

Trance of Identity

A fundamental issue and an important book review for all Alphay members

by Scott Ohlgren

In the 25-plus years I've been involved in direct sales, I have been in contact with and personally trained thousands of people who come into network marketing and repeat the following scenario:

1. they see what's possible and develop a desire to succeed.
2. they do a small bit of the work, all based on how they have always behaved and responded.
3. they lose hope, stop and/or drop out.

I understand all aspects of this scenario for a couple reasons. The first is because most of the people I have ever personally sponsored end up—or will end up—doing these exact 3 steps. The second is that I myself came very close to following this 3-step outcome when I first entered into network marketing all those years ago: I saw what was possible, applied myself *in the same ways I'd always applied myself before*, lost hope and got within an inch of dropping out.

I didn't drop out. The reason is because right about the time that I was going to quit, I was exposed to a series of books and workshops that taught me a very powerful insight: I learned that my particular way of applying myself in the world—of reacting, thinking, speaking, listening and, most importantly, coming to the conclusions that I habitually did at that time—were in fact just one out of about 20,000 or 30,000 other possible ways I could be and respond in the world.

This insight had a fairly immediately effect on me. I saw that if my particular way of being in the world—let's call it my Identity—didn't work, I could choose another way of being in the world. I could develop new skills that would allow me to change and react differently. In fact, my particular way of applying myself in the world was just my current habitual story that I'd cobbled together along the way... From stuff I inherited, things I heard that I liked, and things I made up. I also saw that this story, this way I'd applied myself in the world, had produced the life I was living. The income I had, the people around me, my job, my relationships, my home, even the possibilities I could see and couldn't see, were the product of the story that was me. **I saw that I would have to reach beyond this story if I wanted to produced a significant change in my life.** That which I thought I was had to change. What I was comfortable doing had to change. I had to be willing to engage things in a new way, if I wanted significantly grow.

If I wanted to succeed at a whole new level, I had to create quite a different story: one that was more effective at communicating ideas to others, of listening, of responding, and of seeing possibility where before I saw none.

Empowering NOs versus Trance NOs

Let's be clear: it is one thing for someone to make an empowering, very clean 'NO' decision about their involvement in Alphas in their life.

It is completely something else, however, when the 'NO'—the stopping and the quitting—comes not from a place of empowerment and choice, but instead is derived from what could be termed a *Trance of Identity*.

A Trance of Identity is where someone believes—most often unconsciously—that "who they are" is something fairly permanent and unchangeable. They're so locked in to how they react, think, speak, listen and, most importantly, come to conclusions, that they think there's not a better way. Even if they are aware of the 20-30,000 other possible ways of being, it's not *their* way, so it's not applicable, or learnable. It's not them. In fact, you'll hear it in statements such as, "*I can't do that*" ... "*That's not me*" ... "*This is just the way I am*" ... and the most insidious: "*I tried, but failed because of the following reasons...*"

In the subsequent years, I saw many people who succeeded wildly and helped build a large network, while others built small networks and earned just a couple hundred dollars a month from their efforts.

I saw that the difference in these two sets of people wasn't "who they know" or "their circumstance." The difference was *who they became*. I saw that this difference wasn't applicable to just us in direct sales or Alphas. It extended to all avenues of success, in all human endeavors. It was merely highlighted extremely well in networking, because there wasn't any escaping or denying this fact.

In the standard world of linear income—which is how the vast majority of people earn a living—the need to address one's way of being in the world isn't so important. You can tend to get by in the linear income world remaining at the current skill level that you were at 10 years ago.

But after all these years of watching people land into these two camps—those who succeed and those who don't—I've come to this conclusion: I do not believe that people can go from their current levels of success (whatever that is) to a high level of success in Alphas without breaking through their current Trance of Identity. They need to be open to improving their way of being—their skills in reacting, thinking, speaking, listening, and, most importantly, the conclusions they habitually come to.

How to tell

The great thing about this Trance of Identity is that you know if you're successfully breaking out of it or not. The test is easy: if 6 months from now, you find that you're still responding to objections the same way, you still have the same fears, you still have the same things that stop you, you still have the same sense of limited personal power and influence, then you know you're still in the Trance, and that you're still reacting, thinking, speaking, listening and coming to the same conclusions that you were before.

