

# Tithing

NLP Modelling Project for John Seymour Associates

Practitioner Training

Sara Webster, Spring 1997

## Introduction

Tithing is the practice of giving 10% of ones income (or increase) to the source of ones spiritual teaching.

I currently experience difficulty with doing this and find myself blocked by fear and insecurity. I want to learn how to do this with ease and joy, for 3 main reasons:

1. From the emotional perspective: that tithing will enable me to be more spiritual through removing the *attachment* to, or *need* for money.
2. From a more logical perspective: that by maintaining a cycle of giving and receiving, we can increase the wealth and abundance of all mankind.
3. To show my gratitude for the abundance in my life.

I see people I admire living with such love, joy and grace and a real connection with Spirit', and who appear to tithe regularly, frequently and joyfully.

## Method

I selected one of these people, Carrie, and interviewed her, in order to find out how she does this behaviour: specifically, the behavioural *strategies* she uses, the importance of environment, beliefs, values, skills and abilities, identity and spiritual purpose, together with other specific behavioural activity.

We met at her house, so that she would be able to demonstrate what she does. The interview was video recorded, and I did a follow-up interview to fill in some missing pieces that I identified after the first interview. I spent some time before meeting her to clarify where I was with tithing, in terms of beliefs etc. I prepared a worksheet that was the basis of a mind map, which I thought would be useful to prompt me for the relevant questions. In practice, during the flow of a very lively conversation, it was easier to make minimal notes, and trust my own recollection of the outstanding pieces... and of course the video.

My objective was to find the bits that could make a difference to me if I chose to adopt them.

## Results

What quickly became clear was that tithing is not a small chunk activity, for example, a single monthly activity of writing a cheque etc. but it is almost always there, in Carrie's consciousness. There are many sub-TOTEs to the entire process. There are different processes and activities for cash income, cheque income, bank interest, gifts etc. There is a difference in collecting the money together, and actually making the payment.

I will structure my findings in accordance with *logical levels*:

' Substitute God, Universal Energy, The Light, Higher Consciousness, [etc. as](#) you feel comfortable.

### ***Spiritual Purpose***

Carrie's faith is the most important part of her. She talks of being 'aligned with God'.

### ***Identity***

Carrie believes she is the '*sort of person that good things happen to*'. That she is an 'extraordinary' person. She quoted some specific examples which would be of value to the reader: Carrie lives in a huge, and beautiful house in central London, free of charge; she has got a good job without qualifications.

She honours her 'basic self'. For example, when she receives gifts, she does not tithe from them, but thinks of it more as tithing to herself - presents are for the basic self, not the higher self!

She describes herself as a spiritual being learning to function in physical body.

### ***Beliefs and Values***

Carrie has a number of clearly stated beliefs about money:

- Money is energy, and tithing is a process of giving back to the source of that energy.
- Carrie believes there is plenty of money around... why shouldn't she have some of it!
- She believes it is OK for her to have it - that she is an element in the cycle of abundance.
- Why wouldn't the universe provide? She sees people in the world with lots of money.
- She believes it is wrong to waste money.
- She believes she has enough to give.
- She believes that if one cannot tithe joyfully then don't do it. There are no 'shoulds'.

What is important to her about tithing is:

- Abundance, including having more than she needs
- Tapping into a spiritual law
- Keeping her agreements, including to herself

<sup>1</sup> The basic self is the childlike part that is responsible for our basic needs and likes to have fun. This is distinct from the Higher self, which is the spiritual, creative part.

## **Capabilities**

### **States**

Carrie's state is one she described as a mixture of Gratitude, Joy, Relief, Excited: She likened it to the feeling she had when her parents came home after a trip. It is located in the chest. It is big and expanding and has little bubbles. It is this that gives her the desire to tithe, and is current when she does most of the tithing activity (see below). At the critical moment of writing the cheque, she is also proud/pleased with herself.

### **Meta-Programs**

#### **Towards/Away**

Carrie only spoke in positive terms of abundance rather than lack. Descriptions of other elements, such as environment, indicate a direction towards. An away from motivation came into play at the start of the strategy described below, when she moves away from the irritation of the incompleteness.

#### **Time orientation**

Carrie described herself as living in the present. She made no gestures to indicate time orientation, and spoke very much in the present tense - see, for example beliefs and identity. She has a through time time-line (left to right). It is at eye level and very long. The past is foggy while the future is 'incredibly bright' with sun at the end.

#### **Internal/external reference**

Carrie does use external references as well as her own internal one.

She made several important decisions about tithing without reference to others:

1. Not to tithe from gifts - which, strictly speaking, breaks the 'rules'.
2. She tithes part of the sum, not to the strict source of her spiritual teachings, but to a related organisation from which she get much joy and which does good spiritual work.

