

**Andrew Carnegie, Napoleon Hill, Plato, Pythagoras,  
& Some Fun Puzzles**

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*"What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun."*

--Ecclesiastes 1:9

In this month's column, we will examine the core values that comprise the basis for economic success. The principles of these values have been taught for almost a century through the worldly philosophy developed by the steel industrialist Andrew Carnegie. His principles then were shared across the planet by his student, Napoleon Hill.

**Carnegie's Principles of Real Wealth**

1. Economic Security  
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2. Mental Health
3. Physical Health  
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4. Generosity
5. Social Harmony
6. Open-Mindedness  
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7. Fearlessness
8. Hopefulness
9. Faithfulness
10. Self-Discipline
11. Wisdom
12. Passion

Carnegie, born in 1835 and died in 1919, was the wealthiest person in the world during his professional life. Napoleon Hill, a law-school dropout of meager means who worked as a journalist, was invited to interview Carnegie as part of a newspaper series about successful and famous men in 1908. Though Hill scheduled the interview as a short one, he impressed Carnegie, who invited young Hill to stay at his home. Over the next three days, Carnegie shared his philosophy of life with the young man and commissioned Hill to carry out the task of communicating his secular philosophy. Hill accepted the challenge. The output of his efforts in the form of his top-rated book *Think and Grow Rich* (The Ralston Society, 1937) and lecture series reflects the Carnegie "Philosophy of Achievement."

However, we may inquire how Carnegie came to develop his philosophy. Did Hill write in the vacuum of his own life experiences or act under the influence of the thoughts, writings, and

examples of Carnegie and others? In order to answer these questions, let us begin with Carnegie's early life. Born in Dunfermline, Scotland, he grew up in an impoverished family of weavers. Though poor, young Andrew was literate, owing to the long-established public-education system in Scotland and his introduction to Scottish poet Robert Burns's writings by an uncle.

Carnegie immigrated with his family to the United States in 1848 and settled in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. In 1850, he became a messenger boy and then an operator at a telegraph office in Pittsburgh. Although he ended his formal education in Scotland, Carnegie continued to learn through his passion for reading. Colonel James Anderson, who became an early industrialist after serving in the Army, established the James Anderson Library and Institute of Allegheny City with 400 books from his library. This library, founded in 1850, was open to working boys, including Carnegie, every Saturday night. Colonel Anderson became a role model for young Carnegie, both as an industrialist and as a philanthropist.

Though Anderson's library's full contents in the years preceding the Civil War remain unknown, we may assume that the collection of an officer and a gentleman of the time would include translations of classics from the Greek and Roman Empires. Generally, these collections included the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Sophocles. One famous collection of the era was *The Works of Plato, viz. His Fifty-Five Dialogues and Twelve Epistles* (S. Cornish and Company, 1839). This collection in five volumes contained English translations compiled by Andrie Dacien. Though we do not know with certainty whether or not young Andrew read these volumes, the "Apology of Socrates" listed within the section titled "Plato's Divine Dialogues" resonates within the "Philosophy of Achievement" penned by Carnegie. Here is a quote from this section of Plato:

*"Since you are an honest man and a citizen of the most famous city in the world, equally renowned for wisdom and valor, are you not ashamed to make it your whole business to amass riches and to purchase glory, credit, and honor, and at the same time to slight the treasures of prudence, truth, and wisdom and not to think of improving your soul to the highest perfection it is capable of? All my business is to persuade you, both young and old, that you ought not doat so much upon your body, your riches, and other things, but should love your souls. I ever tell you that virtue does not flow from riches but, on the contrary, that riches spring from virtue, and that other advantages accruing to men, whether in public or private stations, take rise from the same fountain."*

