

The Law Of Attraction

The phrase Law of Attraction, although used widely by New Thought writers, has a variety of definitions. Turn-of-the-20th-century references conceptualized the law of attraction as relating to physical structure and to how matter develops. A more modern consensus among New Thought thinkers is that the Law of Attraction says people's thoughts (both conscious and unconscious) dictate the reality of their lives, whether or not they're aware of it. Essentially "if you really want something and truly believe it's possible, you'll get it", but putting a lot of attention and thought onto something you don't want means you'll probably get that too.

Widespread popular interest for the law of attraction reached its peak after the release of the *The Secret*, a 2006 cinematic release. After the film's release, the book *Law of Attraction: The Basics of the Teachings of Abraham* by Esther Hicks and Jerry Hicks made the New York Times Best Sellers list, drawing more attention and interest to this topic. Prior to this, the couple had been in the New Age field since the 1980s.

In 2007 Rhonda Byrne, the writer of the bestselling book *The Secret*, had become so popular that she was interviewed on Oprah Winfrey. By the time Byrne went on Oprah the book had already gotten its break on the Ellen DeGeneres show and was "hugely successful". Oprah aired the first of two segments on February 8, 2007.

Since many of the claims of the law of attraction appear impossible without violating established scientific principles and our understanding of the universe, it has received criticism from the scientific community. Physicist Ali Alousi, for instance, criticized it as unmeasurable (and therefore unscientific) as well as questioning the likelihood that thoughts can affect anything outside the head. The Associated Press is also quoted as saying that "some medical professionals suggest it could even lead to a blame-the-victim mentality and actually be dangerous to those suffering from serious illness or mental disorders".

Overview

The Law of Attraction claims to have roots in Quantum Physics, although this is dismissed by the scientific community as pseudoscience. According to proponents of this law, thoughts have an energy which attracts whatever it is the person is thinking of.[2] In order to control this energy to one's advantage, proponents state that people must practice four things:

1. Know exactly what you want.
2. Ask the universe for it.
3. Feel, behave and know as if the object of your desire is already yours (visualize).
4. Be open to receive it and let go of (the attachment to) the outcome.

Thinking of what one does not have, they say, manifests itself in not having, while if one abides by these principles, and avoids "negative" thoughts, the universe will manifest a person's desires.

The use of the term "metaphysical law" has also come under fire (of the term and)

Both Dr. Victor Stenger (PhD. Physics, UCLA 1963) and Dr. Leon Lederman (PhD. Physics Columbia Univ.) are critical of references to quantum physics to bridge any unexplained or seemingly implausible effects, which are hallmark traits of modern pseudoscience.

Writing in the New York Times, Virginia Heffernan said: "“The Secret” is not really a book but a series of misquotations from historical figures and fraudulent maxims from no-count hucksters. And yet something in that gooeey red waxy seal on the front of “The Secret,” and the book’s believe-in-magic glitter, takes me to a happy place." The hitherto undiscovered "Secret", is actually a mix of misunderstood quantum physics and a re-telling of "New Thought" fallacies, which have been around since the late 18th century.

The principles of the law of attraction have also been interpreted in the realm of medicine and illness. In 1990, Bernie Siegel (a retired assistant clinical professor of surgery at Yale) published a popular book, *Love, Medicine and Miracles*, which asserted that the threat of disease was related to a person's imagination, will, and belief. Siegel primarily advocated "love" as the source of healing and longevity stating that "if you want to be immortal, love someone." Some argue that this claim is clearly falsified by the eventual death of every known human, despite the propensity of many to love each other. As yet, no immortal loving people have been discovered. Siegel's description has been largely rejected by the medical community. The most notable critic is neuroendocrinologist and Stanford professor Robert Sapolsky, who devoted a whole chapter in his book *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* to critiquing Siegel. Sapolsky refers to Siegel's general idea as "benign gibberish" but is strongly critical of what he sees as blaming patients for their illness, based only on questionable anecdotal evidence. Sapolsky sums up his primary criticism as follows:

Where the problems become appallingly serious is when Siegel concentrates on the main point of his book. No matter how often he puts in the disclaimers saying that he's not trying to make people feel guilty, the book's premise is that (a) cancer can be caused by psychosocial factors in the person; (b) cancer (or any other disease, as far as I can tell) is curable if the patient has sufficient courage, love and spirit; (c) if the patient is not cured, it is because of the insufficient amounts of those admirable traits. As we have just seen, this is not how cancer works, and a physician simply should not go about telling seriously ill people otherwise.