On the other hand, this second decision she checked out with one of her teachers, after which she made a 50:50 split.

Her knowing that she is doing a right thing, is internal, because people do not generally know she does this, so don't acknowledge her for it.

#### **Sorting patterns**

These are primarily peoples and places. Though I don't think this is relevant!

#### **Chunk size**

Carrie is a big chunk person! Not only was she reluctant to get into the detail I was looking for, but she think not just in global, but universal terms! Her focus is much bigger than herself.

### Modal motivator

Looking at the language she uses around beliefs and identity, she generally considers possibility rather than necessity.

### *Behaviour*

#### **Reps systems and sub-modalities**

Carrie's primary representational system is visual. She used lots of visual accessing cues: looking up and to the front. She doesn't use much hand gesturing. It is important that her room looks tidy. A critical sub-modality in this system is brightness.

#### **Strategies**

I mentioned above that I identified a number of discrete TOTE's to process of tithing:

1. Having the 'attitude of gratitude' and abundance. This is a largely continuous state.
2. Having the desire to give and be joyful. This occurs when she receives.
3. Putting money aside (different TOTE'S for cash, cheques, interest and gifts). For example, when Carrie comes home with cash received, one of the first things she does is to put 10% in her tithing envelope. This behaviour is part of the 'coming in' ritual, just like shutting the door, putting her keys on the dresser, going upstairs, etc. She puts exactly 10% in the envelope - never too little, and if she puts in too much, because she doesn't have change, then she writes a note to herself to remember to put less in next time. The cue to put money aside from cheques and interest is when she gets her bank statement. Carrie has opened a separate bank account for her tithing money, and when she sees her statement, phones to transfer 10% across. She feels that a standing order would remove her from the process, so is not desirable. She does not tithe from gifts (see beliefs).
4. Buying the travellers cheques (payment is in US\$). This involves phoning her sister to buy them for her. This is a periodic activity, when Carrie thinks she has a suitably large sum in her tithing account - £400 to £800. She may buy more than she needs if she anticipates getting more income soon. Paying over a large sum means that she has earned an awful lot! (I chose not to explore this further at this stage). I asked Carrie why she doesn't simply phone or write with her credit card number. She said that credit cards are not 'real money'. She uses travellers cheques because it is a cheap method of payment, and incurs no bank charges. See beliefs.
5. Paying the travellers cheques into her American bank account. This follows on from 4 above.
6. Making over the tithe by writing a personal cheque. (or sending the travellers cheques directly to their destination). Often about a week after depositing the travellers cheques. She described this as being just like paying an electricity bill etc. Or doing a task from her to-do list. It is simply meeting a commitment. This was a very useful re-frame for me.
7. Posting the cheque. This follows on from 6 above.

The one which is most likely to make the difference, and give me the additional choice I desire, is number 6. Although ironically, this is not the part that Carrie

focuses on as tithing. The bit that she emphasises is the continual putting away of money, and doing so with gratitude.

The goal of this TOTE is to write a personal cheque for her chosen sum of money. She knows she has completed it when the cheque is written.

The strategy runs as follows:

- K' Feels like she has forgotten something
- V' or Ve Scan mental checklist or written to-do list
- K' Feel irritation at not having done it
- A'd "You have a broken agreement... when are you going to do it?... is that why I'm not getting all the help I could do with?"
- K' Fear - she may not be as 'tuned in' as she would like
- A'" "I'm so proud of you for putting all this money aside"
- V' Picture herself *feeling good* - very bright, clear, dissociated picture.
- Ve See cheque book and pen
- Ke Write cheque

### ***Environment***

Carrie feels it is significant that she tithes in the same room that she meditates in. She sees it as a sacred space.

It is important to her that her environment is organised and clean. When it is disorganised she feels angry, and it is important to her that she feels gratitude (see below).

Her financial affairs are well organised and she always knows where her cash tithing envelope is!

## **Practical Application**

### ***Introduction***

If you would like to tithe more easily, the following description may offer some keys. This is a description of the approach used by someone who tithes regularly and with a great deal of joy.

### ***Mental Alignment***

It may be helpful to see yourself as a person comprising many parts, including the higher self, to which tithing relates, and the basic self. The higher self is the self that is spiritual and creative, and connected with the energy of the universe. The basic self is the child inside you that is responsible for your basic needs, and wants to have fun.

