

# Prosperity: Maybe Not What I Thought It Meant

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I've always thought of "prosperity" as having an abundance of material wealth, and that seems to be consistent with popular usage. However, my thinking here has been going through some changes lately.

Etymologically, it has meant such things as, "cause to succeed, render happy" and "agreeable to one's wishes" and "tending to bring success". Perhaps the idea that prosperity should be linked to material wealth is of modern, capitalistic creation. I no longer think it necessarily has much to do with material wealth, rather, to have prosperity is to have all of your needs, material, physical, emotional, psychological, *et cetera*, sufficiently met.

When I think of the most prosperous people ever having lived in this world, I think of our primal ancestors. My current suspicion is that the agricultural revolution was a giant mistake in terms of maintaining human prosperity. Hunter-gatherers had their share of challenges, no doubt, but I don't think meeting all of their various needs day-to-day was one of them.

To my understanding, they weren't traumatized as children, they didn't perform back-breaking labor, everyone assisted everyone else, community was important, and leisure time was abundant. If I had to pick a time to live among the history of our species, I don't think I would pick any time after the advent of agriculture.

The industrial revolution has been a corrective to this mistake in various ways, but practices like the nuclear family household, disrespecting children's primal need for play and everpresent curiosity, welfare dependency, the diminishing of community, the destruction of savings via inflationary monetary policy, poor food pyramid-based dieting and stationary lifestyle, the military-industrial complex, and much more, keep humanity from returning to its natural level of prosperous living.

I could be totally wrong about all of this, but I don't think so.