

Dear Friends,

Last month, I spent time covering a scarcity mindset. It occurred to me that I need to tell “the rest of the story” as Paul Harvey used to say. This month I want to focus on an abundance mindset.

The terms abundance and scarcity mindset are often attributed to Stephen Covey, who used them in his widely successful book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (1989). An abundance mindset is when we believe there are plenty of resources for everyone. A scarcity mindset is when we believe there are limited resources, so if someone else has something, there is less of that resource available for us, says Tabitha Kirkland, a psychologist and associate teaching professor at the University of Washington’s Department of Psychology. Our mindset changes behavior because it determines what we focus on, which then affects how we act. When we experience scarcity — be it a lack of time, money or social connection — attention shifts to the scarce resource. Kirkland says that cultivating a more abundant mindset can help us see connections, broaden our perspective, solve problems and make decisions that will benefit us long-term — even when our resources are low.

Foster collaborative relationships – Our environment matters. If we’re in a workplace/church setting that encourages competition over collaboration, it’s going to be harder to adopt an abundant mindset. One way to try to nudge culture in a more abundant-mindset direction is to try to encourage and celebrate the successes of your co-workers and friends, instead of viewing their wins as your loss. We foster collaborative relationships that way because we’re in this together.

Practice gratitude – Gratitude can help us be aware of what we do have, instead of fixating on what we don’t. Writing down things we are grateful for each day or at the end of each week is an easy and tangible way to help shift to a more abundant mindset.

Notice and redirect automatic thoughts — Noticing thoughts can allow us to question if they are true and if they are beliefs we want to hold, or if rather replace them with a different perspective. “If [we] do this frequently enough, [we’ll] get better at interrupting those automatic habits of thought in all areas of life,” Kirkland says.

Advocate and give support – Part of developing a more abundant mindset is recognizing when we have resources and sharing them. The idea here is that helping and giving to others lifts everyone up. If people find big and small ways to support each other, this creates the resources others are seeking. “I think if we want to have more collaboration, abundance and optimism, we need to create the life for ourselves we hope to find,” Kirkland says. “We can start ... in our sphere of influence; that can be really empowering.”

Next Steps

- Have energy and time to give back? Volunteering helps support others and provides health benefits for the volunteer.
- Kick-start your gratitude practice by writing down three good things each day.

We are in the Grip of Grace,

Pastor Peter

P.S. Thank Plymouth Presbyterian Church for your recent gift of appreciation given to me during the June 16th worship service. Thank you so much for your encouragement and love.