

The Secret Behind the Secret

By Sam Menahem Ph.D.

“The Secret” is not really a secret. It has been written up under many names for at least two hundred years. It is usually called the “Law of Attraction.” I was introduced to it by my grandfather, who gave my mother a series of books by Robert Collier, a popular self help author in the 1920s. My mother used “the secret” to “send the waves.” She felt that beaming positive thoughts to anyone she knew who was ill would help. Often it did help, but not always. This was the beginning of my wondering why some people heal, while others do not. Later, my father gave me “The Power of Positive Thinking” by Norman Vincent Peale and Psycho-Cybernetics by Maxwell Maltz. Thus, I was programmed to be interested in the power of thought by both of my parents. My own inquiry into healing led me to become a psychologist-a spiritually oriented psychologist. I traced healing and the power of thought back to the late 18th century. The healers included; Franz Mesmer (the first hypnotist), Pierre Janet (a better theorist than Freud), P.P. Quimby (a miraculous American healer), Mary Baker Eddy (Founder of Christian Science) and Ernest Holmes (Founder of Science of Mind). . The “new thought” movement spread all over the world. In 1920s France, for example, Emile Coue had half the country saying, “Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better.” It worked for many people but not for all. Why?

In the late 1970s, I was browsing in a bookstore, waiting for my wife to finish shopping. Instead of my usual foray into “self help” I wandered over to “occult”, expecting to read some nonsense. I picked up the wackiest sounding book I could find, “The Seth Material.” Instead of nonsense, I found the answer to my search. I found out why some people heal and some don’t. I found out why some people are financially successful and some are not. I found out why some people are happy and some are not. It was right there, channeled by an “entity” called Seth and written down by a writer named Jane Roberts.

“You create your own reality, through your beliefs, conscious and unconscious, period, there is no other rule.” 1

This is the real secret. It was the simple answer to my search. Cognitive psychology was revealed to me by a spirit. I finally knew what I was doing with my patients. I wasn’t just listening to them complain or report their personal news. I was helping them see the powerful effect of their beliefs on their lives. I was helping them change their beliefs from negative to positive, thus creating positive thoughts. The negative, disharmonious thoughts had emerged out of their buried negative beliefs. Most of this process was unconscious, but could be made conscious. I was helping people to take responsibility for creating their thoughts, emotions, health, level of abundance-in short-their lives. I have been doing this for thirty years. The secret is not secret at all.

The video and book that have many people buzzing lately is just a popularization of the connection between thoughts and feelings, which then manifests through us.. Life really is how you make it-or more accurately, how you see it. Obviously, the public is more ready to hear this than ever. Thanks to Oprah-the word is out.

As I viewed “The Secret” video, I was glad to see that it was clearly stating the law of attraction, positive thoughts- positive life, peaceful thoughts- peaceful life. As I continued to watch, I was a little disappointed that there was too much emphasis on external abundance. “Think positive, get stuff,” is not the spiritual message we really need. I was also disappointed at the glib way they approached the healing process. Just change your thoughts and you will be rich and cancer will go away. Well, as I learned in childhood, you sometimes need more than just someone to tell you to think differently. I would like to provide a few more steps and techniques that were omitted or glossed over in the video of “The Secret.”

First, if we are dissatisfied with our lives, we must examine our conscious thoughts and feelings. Be aware that there are beliefs we hold that are leading us to these thoughts and these thoughts are often connected to feelings of fear, anger and guilt. We are like buildings made of bricks (beliefs), cemented in by mortar (feelings). We can loosen the mortar (feelings) and rebuild our houses of better bricks (beliefs). We must take responsibility for the fact that we each built our life out of our life experiences. Instead of blaming others, the world, God or circumstances for our woes, we must ***take responsibility for this house we built (with our belief system).***

Second, ***we must take responsibility for our lives by developing forgiveness for others and for ourselves.*** We need to do this out of compassion for the suffering we all endure due to our negative beliefs, especially the belief that we are all separate from each other and from God. In truth, we are all connected on a deep level. Understanding this spiritual truth is a great belief change. I call it the “spiritual cognitive shift”. “***A Course in Miracles***” tells us that we are alive solely in order to forgive everyone for everything. Judgment, criticism and righteous anger are the elements of the human suffering that the “Course” recognizes clearly. We are very attached to our separate identities. We want what we want. We also don’t want certain outcomes. The insight is to recognize the deep spiritual connection between all people. We are taught to turn to our inner spiritual teacher instead of our ego for guidance in daily conduct.

Buddhists have the same basic idea. One for the four noble truths is that all suffering comes from desire (clinging to separate identity). The Buddhist cure consists of the eightfold path, which includes meditation, right thinking, and right intention. In other words, as we meditate, with positive intention, we will see that we are much more than our thoughts and feelings that emerge out of attachment to separate self. We are urged to practice non-attachment. That is our responsibility. Once we accept this responsibility for our way of thinking (clinging, desire, negative beliefs), our lives begin to change. We see the world differently. But how is this done? It is done by releasing. Meditation is releasing practice.

True forgiveness becomes possible when we release judgment and criticism. Thus, the third step toward the secret is learning how to release judgments and negative emotions (anger, fear, and guilt) which are held in place by negative beliefs e.g. "I don't deserve to be happy"- which is guilt. Meditation is one way of releasing. Another way is the "The Sedona method" developed by Lester Levinson in the 1950s and now popularized by Hale Dwoskin and Larry Crane, suggests asking ourselves three questions. "Could I release it? Would I release it? When?" If it feels like we can release it, we do. If not, we ask again later, until we feel it releasing. We can then replace negativity with a positive belief via imagination, or even better, by just letting the natural power of our inner spiritual teacher develop the positive belief for us. The ultimate positive belief (which is really beyond all beliefs) is that we are all Spiritual beings, unique manifestations of the same one source (often called God). Thus, though we seem separate and different, we are all really the same-Spirit. If this is true, it follows that we are fine right now, we have abundance and health (at least potentially) right now. The more we eliminate negative, fear based beliefs (separation), the better we will feel. Even in this temporary abode we call the body. The real healing is spiritual. I believe that the Sedona method is consistent with "A Course in Miracles" and Buddhist meditation.

The secret is not about outer wealth (visualize a Lexus). It is about a subjective Spiritual feeling that all is really well and we will be provided for. Once we realize that we are really spiritual beings, we are healed. Our lives are what we need to learn this truth. Life is a spiritual lesson plan in eliminating negative beliefs and feelings, accepting our Spiritual nature. This process continues until we realize God or Spirit or Oneness. The secret is not about getting good stuff. It is about realizing our spirituality. Ultimately, we will discover our fundamental nature as Spirit, not just seemingly separate bodies. We will know that love, abundance and happiness are our nature as Spirit, as manifestations of the One and only Spirit. God, no matter what word we use, is God and we are One with it.

This is the ultimate "secret," we are One with God, joined in Spirit. As we realize this we will naturally love our neighbors as ourselves because our neighbors are our selves.

Note

1. Roberts, Jane-*The Nature of Personal Reality: A Seth Book*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs N.J., 1974. (Introduction)

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