History

A physical "energy of attraction", 1902

As early as 1902, references to something similar to the law of attraction can be seen particularly in discussion of matter formation.

John Ambrose Fleming an electrical engineer and turn of the century physicist described "every completed manifestation, of whatever kind and on whatever scale" as "an unquenchable energy of attraction" that causes objects to "steadily increase in power and definiteness of purpose, until the process of growth is completed and the matured form stands out as an accomplished fact".

The New Thought Movement, 1904 - 1907

Thomas Troward, who was a strong influence in the New Thought Movement, claimed that thought precedes physical form and that "the action of Mind plants that nucleus which, if allowed to grow undisturbed, will eventually attract to itself all the conditions necessary for its manifestation in outward visible form".

In 1906, William Walker Atkinson (1862-1932) used the phrase in his New Thought Movement book Thought Vibration or the Law of Attraction in the Thought World. The following year, Elizabeth Towne, the editor of The Nautilus Magazine, a Journal of New Thought, published Bruce MacLelland's book Prosperity Through Thought Force, in which he summarized the principle, stating: "You are what you think, not what you think you are."

"Think and Grow Rich", 1937

In 1937, author Napoleon Hill published his book Think and Grow Rich, which went on to become one of the best selling books of all time, selling over 60 million copies. In this book, he discusses the importance of controlling your own thoughts in order to achieve success, as well as the "energy" that thoughts have and their ability to attract other thoughts. In the beginning of the book, Napoleon Hill mentions a "secret" to success, and promises to indirectly describe it

at least once in every chapter of the book. It is never named directly for he says that discovering it on one's own is far more beneficial. Many people have argued over what the secret actually is, but there is a general consensus that the secret he referred to is, in fact, the Law of Attraction.

Mid 1900s to 2000

By the mid 1900s, various authors addressed the topic and related ideas under a range of religious, occult, and secular terms, such as "positive thinking", "mental science", "pragmatic Christianity", "New Thought", "practical metaphysics", "Science of Mind"/"Religious Science", and "Divine Science". Among the mid 20th century authors who used the term were Florence Scovel Shinn (1925), Sri K. Parvathi Kumar, (1942) and Alice Bailey (1942). Author Louise Hay in 1976 released a pamphlet in which she links various diseases and disorders to certain thoughts and states of minds. This list was included in her 1984 best-seller book *You Can Heal Your Life*, in which she promotes positive thinking as a healing method.

Other proponents of the Law of Attraction included Wallace Wattles, Robert Collier, and Helena Blavatsky, who all published books in the early 1900s.

The "law of attraction" in the 21st century

In 2006, a film entitled *The Secret* (2006) based on the "Law of Attraction" was released and then developed into a book of the same title in 2007. The movie and book gained widespread attention in the media from *Saturday Night Live* to *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in the United States. The same year the Hicks' *The Law Of Attraction* was on the *New York Times* best seller list.

The success of the film and various books led to increased media coverage. Oprah Winfrey devoted two episodes of her show to discussing the film and the law of attraction. Talk show host Larry King also discussed it on his show but criticized it for several reasons. He pointed to the sufferings in the world and asked: "If the Universe manifests abundance at a mere thought, why is there so much poverty, starvation, and death?"

This is similar to a common criticism that the law of attraction only works because most of the anecdotes cited in books and movies are about people who live in a culture that has paths to allow people to overcome adversity, while this is not true for much of the world.

In August 2008, Esther and Jerry Hickses' book *Money and the Law of Attraction: Learning to Attract Health, Wealth & Happiness* appeared on the New York Times Best Seller list.

The Secret (2006 film)

Directed by Drew Heriot
Produced by Rhonda Byrne (Executive Producer), Paul
 Harrington (Producer)
Distributed by Prime Time Productions
Release date(s) March 26, 2006
Running time 87 mins
Language English

The Secret, a film^[1] produced by Prime Time Productions, consists of a series of interviews related to "The Law of Attraction". Distributed through DVD, and online (through streaming media), the film and the subsequent publication of a book by the same name and of the same topic as the film, has attracted interest from media figures such as Oprah Winfrey, Ellen DeGeneres, and Larry King as well as criticism from the mainstream press.

