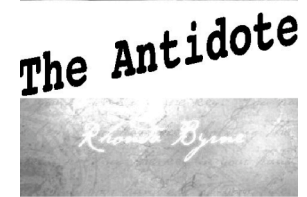


*Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity,
and I'm not sure about the former.*
—Albert Einstein

THINKING IT THROUGH

I have two (2) basic objections to *The Secret*.

One is intellectual, and the other --- the more important one --- is ethical.



For anyone who enjoys thinking, batting ideas around, debating the issues, considering my intellectual objections can be interesting, even fun. However, there are always those who take these conversations too seriously, those who seem to be personally offended when someone does not see things their way. I, for one, do not need you to agree with me. All I am asking of anyone reading this is that you consider my point of view. After all, the very point I am making is that none of us really knows how the universe operates, so it would make no sense for me to claim to have some corner on the ultimate truth. For all I know, I will die one day, travel up to heaven, and be informed that the point of life was the accumulation of money and cars. Or, I might be told that the biggest mistake I ever made was not believing in *The Secret*.

“May I pleeeeeease have a do-over?” I will be sure to ask in either of those cases.

Which brings us to what I consider the more serious objection, the ethical objection. This one is quite simple. Extremely simple, in fact. If Larry King wants to bring me on his show with some of the Secret-Givers to try to stir some stuff up, beyond the fun part of intellectual debate described above, I will have only one important thing to say: Will you Secret-Givers please just publicly clarify that what you are imparting in *The Secret* are your opinions and personal beliefs, not any kind of ultimate truth? Just a little disclaimer --- that is all I am asking.

I love how the novelist, Tom Robbins, puts it in *Jitterbug Perfume*:

“Teachers who offer you the ultimate answers do not possess the ultimate answers, for if they did, they would know that the ultimate answers cannot be given, they can only be received.”

Thank you, Tom Robbins.

And while we are on the subject of quoting quirky authors I love, Kurt Vonnegut said this:

“Just because some of us can read and write and do a little math, that doesn't mean we deserve to conquer the universe.”

A bit off the subject, but it does go to the importance of humility. So thank you, Kurt Vonnegut. You may step down.

15 QUESTIONS

FOR SECRET-GIVERS & SECRET-DISCIPLES

I called a good friend of mine recently, asking, “Am I missing something?”

My objections to the oversimplification and erroneous applications of the principles of positive thinking seem so obvious to me that I keep thinking that there is some context being given for these outrageous declarations that I am overlooking. There is no such context given in either the dvd or the book. I’ve checked and double-checked. And my friend has taken a good look too.

However, I have heard some of the Secret-Disciples allude to such a context. One such context is apparently the voluminous work by H.P. Blavatsky called *The Secret Doctrine* (1888). Very interesting stuff, this *Secret Doctrine*, but it is anything but simple. Regardless of its legitimacy (I have no opinion about that at this point), this is some very complex reading --- certainly nothing that can be distilled into the 3-step method of the law of attraction described in *The Secret*.

So, for now, I remain focused on objecting to the over-simplification and massive generalizations specifically presented in the dvd and book. Toward that end, I offer the following 15 questions for the Secret-Givers. Of course, you Secret-Disciples are welcome to answer them as well. I do request that anyone answering these questions, answer with a simple yes or no. If you are not able to do so, then my point is made: things are not as simple as represented by *The Secret*.

The Questions

1. Do you believe that “the law of attraction,” as described in *The Secret*, is an absolute certainty?

[If the answer to this question is “no,” then I thank you for your time. You need not answer any of the rest of these questions. You and I are on the same side of this debate.]

2. Do you believe that the law of attraction provides an explanation for everything that happens to any of us?

3. Do you believe that there are other universal laws that might compete with, or affect the performance of, the law of attraction in any way?

4. Do you believe that what and how we think literally creates the reality of our lives?

5. Do you believe that when bad things happen to a person, it is related to what and/or how that person has been thinking?

6. Do you believe that the people who died in the terrorists attacks of 9-11-01, including those who gave their lives to save others, attracted their own fate by way of their thinking?

7. Are there exceptions to the law of attraction?

8. Is sudden infant death (SID’s) the result of the law of attraction?

9. Do you think that your perceptions and beliefs regarding the law of attraction might be flawed?

10. Do you believe that the renowned physicist, Stephen Hawking, would agree with your beliefs about the law of attraction?
11. Do you believe that a murdered child and a woman who is raped are ultimately responsible for what happened to them?
12. In the dvd of *The Secret*, one scenario shows us that a man being afraid that his bicycle will be stolen will actually cause his bicycle to be stolen with his fear-based thoughts. Given this belief, does this mean that locking our doors at night or having a security system installed in our homes, will actually increase our chances of having someone break into our houses?
13. If my fear of having my bike stolen can actually cause it to be stolen, does that mean that my thoughts have the power to make another person do something (e.g. steal my bike) that he would not do if my thinking was more positive?
14. We are told --- in the book and the dvd --- that the universe operates like the genie in Aladdin's lamp, that our every wish will be granted. This statement is made without caveat and without disclaimer. Bottom line: do you believe that this is true?
15. Do you believe that everyone who has sincerely asked the universe for something, has believed that her request would be fulfilled, and has been willing to receive the fulfillment of that request, has been given what she requested?

BONUS QUESTIONS for The Secret-Givers:

Given the infallible law of attraction, as you describe it, what happens if you and I both request of the universe the exact same pair of shoes and there is only one pair of these shoes in existence? Does your law of attraction have to arm wrestle my law of attraction?

How do you explain the hypochondriac who lives in constant fear of illness, yet remains physically healthy? Or the person who lives in fear of losing money and material things, yet continues to accumulate more of both?

Isn't it fair to say that there are probably more variables in play here than just the law of attraction?

Thom Rutledge is a psychotherapist and author of *Embracing Fear: How to Turn What Scares Us into Our Greatest Gift*, a book about the empowerment that is available to us when we don't try to wish our troubles away. For more information about Thom, his books, and his availability as a speaker: www.thomrutledge.com.