Tithing is abiding by a spiritual law: the Cycle of Abundance. Here are some examples Carrie gave of this:

1. Your purse gets stolen. The thief uses the money to buy food for his children. Or he buys a TV, and the money goes to the shop keeper who invests it in shares, that enable a company to grow and employ more people.... Or the thief buys drugs, and the drug dealer buys the TV....

. You pay your income tax, which funds the leisure centre, which means you don't have to buy your own swimming pool, or maintain it, or heat it, but can go swimming cheaply whenever you want!

Tithing is another way to maintain this cycle. But it has some additional dimensions:

Firstly, it is a way of demonstrating your gratitude for what you have. In life, do we not generally feel more likely to give to someone who was grateful last time?

Secondly, it gives a message to the subconscious that you already have enough - if you can spare 10%, - therefore enabling you to feel abundant!

It is important that whilst satisfying the higher self with tithing, not to allow the basic self to feel deprived. So give to yourself too - maybe keep any presents for yourself.

### ***Approach to money in general***

The bottom line is that we are talking about giving away *money*.

Money in itself is worthless, it merely represents energy. It is not really yours either, - it belongs to us all. We just look after it for a while.

There is plenty of money around... why shouldn't you have some of it? You deserve it. Why wouldn't the universe provide for you? Look at the evidence - there are lots of people in the world with lots of money.

And it is fine for you to have it - you are an element in the cycle of abundance. You are not depriving anyone else if you have money.

On the other hand don't waste money and manage your finances well in an organised manner, including knowing at all times where the tools you need are for tithing.

And look! Out of £100 you earn, if you tithe 10% then you still have a *whole £90!* If you were to let that accumulate for a while, and you write a cheque for £80, that means you have earned an awful lot!

### ***Approach to tithing***

It is important to maintain an attitude of gratitude. Tithing is not just an activity but a state of mind or approach to life. Remember the feeling you had when your parents came home after a long trip - the joy, excitement,... relief. And look at the blessings around you. Now, doesn't that make you feel good?! You are also entitled to feel proud of yourself.

3 "As you sow, so shall you reap". That money is not yours, you are just looking after it. Giving leaves room to receiving

Take on the belief that you are the *'sort of person that good things happen to'*. Look for the evidence of that in your life.

If you choose to tithe, it is important that you do so joyfully. Otherwise don't do it. There are no *'shoulds'* here. Think only of the possibilities! In fact it is more important to give joyfully than to stick to the *'rules'*. The *'rules'* say you should give to the source of your spiritual teachings. But you can give to whomever you want if it is done with gratitude and joy. You will know if it is the right thing for you.

And remember that if you decide to do it, it is important for your basic self to keep your agreements with yourself as well as others.

You may find it helpful to focus on the good things that will result from tithing. Don't focus on the lack, but on the growing abundance in your life. Develop an *'attitude of gratitude'* for the good things in your life *now*. Also raise your sights to focus on the bigger picture, and turn up the brightness knob! Not only to your place on the globe, *'but in the universe.*

### **The practicalities**

If you meditate, you may like to consider tithing in the same room that you meditate in. Look at this as a sacred space. Keep this place clean and organised. You may find that your basic self doesn't like living in a disorganised environment.

It is important to maintain that feeling of gratitude, joy and a desire to give whenever you receive.

Depending on the work you do, and the way and frequency you receive money, you set up a system that has several stages. If you receive small, frequent sums, then consider putting it in an envelope (in your meditation room?) the *minute you* get in. Put in only 10%, no less. If you don't have change, put in a little more, and write yourself a note to remember to put less in next time. Don't overdo it and feel deprived.

If you receive money by way of cheque or directly into your bank (not forgetting the interest you earn!), then check your bank statements regularly. You can open another bank account, making sure you can telephone to make transfers of 10% from your current account to your tithing account. It is probably a good idea not to set up a standing order, as this removes you from the process - if it is happening behind the scenes, it removes the opportunity for joyful giving.

Allow these funds to build up until there is a suitably large sum. Think how much you must have received in order to accumulate this amount!

And that is tithing.

The rest is like paying the electricity bill, or doing something from <sup>your</sup> ~~your~~ to-do list. It is simply meeting a commitment.

Do you ever have the feeling you have forgotten something and check your to-do list? Maybe this is on a piece of paper, or perhaps you carry a mental picture of it in your head.

Well expect the same to be true of tithing - of making over the money to your chosen recipient. Notice the feeling of irritation at not having done it and the voices

reminding you that you have a broken agreement. So when are you going to do it? Maybe you are not as 'tuned in' to the universe as you would like to be. Does that make you feel fearful?

But be proud! And while you think of all this money you have put aside, see yourself in a picture, feeling very good. Make the picture very bright and clear.

And as you do this, reach for your cheque book and write the cheque.