“Your current best understanding of the way things work, the way things are, is where you are stuck.”

- Zen Master Genpo Roshi

If you realize that you're reacting differently, and feel more empowered, and getting different results, then you know you're breaking through. One of the early signs that you are reaching beyond your Trance is uncomfortableness and the feeling that what you have relied upon your whole life is not really available anymore.

The book that shows you how

The Trance of Identity is a name borrowed directly from a very powerful book by Victoria Castle, called [*The Trance of Scarcity*](#).

Victoria's book is a must-read for all new Alphay members. It is a book about what stops you, and the story behind your stop. It opens with this inquiry: **What eclipses people's greatness? What stops us short from being all we can be?** While she uses the the specific trance of scarcity, her book really deals with the trance of one's identity, and then teaches us how to break through it to a much more powerful version of yourself.

What follows is the her book's entire introduction chapter. Reading it will clearly outline what the book will do for you, and why it's an important part of your path to Alphay success.

You can buy *The Trance of Scarcity* at Amazon for about \$10 Kindle version, or \$12 paperback version. You will not regret the purchase.

Enjoy, and please pass on to others the insights you get.

Scott

*A thanks to Alphay member Susie Peterson for finding *The Trance of Scarcity* and then recommending it to all of us on the Alphay Facebook group.*

The Trance of Scarcity

Stop Holding Your Breath and Start Living Your life

Introduction Chapter

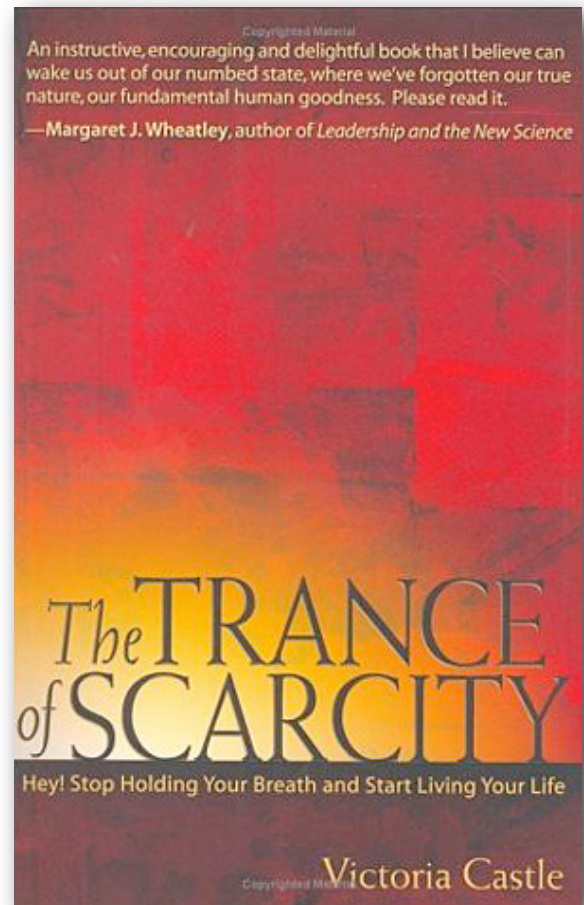
What eclipses people's greatness?

What stops us short from being as creative, caring, and resilient as we are? What is it that squeezes the life out of us so stealthily that we volunteer to shrink to a shadow of our true selves? And most importantly, how do we stop it?

Before we can decide on a treatment, we must first find the source of the malaise. Once Albert Einstein was presented with the following scenario: if you had one hour to solve a difficult problem, how would you use the time. He answered, "I'd spend the first 55 minutes defining the problem." In my own life, thoroughly defining the problem presented by the Trance of Scarcity took quite a bit longer than 55 minutes! But while my research may not have been comfortable or brief, it revealed to me an element of our existence, a *way of being*, that is most often invisible to us. Yet it fairly floats in the air we breathe. We catch it like a virus as we move within our cultural and familial surroundings, but then, strangely, we keep it alive for years without realizing how much better we would feel without it.