Synopsis

The Secret, described as a self-help film, uses a documentary format to present the Law of Attraction. This law is the "secret" that "has traveled through centuries to reach you." The film features the short dramatized experiences and interviews of a team called personal transformation specialists, spiritual messengers, feng shui masters, and other "experts".^[citation needed] As described in the film, the "Law of Attraction" principle posits that feelings and thoughts can attract events, from the workings of the cosmos to interactions among individuals in their physical, emotional, and professional affairs. The film also suggests that there has been a strong tendency by those in positions of power to keep this central principle hidden from the public.

The previews or "clues" to the film, show men who "uncovered the Secret...". As Lisa Nichols, who makes an appearance in the film, puts it: "What you think about; you bring about."

Steps

Ask

Believe

Receive

Teachers of the Law of Attraction

The film includes interviews of individuals described as professionals and authors in the fields of quantum physics, psychology, metaphysics, coaching, theology, philosophy, finance, feng shui, medicine, and personal development, who are referred to as "secret teachers". Some of these individuals, at their Web sites, promote the film and their connection to it. A few of the individuals with only brief appearances do not specifically speak of the "Law of Attraction" in their interviews, so their support of the concepts is based on viewer assumption.

Individuals who focus on the "Law of Attraction", are interviewed in the film, and have later been featured on prominent American TV shows, are:

Rusty G. Parrish, John Assaraf, Dr. Rev. Michael Beckwith, Dr. John Demartini, Bob Proctor, Jack Canfield, James Arthur Ray, "Dr." Joe Vitale, Lisa Nichols, Marie Diamond, Dr. John Gray.

Other people involved in the film, who have spoken of their strong belief in the Law of Attraction include: Esther Hicks and Jerry Hicks (original edition only), Mike Dooley, Bob Doyle, David Schirmer, and Marci Shimoff.

Others interviewed in the film, and who voice very similar views without actually using the phrase "Law of Attraction" include:

Lee Brower, Hale Dwoskin, Cathy Goodman, Morris E. Goodman, Dr. John Hagelin, Bill Harris, Dr. Ben Johnson, Loral Langemeier, Denis Waitley, Neale Donald Walsch, and Dr. Fred Alan Wolf.

The Books

Two books, *The Secret* (Simon & Schuster, 2007) and its companion volume, *The Secret Gratitude Book*, (Atria Books, 2007), both by Rhonda Byrne, were published in 2007.

The Secret was featured on two episodes of Oprah — and as the film reached number one on the Amazon DVD chart in March 2007, the book version of *The Secret* reached number one on The New York Times bestseller list.

For much of February through April 2007, both the book and the DVD versions were #1 or #2 at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Borders. Simon & Schuster released a second printing of 2 million copies of *The Secret* — "the biggest order for a second printing in its history", while Time reported brisk sales of the DVD through New Age bookstores, and New Thought churches, such as Unity and Agape International Spiritual Center.

Think and Grow Rich

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Think and Grow Rich is a motivational personal development and self-help book written by Napoleon Hill and inspired by a suggestion by Scottish-American billionaire Andrew Carnegie. It was published in 1937 during the Great Depression. It remains the biggest seller of Napoleon Hill's books, selling a claimed 30 million copies over the next 70 years (although Alice Payne Hackett's *70 Years of Best Sellers* suggests the figure was lower).

The Science of Getting Rich

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Science of Getting Rich is a book written by the New Thought Movement writer Wallace D. Wattles; it was published in 1910 by Elizabeth Towne. The book is still in print after almost 100 years. It was a major inspiration for Rhonda Byrne's bestselling book and film *The Secret* (2006 film). According to USA Today, the text is "divided into 17 short, straight-to-the-point chapters that explain how to overcome mental barriers, and how creation, not competition, is the hidden key to wealth attraction."

Historical context

The Science of Getting Rich is based upon what Wattles called "the Certain [that is, the positive, self-assured] Way of Thinking." According to Mitch Horowitz, the editor-in-chief of the Jeremy Tarcher imprint of Penguin Books, which reprinted The Science of Getting Rich in 2007, Wattles's "Certain Way" descended from the "mental healing movement" that had started earlier with Phineas P. Quimby in the mid-19th century. As Horowitz explained to a reporter from the Washington Post, after experiencing relief from physical symptoms of discomfort or illness through Quimby's mental strategies, people began to wonder, "If my state of mind seems to have a positive influence over how I feel physically, what other things can it do? Can it lead to prosperity? Can it lead to happiness in my home? Can it lead to finding love and romance?" One result of such questioning was Wattles's application of Quimbian "mental healing" strategies to financial as well as physiological situations.

