The Soul of Money, by Lynne Twist
Expanded Comprehensive Summary by Nicola Holmes, Life Coach

The Lie of Scarcity: Twist suggests that North American culture is driven by scarcity: an underlying, chronic, and pervasive sense of lack and “not-enoughness.” She believes that many of us perceive that we are in constant danger of not having our needs met, buy in to the false premise that ‘more is better,’ and participate in a competitive culture of accumulation, acquisition and greed. We are challenged to examine if this way of living may be, in truth, unfulfilling, destructive, and insatiable.

The Surprising Truth of Sufficiency: Twist then articulates that the opposite of scarcity is not abundance but sufficiency or a state of ‘enoughness.’ Rather than perpetually strive for ‘more,’ we’re encouraged to place greater emphasis on treasuring and stewarding what already is. Twist argues that we can apply “natural laws” to money, and makes compelling arguments that mutuality, synergy, co-existence, and cooperation nurture prosperity. She challenges the characterization of humanity divided into groups of ‘have’ s and ‘have not’s,’ asserting instead that “we are all have’s and our assets are simply diverse.”

Changing the Stories we Live By: Twist writes about humanity’s potential to move away from a paradigm of unsustainable growth to one of sufficiency and reverence for life. She encourages each of us to play our part in shifting consciousness and taking a stand for the stories that support individuals, societies, and the Earth. Twist’s life brought her (in unexpected and mystical ways) to work with South American Indigenous peoples, and the resultant cross-cultural collaborations have profoundly impacted her appreciation for culture’s role in shaping assumptions about life and money.

Twist also notes the influence of gender in relation to money. In heterosexual couple household finances, she asserts that women historically enacted naivete and helplessness while men managed money. On a societal level, women’s contributions and their affiliated ‘industries of care’ are still often unrecognized, unpaid, and/or undervalued while men’s labour and the patriarchal industrial-military complex are characterized by entitlement and overspending.

The book’s conclusion is essentially a call to action, posing the questions: will we transform our lives and relationships to money as individuals? Will we cultivate a critical mass of people who challenge a scarcity-based culture/economy, align money with our souls, and nurture sufficiency? If you read the book, you’ll have that much more food for thought to consider these questions for yourself.