In working with thousands of people, I have repeatedly encountered the tragic theme of *I am not enough*—not good enough, smart enough, rich enough, young enough, old enough, worthy enough. Almost as prevalent is the them of There is not enough—not enough time, money, opportunity, love, cooperation, power, you name it. This prevailing premise of *not-enoughness* successfully cripples the lives of people who would otherwise be buoyant and passionate. Since its subjects are so readily yet unwittingly loyal to it, I came to call this blight the Trance of Scarcity.

A trance is a semi-conscious state, a predisposition: under its spell we accept what we're told without question. The Trance of Scarcity shows up in a hundred personalized



versions, but the results are always the same. Instead of experiencing the brilliance and creativity we are aching to offer, the world gets the by-products of actions that oppress, isolate, exclude, and defeat.

The Trance of Scarcity has us in its snare and produces unfathomable waste. The trance may show up privately, as self-doubt and over-consumerism, or publicly, as elitism and disregard for future generations. Many of us spend our time lamenting the way things are, justifying all the reasons why they can't be different, and preparing for the worst. Whether we act as the oppressed or the oppressor, we are caught in a web of our own making. As a reigning planetary myth, the Trance effectively keeps us from living at peace with ourselves and each other.

There is life on the other side of the Trance—a life characterized by vitality, fulfillment, and efficacy. It's not a pipe dream, and it's not as far away as we've been lead to believe. It does, however, require tampering a bit with our beliefs and confronting whatever has lived within us as the sone cold truth (usually the most disruptive things we can imagine!). But then, claiming ones' freedom always causes a certain degree of disruption. Breaking free is the polar opposite of comfort and stasis, very different from sedating ourselves so we can tolerate captivity.

To successfully upgrade from scarcity and struggle to abundance and ease, we must interrupt and dislodge old patterns that have been living quite comfortably within us, acting like they own the place. These old patterns are like a cat that likes to sleep on your head but isn't the least bit interested in the fact that you are allergic to it. It's time to move the cat. A little discomfort can end a lifetime of suffering.

The more each of us chooses to live and breathe and move within a reality of sufficiency and inclusion, the quicker we will break the Trance that now holds our world in its sway. We end this disastrous tale when we stop telling it to ourselves and each other, when we literally begin to *embody* a better reality. The Trance loses power when we address the source of the suffering rather than applying yet another bandage to the symptoms. We can eliminate this suffering, one person at a time, starting now.

This book will help you break free from the Trance of Scarcity in three ways.

1. By defying the cultural "common sense" that scarcity is an unchangeable truth, and revealing it for what it is—a mere story. Rather than offer strategies for better living in a world of scarcity, we will address the source of the reality of scarcity and expose it as a hoax, thus eliminating its power over us.
2. By leveraging the two elements that create our personal realities—**our Stories** and **how we embody them**—and then using those elements to create the reality we want. Insights and platitudes have too little impact on our lived experience, it is the practical

essentials of *embodiment* that lead us to a new and sustained *way of being* where abundance is readily at hand. Embodiment is a key player in living beyond the Trance and will be illustrated in detail.

3. By using the powerful, well-tested practices of the Cycle of Abundance that result in greater ease, freedom, and satisfaction. Through these practices—as relevant to organizations as they are to individuals—you will learn to literally embody the state of abundance, of living in the world with greater effectiveness and ease.

Part 1 of this book looks at the Trance of Scarcity and the social constructs that hold it in place. We will then explore what generates your own reality and how you can change it at the most essential level, rather than waste another minute trying to get your circumstances to behave. Our focus here is on cultivating the *way of being* that aligns us with abundance: the state of ease and flow.

You can live your life so that you're never captured or crippled by circumstance again. Embodying abundance isn't like a fad diet, it's a *way of being* firmly grounded in what actually works. It means that no matter what life presents, you can embody confidence, resilience, and success—not because you're more deserving but because you've found the leverage point for real freedom. It's a whole new ball game, and one that people miss out on when they maintain blind allegiance to the Trance of Scarcity, which insists that there is never enough, regardless.

After a lifetime of struggle and strain, we become suspicious of pleasure, ease, and flow. According to the Trance, the tighter we're wound the better. But ironically, this contraction of mind and body is the perfect breeding ground for scarcity.