Wattles, who had formerly been a Methodist, ran for office as a Socialist candidate in Indiana in 1916. He included the word science in the title, reflecting a secular approach to New Thought as he wrote about business prosperity, mind training, and success in the material world. The mental technique that he called "thinking in the Certain Way," was intended to establish a state of positivity and self-affirmation. According to Horowitz, mental healing and positive thinking theories for prosperity were joined by late 19th century trends

such as Transcendentalism and a belief in the power of science and that "All these currents came together, and this philosophy that we call 'New Thought,' was born out of them. It's as American as an old-growth forest."

The contents, with chapter titles like "How to Use the Will" and "Further Use of the Will" advance Wattles's concept of the "Certain Way."; similar keywords about will power, mastery, and success are found in the writings of contemporary early 20th century authors Charles F. Haanel (The Master Key System), the Methodist minister Frank Channing Haddock (Power of Will, Power for Success, Mastery of Self for Wealth Power Success), and Elizabeth Towne (How to Grow Success). Towne published other books and magazine articles

by Wattles: *The Science of Getting Rich* (1910) is a companion volume to the author's book on health from a New Thought perspective, *The Science of Being Well* (1910) and his personal self-help book *The Science of Being Great* (1911). All three were originally issued in matching bindings.

Influence

The Science of Getting Rich preceded similar financial success books such as *The Master Key System* by Charles F. Haanel (1912) and *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill (1937). In the 100 years since its publication, it has gone through many editions, and remains in print from more than one publisher.

The Science of Getting Rich was credited by Rhonda Byrne as one of the inspirations for her popular 2006 film and 2007 book *The Secret*. As Byrne explained it on the web site of Oprah Winfrey, "Something inside of me had me turn the pages one by one, and I can still remember my tears hitting the pages as I was reading it. [...] It gave me a glimpse of *The Secret*. It was like a flame inside of my heart. And with every day since, it's just become a raging fire of wanting to share all of this with the world."

When Tarcher/Penguin reprinted the book in 2007, their initial print run was 75,000 copies.

The continuing influence of *The Science of Getting Rich* is such that in addition to reprints and audio versions of the book itself, there are a number of web domains whose names are based on its title.

The book is included in personal development scholar Tom Butler-Bowdon's list of "50 Success Classics" in his 2004 book of that name.

As a Man Thinketh

As a Man Thinketh is a literary work of James Allen, published in 1902. The title is influenced by a verse in the Bible from the Book of Proverbs chapter 23 verse 7, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is."

The full passage, taken from the King James Version, is as follows:
"Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words."

The passage seems to suggest that one should consider the true motivations of a person who is being uncharacteristically generous before accepting his generosity - a far cry from Allen's extrapolations. And so in the Bible the passage is concerning the other person as where in James Allen's work he is primarily concerned with self responsibility.

It is now in the public domain within the United States and most other countries. It was released the 1st of October 2003 as a Project Gutenberg eText edition.

This book is written in terms of responsibility assumption.

The lyrics to the song Good Thoughts, Bad Thoughts by Funkadelic are loosely based on this book.

The book opens with the statement:

Mind is the Master power that moulds and makes,
And Man is Mind, and evermore he takes
The tool of Thought, and, shaping what he wills,
Brings forth a thousand joys, a thousand ills:—
He thinks in secret, and it comes to pass:
Environment is but his looking-glass.

Chapter 1 starts with the quote from Dhammapada where effect of karmas is explained.

Quotes From As a Man Thinketh

* A man is literally what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts.

* Cherish your visions. Cherish your ideals. Cherish the music that stirs in your heart, the beauty that forms in your mind, the loveliness

that drapes your purest thoughts, for out of them will grow all delightful conditions, all heavenly environment, of these, if you but remain true to them your world will at last be built.

* The soul attracts that which it secretly harbours, that which it loves, and also that which it fears. It reaches the height of its cherished aspirations. It falls to the level of its unchastened desires - and circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own.

* Every action and feeling is preceded by a thought.

* Right thinking begins with the words we say to ourselves.

* If anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.