Those of us familiar with Carnegie's worldly philosophy as presented by Napoleon Hill will recognize how the thoughts of this one paragraph permeate the twelve principles found in *Think and Grow Rich*. Furthermore, the set of twelve principles' structure follows the same mathematical architecture based on the ratios of 2:1 and 3:2. Plato used these ratios in his numerous cosmological allegories found throughout his *Republic*, *Laws*, *Timaeus*, and other works. The fundamental cosmology employed by Plato comes down from his predecessor Pythagoras, as encoded in his mathematical developments (see *Pythagoras & Plato-- Economics, Music, Color, & Metatrons Cube*, <https://youtu.be/rTAz8sDj7eo>, and *Decoding Pythagoras for Musicians & Sound Engineers*, <https://youtu.be/WnwW2c6MEns>). Much of the works of Pythagoras comes from his presumed education at the Temple School at Giza, Egypt. The

mathematics, cosmology, and philosophy developed and taught at Giza are embedded in the design, layout, and structure of the pyramids and related constructions. Though we do not know the source-origin of these principles, we do recognize earlier treatises. These include works such as the Vedic texts of India, including the Sastra texts, approximately fifteen volumes that focus on mathematics and architecture, and the *42 Ideals of Ma'at*. This second source, which served as a compendium of moral and spiritual instruction 5000 years ago, contains amalgams of points that parallel eight of the Ten Commandments and the twelve principles in the philosophy of Carnegie. Those of us familiar with Douglas Adams's humorous sci-fi novel *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (Pan Books, 1979) may recognize that 42, the second sphenic number ( $2 \times 3 \times 7 = 42$ , for which  $2 + 3 + 7 = 12$ ), is "The Answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, The Universe, and Everything."

Let us return to the philosophy of Andrew Carnegie as expressed by Napoleon Hill. The twelve principles that constitute real riches fall into four natural groups of one, two, three, and six—three prime numbers and the product of two of them ( $2 \times 3 = 6$ ). As we go through the following discussion of the twelve things that constitute real wealth, we ask you to find a dozen pennies or another set of twelve coins of identical diameter. Place them one by one on a table or desk as we go through the twelve principles.

Start by placing one coin down right now.

#### **Group of One**

In order to achieve a good life, Carnegie considered "Financial Security" (aka economic or material) to be the outcome of the coalescence of--and with--the other eleven principles. Many people have been surprised when they have found financial security at the bottom of this list. Those of us with barely enough to eat may place this item at the top of their agenda. Thinking about the Hierarchy of Needs identified by Abraham Maslow, material security exists as a precondition for obtaining the higher forms of riches on the list. However, following the Platonic/Pythagorean model would imply that all twelve elements are complementary and, therefore, of equal necessity. Perhaps Carnegie found that the mastery and application of the other eleven attributes generated a facility for accumulating material income and wealth.

Next, we ask you to place two more coins on your surface so that the three coins touch one another, thus forming a triangular shape.

#### **Group of Two: Basic Self**

"Positive Mental Attitude" and "Sound Physical Health" comprise the group of two. A positive mental attitude may be the most difficult to attain and to maintain. Many professionals in fields that require physical and emotional empathy with a client often confront this challenge. These professionals include doctors and other medical personnel who treat life-threatening or imminently fatal conditions, psychologists and psychiatrists, funeral directors, musicians, attorneys and their experts, police officers, and fire and rescue workers. Need we say more?

Sound physical health coexists closely with the previous. We need interrelationship and codependency of these for the fulfillment of the other ten principles. Concurrently, the actualization of the other ten attributes of wealth proceeds from the realization of these two.

Many doctors of medicine emphasize that the health of the mind and body intertwine. The well-being of one depends on the health of the other. Thus, many doctors recognize the importance of a positive mental attitude during recovery from a severe physical illness.

Next, place three more coins on your surface in a row, such that the middle one of the three is nested below the previous two. Thus, the six coins form a triangle.