In Part 2, we'll investigate how the most important ally to embodying abundance is (oh no!) pleasure. We're talking about real pleasure—not the shallow kind that comes from overindulgence but rather the capacity to be so fully present to our lives that we partake of their richness in a way that feeds the soul. **The original root of *pleasure means supple***, like a river freely flowing or a fabric with give and resilience. Abundance thrives on flow, not constriction. Specific practices are offered in this book that will show you how to embody this flow.

What we embody becomes our *way of being*; it influences every part of us. Our *way of being* in the world is the result of what we practice, whether or not it is intentional. Our habits and automatic reactions live in our muscles and in our nervous system. That's why the conceptual approach of "mind over matter" does little more than irritate—it cannot override what is already embodied. Some behaviors and habits are the result of years of embodying our unexamined Stories (such as the Trance of Scarcity), and they hold us in patterns of that run counter to our biggest commitments; patterns such as believing we're not good enough, waiting for circumstances to change so we can be successful, and accumulating enough stuff that we feel safe.

The good news is we already have all the technology we need to make the fundamental sift away from the Trance of Scarcity and into embodied abundance. By engaging in the practices offered in this book, we can release our habitual embodiment of the Trance. We can change our experience from a life dominated by struggle and constriction to a life of greater ease and possibility. And this shift can occur independent of our circumstances.

Embodied abundance goes far beyond the narcissistic orientation of "As long as I have what I need, that's all that matters." Real abundance means living in a state of fullness and flow, welcoming our interconnectedness with everyone else. This is the great power of breaking free from the Trance of Scarcity. Little by little, we are released from the Me orientation that has kept us separate and lonely, and we enter the We orientation that makes room for our hearts and minds to stay open and connected.

In addition to working with my clients and students, I have personally, in excruciating detail, tested all of the principles presented here. About 20 years ago, I went through a year I now affectionately refer to as Victoria's Adventures in Hell. At the time, I just called it Hell. In a matter of months I went through a crushing divorce, my father died, I had surgery for a major health risk, I moved to a new city where I knew no one, I looked for work for six months, and day by day I watched the little money I had disappear. I was well down the path of permanent suffering and struggle when, much to my surprise, I found a different route and took it. Since then, my focus has been on embodying what I learned during that time and making it accessible to others, with the hope that their own Adventures in Hell might be as short-lived as possible. This book includes plenty of stories from my own experience, for your education...and amusement.

What I learned was this simple but crucial formula: What we believe and what we embody becomes our reality. If we address both causes, our lives change. While the power of belief has been recognized for years, embodiment has been overlooked, even though it is essential to lasting change. Anything short of embodiment is just chatter.

As I caught sight of the Trance of Scarcity quietly pulling my strings, I realized that it was pervasive in far more lives than mine. The Trance has proven itself to be pandemic. In individuals, communities, organizations, systems, and governments. Learning to free ourselves is both a personal and planetary issue, if we are to create a future in which we all can thrive.

When one person gains access to her greatness, we all benefit. The essentials of embodied abundance aren't sneaky or slippery, they're hidden only as long as we look at life through the lens of the Trance of Scarcity. We keep seeing the hopeless view conjured by not enough, and eventually, being thoroughly convinced that the whole thing is pointless, we stop looking.

At this period in history, the majority of people throughout the world feel disempowered and exhausted. Doesn't make for a very bright future, does it? We know all too well what life looks

like inside the Trance of Scarcity—the evidence is everywhere we turn. The time is right to see what life is like when we live in freedom from the Trance. Fulfilled people—those who have ready access to their greatness and aliveness—are resourceful, generous, resilient, peace-making folk. A world full of such people has a very different future than the one we face now. Each of us holds a piece of the larger solution. Each of us plays our part by making the contribution that is our alone to make, the one that we're itching to bring forth. That's where the real fun is.

If you have had enough struggle, if you are ready for greater autonomy and aliveness, read on. You'll be helping to change the world, whether you intend to or not. Once you embody abundance as your *way of being*, you can't help but be more inspired and more inspiring. You'll build bridges to replace dead ends, and you'll easily arrive at solutions to issues that used to overwhelm you. You'll have broken free from the Trance of Scarcity, and your bountiful life will show it clearly to anyone who wants the same.

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