

Life Supports What Supports Life

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

A few months ago, I was invited with my wife to a couple's very nice home. I am sure the home cost at least a few million dollars, and I remember speaking with the owner of the home as we listened to some music. The man was telling me that he was in the [legal](#) industry, and there was a possibility he was about to lose his job. He told me that his income was down substantially, and that he was fairly frightened about the future. I was not sure exactly what to say because it did not seem like there was a lot of good news for him to look forward to. Moreover, he had just recently purchased this home, and I am sure that the massive downturn in the financial industry and the expense of the new home was not something he was all that excited about. So I decided to change the subject.

Sitting in his driveway was a beautiful Bentley that did not appear to be more than a couple of years old. I told him I thought it was a beautiful car. We spent the next several minutes discussing the car, and he told me how much he enjoyed driving it. He seemed very happy talking about this, and I was glad to have changed the course of our conversation to something more uplifting. Then the man said something I could not believe:

"I really enjoy the car, but a friend of mine at work really likes it, and he has been really good to me. I actually gave it to him a couple of days ago. He is going to pick it up in a couple of days."

"You mean you just gave him the car?" I asked.

"Yes, he's a really nice guy and has treated me very well. He's very supportive and we're great friends."

"You did not charge him for it?"

"No, of course not."

I am not someone who is in the market for expensive and exotic cars; however, I am assuming that this car must have been worth at least \$100,000 or so. This was an incredibly generous gift--especially for someone who did not have a lot of income coming in, who might also be quite close to losing his job.

What was even more strange to me is that this was the second gift exchange involving a very expensive car that I had seen occur in the past several months between people at work. My previous assistant showed up at my house one day in a brand new BMW that must have cost at least \$45,000. While her wages were not meager, this still seemed unusual to me. She was not married and she lived with her boyfriend, who worked for a relatively small company that made software. I imagined the company probably was not doing all that well because it made software for the [recruiting industry](#), which was not doing well at the time. So many companies were letting people go, and so few were recruiting.

"That's a great car," I told her.

"Thanks. My boss's wife gave it to me. It's brand new. She thought I would like it more than she did, so she bought another car."

"You mean she just signed over an expensive BMW to you?"

"Yes. Isn't that the nicest thing you've ever heard?"

Within a few months of each other, I had encountered two separate instances of people giving away expensive cars--with no strings attached. The givers of these cars, to my knowledge, were not experiencing overwhelming abundance; however, this sort of giving away of things of huge significance is something I have seen over and over again. It is not just confined to cars. People support financially, and otherwise, people they perceive and believe are helping and supporting them. In both of these particular instances, these gifts were between people in a work situation. A financial trader gave a car to someone that he believed had helped him tremendously at work. The wife of the owner of a company had given a car to a valuable employee.

I once sold a house to a relative for much less money than the offers I had received--because I believed that the relative had been supportive of me. I gave the house to him at a very special price with no strings attached. We do things like this for people who are close to us and who support us. The biggest example is the fact that we give so selflessly to our children with no expectation whatsoever of a reward. Our children are tasked with carrying on our DNA to the next generation, giving us emotional support in our old age, and more. This kind of support is invaluable.

Life supports what supports life. In each of these instances of giving away cars, what was happening is that people were supporting those around them with extravagant gifts because these were people who supported them--even if it was in a remote way. It is no different than watering a seed of something that may feed us later. Smart people nurture those things and the people around them that help them grow. When you develop this mentality of nurturing the people and things around you that help you grow, you are much like the farmer, who feeds his chickens, and waters and fertilizes his crop. You are taking care of the things around you that give you life.

I was witnessing these "car giveaways" among people who are very wealthy. I am sure that their attitude has always been to give things away and nurture those around them in any way that they can. You need to be doing the same thing with the people around you and the things that help you grow. If you go out to the street and you speak with the most impoverished people, they will almost invariably be the people who are the most selfish, who do not know how to give or contribute to the people around them--people that could help them thrive. Most of them are isolated from their families and friends. They are isolated from the economy because they cannot work consistently to provide value to businesses and organizations. They do not support the growth of others, and consequently, the world does not support them.

In order for you to succeed in your career, no matter what you are doing, you must be in some sense or form supporting and furthering life. The more you support others, the better you will do. The world around us is built to support and encourage life. Do not hold back life; instead, nurture and support the things that nurture and support you.

The entire world around you is based on life pushing forward. A seed is planted and grows into a plant, which sprouts more seeds. People are born; they live and die, and then new people are born. This is a continual process of life, and it is all around us. The people who provide the most value in the world are the ones who are the most supported and have the most money. The reason for this is due to the fact that they are supporting, in some sense, the lives of others. When you give to the world, the world gives back to you. The more you give, the more you generally will receive. Resources are directed towards what is giving others life and sustenance.

What does this mean for you and your career?

When you are working in your job, you should always be giving more than you are taking. You need to direct your work towards things that are providing your employer value--not just towards things that provide you with something of value. I had a very interesting experience yesterday with one of our company's employees. For weeks I have been telling this particular employee that he needs to move beyond simply mechanically doing tasks to being proactive, using the information learned from doing various tasks to create value and find new ways to create revenue. One of the tasks our company does is send out job alerts to our former job wire subscribers, notifying people of market activity taking place after they have canceled their memberships. Our hope, of course, is that the people will come back as subscribers to the service. Yesterday, I had a meeting with this programmer about a separate task, and he had numerous suggestions as to how we could make these job alert emails more effective in converting former subscribers into current subscribers. This is an example of value creation. I would not have seen this value without his insights. Instead of mechanically doing a job, this fellow moved into the role of someone who creates value. By creating value, he is supporting the growth of the company and, in a sense, "creating life" because his actions will result in more revenue for our companies, which keeps people employed.

Everyone needs to constantly be spawning value and life around them. The more value you create and the more you are a life giver, the more likely you will be to survive.

Look to create value, wherever you are. When you provide value and growth for a company, you will never lose your job. An employer would have to be insane to let you go. But the value you provide must lead to growth. Growth is the ability to free up cash, create cash, improve a corporate reputation and more. When you create growth, the natural force of "life supporting life" will take over. This will bring you the success you seek.

In every company there are generally groups of people whose focus is on "being down" about the company or their jobs. These people spread negative rumors and thrive on bad news. While this sort of attitude has a place I suppose, it is generally not something that is supporting life and growth. If you spend your time focusing on negative issues, you are doing the opposite of supporting life; you are destroying life. Hence, when companies want to let people go for financial reasons or otherwise, the first people they generally look to dismiss are these "negative souls".

In order for you to grow, you must support others. You can do this emotionally, through your work, through money, or in other ways. However you accomplish this, know that supporting the growth of others will drive you forward in your career and life. The more you nurture others and the more you support life, the more life will support you.

THE LESSON

Be supportive of those around you; the more you do this, the more successful you will be in your work and life. In terms of your career, you need to constantly add value and focus on adding more to your organization than you take. Use your learning to constantly seek new forms of revenue generation and support your company's growth.

<https://www.harrisonbarnes.com/>