### **Group of Three: Social Being**

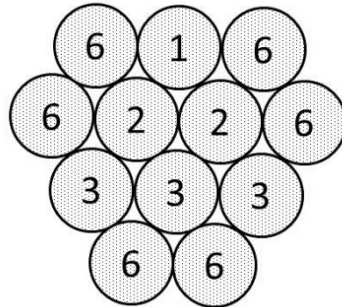
This group of three principles is social; it includes generosity, harmony, and open-mindedness. Altruism implies a willingness to share our blessings with others. The belief that s/he has nothing to offer to another constitutes the one thing that makes a person feel truly poor. Sharing creates communication that develops the bonds that hold together humanity. For most of us, our blessings and good fortune may range from a simple abundance of material goods to the ability to give completely of ourselves. Also, sharing carries over to developing harmony in human relations. How many of us remember the epic turnaround of Ebenezer Scrooge at the climax of *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens and the great personal sacrifice by the couple in O. Henry's short story "The Gift of the Magi?"

Harmony in human relationships implies balance within as well as with others. We feel and extend our inner peace when we reach out to one another. Congruence in human relations renders a comprehensive aesthetic similar to the harmony among sounds and colors or the proportions within physical objects, as stated by both Pythagoras and Plato. In human connection, we experience a balance and flow that produce energetic feelings of well-being. These feelings heal and subsequently maintain the health within the bodies that extend beyond any one of us.

Furthermore, the energetic feelings that originate from harmony grow exponentially as the number of relationships compounds among us. Some of us refer to this extending web of relationships as "the biosphere," while others call it "the human family." However, dissonance within our web of relationships creates negative energies that bring turmoil, while consonance generates positive points and peace. We can overcome dissonance by keeping an open mind on all subjects toward all people.

Most of us like to consider ourselves as open-minded. However, one of the significant weaknesses of human nature is our hesitation to move outside of our comfort zones. We tend to cling to our own sets of beliefs that bring us comfort, much like we would stick to a life-preserver or a rock in a stormy sea. The rougher the weather, the more we cling to a sense of our righteousness. When faced with growing complexity in life, we seek the support of those beliefs that we assume to be right. All of us engage in this action by tending to associate with others who hold the same or similar sets of ideas. Why? This weakness remains a part of our human nature. Perhaps it serves to remind us that we continue to remain human beings rather than perfect beings. Our fundamental nature constitutes the "why" by which we find it challenging to keep an open mind on all people's subjects. As human beings, we take great comfort in the simplification and homogenization of all thought and things, among them our conceptualizations of, beliefs in, a deity, and our views on human life, science, and politics.

Finally, place the remaining six coins on each side of the existing pyramid. Do this by nesting two coins symmetrically on each of the three sides. Your array should appear as follows:



### **Group of Six: Inner Being**

This final and largest group includes fearlessness, hopefulness, faithfulness, self-discipline, wisdom, and a sense of passion. Concerning freedom from fear, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt told us, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." He made this statement as part of his first Inaugural Address during the gravest time of the Great Depression in 1933. Fear does not enter from outside of our sensed "I," our core sense of self. Instead, fear comes from within. We allow it to loom as our reaction to a supposed terror from beyond. Emotional and psychological terrors can stultify us and grind us down to the point at which we lose our ability to succeed in any endeavor. Generally, our fears emanate through reactions to our thoughts, memories, experiences, or perceptions, which lie entangled deep within our subconscious minds. Furthermore, external dangers, which we confront, stimulate our development of fear. Whether or not these dangers are real or imagined, our fears remain fundamental to our "I," producing adverse effects upon our physical bodies, psyches, and spirits.

When we maintain hope for future achievement, this hope serves as an excellent motivator for any success in life. When we as human beings have an existence to which we can look forward, we muster the power to endure and push onward. Even for those who lack financial security but maintain a focus on a dream or vision, hope for the future can help us find purpose in life. Hope provides us, mortals, with the determination to persevere.

