status and class, led me to think about money in ways I had never considered before. Being a person who was not fundamentally organized around money, I had to acknowledge to myself the symbolic and actual power and responsibility that having wealth represents in our capitalistic culture. Although money has no intrinsic value, it must be seen in its historical and social context.

My presentation will explore the multiform meanings of money, as well as investigating my countertransference reactions. I will look at my evolving attitude towards money and invite the audience to think about their attitudes. There are deep moral issues to be considered.

The philosopher Jacob Needleman believes that if we consider our attitudes toward money we may arrive at a "fresh observation of nearly the whole of one's life... and help in the long work of bringing unity into ourselves and our lives." I hope all of us who attend will develop a fresh way to probe our views about money.

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