Along with hopefulness, faithfulness comes through our capacity for applied faith. Some of us believe in a deity, though our conceptualizations and visualizations of such an entity run the gauntlet. Others of us think like human beings and in the power of the human mind, while there are those of us who believe only in ourselves and in the good or evil that we can do. However, stripped of embellishments, possession of faith and its application to a task in which we believe continues to exist as a constant, prime-moving force within the universe. Regardless of our faith source, the capacity to identify and harness it within ourselves is linked inextricably to all other elements that form real wealth.

In order to manage all of the attributes, principles, and values discussed herein, we need to strive for complete self-discipline. On occasion, we may rely upon others to discipline us or create and

maintain social and business institutions. However, this can lead us into an invisible form of slavery. Under the yoke of hidden slavery, we may not even realize that we bear its weight. As did Neo at the beginning of the film *The Matrix* (Warner Brothers, 1999), we may exist under the illusion that we are masters of our fates. As we may recall, Neo's destiny only begins to change when he realizes that he has existed as nothing more than an electrical-power source—a human battery—for the highly developed machines that control the world. The ultimate destiny of Neo is as the savior of his world.

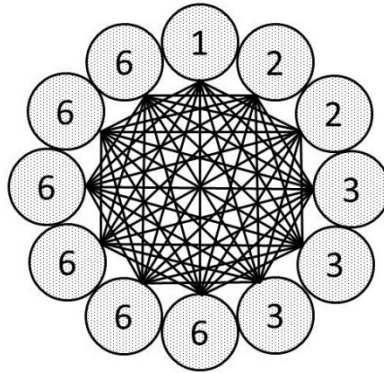
Creation demands that we master the necessary principles rather than falling into place as a cog within some grand industrial structure. Only through self-imposed and self-developed discipline do we escape the false security of this illusion. Furthermore, only through self-discipline do we achieve the wisdom that allows us to understand our fellow beings and the "cosmic all" in which we exist.

Therefore, we turn to the development of wisdom with which to understand others. We ask the following question: Has any successful person in business, politics, science, or any other profession managed to achieve his/her success without a solid understanding of human nature? No. Throughout history, individuals like Andrew Carnegie had possessed very little formal education or family wealth when they started along their life paths. However, all of them mastered the quicksilver skill of drawing others to themselves. Furthermore, these figures achieved this goal in a way that benefitted all who gathered around them. In doing so, they also helped themselves.

No one person can teach wisdom. However, through the real education of drawing one's essence outward, many lessons can unlock the box that holds the secrets of wisdom. Knowledge lives in the realm of our intuitive senses. We develop it through experiences that lead to the understanding of the nature of ourselves and others around us and the universe. Wisdom with which to understand human nature can lead directly to the creation of real wealth. This process rarely occurs the other way around.

Our final principle involves passion, the kind that comes from being engaged in a labor of love. This natural wealth element does not suggest that we love or like everything that we do throughout our lives. Nor does it mean that we should focus narrowly on only one endeavor that brings joy to ourselves, to the disdain of all else. Beyond the mundane and straightforward, finding specific labor that we love brings a sense of involvement, purpose, accomplishment, and *Joie de vie*. Though such works of love may not always nourish our bodies, they will raise our spirits, the ones that have dominion over our physical forms. When labor of love enfolds within our professions, this labor forms an essential sustainer of life. Ask any attorney, economist, musician, writer, artist, or other who remains genuinely engaged in his/her work, "When do you plan on retiring?" The chances are that the "R" word has never been in his/her vocabulary.

Now, transfer your twelve coins from your table or desk to a piece of blank paper and place them in a circle. Your coins are in a circle and each of them is connected to its two adjacent ones. Finally, draw straight lines from each coin to each nonadjacent coin. This shows the interconnectivity among all twelve of Carnegie's principles. Your coins and drawing should look like this:



We hope that each of our readers will attain and enjoy their optimal balance of the twelve things that constitute real riches. May these principles bring success, both internal and external, to the attorneys and other professionals reading this column.