

Chapter 5

THE NEUROSCIENCE OF THE SECRET

One of my clients talked about her daughter leaving home for college. She was aware that her daughter had had a very sheltered and privileged existence when she called home after her first week in school and said that she missed the Pineapple Fairy. My client asked, “What do you mean?”

“Well, it always seemed that there was a fresh pineapple in the corner of the kitchen counter when I was home. Now, I’ve been here a week and there is no Pineapple Fairy. In fact, if I want anything, I have to go get it,” she said in mock desperation.

Many viewers of *The Secret* have assumed that it can generate the Pineapple Fairy. But just focusing your attention on what you want is not magical. If it were, the world wouldn’t be so crowded with wishful thinkers. Focusing on what you want is not wishful thinking, and it is more complex than positive thinking. Disappointed practitioners ask questions about how long it will take for their desire to become a reality.

The phenomenon of the film *The Secret* speaks to a secret that a small segment of the population has known about and prospered from for thousands of years. The secret is really not so secret. It is the Law of Attraction: you create in reality what you focus your attention on. Your life story is the outcome of where you focus your attention.

Focus is not enough. Action alone, for its own sake, is not enough. Focusing—and wishing—do not create and develop skills that people value in the world and will pay money for.

So here are the secrets behind *The Secret*: what it leaves out, why it works, and four principles to empower its application.

Why It Works

The Law of Attraction is based in neuroscience. Your mind is an energy field and

responds to focus. Where you focus your attention creates brain connections. Quantum physics tells us that each of us generates energetic frequencies or vibrations. We project energy in our emotions and thoughts that are the source of what and whom we attract, as well as the basis of our sense of well-being.

If you lay a nail and a paper clip side by side, nothing happens. When you take a magnet and stroke the nail several times from head to point, the nail itself becomes a magnet; it can then pick up the paper clip. Why? The molecules of the nail are aligned in the same direction, creating a magnetic field. When all of you is going in the same direction – and focused – you have power.

The secret, rather than being about wishing for something and getting it, is about understanding and refocusing personal energy.

There is a subtle but significant difference between this principle and the notion that where you place your attention you manifest in reality. Magic is the backdrop of the latter concept. Your mind is a powerful goal-seeking mechanism. When you focus on a goal, your mind begins to figure out how to get it. Your mind takes the focus as instruction to attract. The difficulty is not a lack of ability to focus, but a difficulty with intentional and conscious control over what you focus on. Your mind is preset to focus on certain things, and it makes that focus unconsciously and unintentionally. The automatic pilot of your mind – what it is preset to focus on – has to be consciously redirected.

The mental act of focusing attention activates brain circuitry. Paying attention over time keeps the brain circuits open and active. Focused attention plays a crucial role in actually altering the structure of the brain. With repetition, these chemical links actually become stable changes in the brain's structure.

This concept explains at a brain level why a solution focus is more effective than a problem focus. Focusing on possibilities creates new neuronal networks and pathways, while focusing on problems deepens – further etches – the already existing circuitry. These brain connections literally become mind-maps that subsequently influence the reality that we see.

The real secret behind the secret is to ask the question, “How can I create ...?” This “How can I?” question focuses attention on precisely what you want and enlists your full energy to find an answer and a pathway to achieve it. Thus the real secret moves from imagining and wishing to doing.

When results seem to be coming to successful people easily and quickly rather than by sustained action, you make your assumption by comparing your inside to their outside. Not an apples-to-apples comparison.

How to Make The Secret Work

1. The Power Is in the Focus

Here's The Secret deconstructed: Focusing on a vision will create structural tension in your brain—the tension between where you are now and where you want to be.

Dissonance can create motivation. And your brain, like nature, abhors a vacuum. Your brain will conspire to close the gap between your vision and reality.

The paradox is that we do not attract what we want, we attract what we focus on.

Your unconscious doesn't register + or -. It just registers the focus. A print or negative is the same image; your unconscious is the image.

The power of focus is that whatever you attend to or focus on, you align yourself to bring about—like the magnetized nail. Be specific about what you do want—not just what you don't want in disguise. "I want to get out of debt" focuses on debt. "I want a reliable car" focuses on the idea that the car will break down and need repairs. Everyone wants more money, so wanting is not the key to having it. Focusing on scarcity attracts scarcity. Focusing on prosperity aligns your energy to pursue prosperity.

2. Know How to Ask and Align

Since the Law of Attraction is a law of energy, if you have shortages or struggles in your life, you need to ask two questions:

- 1). Do you know how to ask? To align yourself with the ABCs: Ask. Believe. Create?
- 2). Are you resisting in some way? That is, do you place resistance in a natural flow of energy—the harmony with yourself and what you want, including how you proceed to get it?

Thoughts or feelings that focus on these and other negatives can generate resistance:

- Doubt
- Unworthiness
- Questions of self-worth
- Limitation
- Fear
- Scarcity

If you are not generating what you really want, consider whether you're automatically focusing on what you don't want. This unconscious focus is often informed by the beliefs from childhood experiences that ghostwrite present storylines.

Alignment includes letting go of negative emotion and thoughts. When you suppress negative feelings or thoughts, they remain in the background, generate and subvert their own energy, and sabotage attempts to polarize yourself to positive experiences. When you release negativity, you dissolve the emotional charge. Then you're free to align yourself with feelings of joy, happiness, and peace. You reconnect with the positive energy without the impediment.

3. Take Strategic, Planned Action

The Law of Attraction won't give you what you want, but it will give you the energy to sustain the process to create what you focus on. It won't send a Brink's truck up your driveway, or align the Lotto balls for you. The magnetized nail just lying on the table does not get anything done. However, you can align your internal molecules by focus and purpose, to point the energy field of your mind to specific goals. It's a way to use your power to write the story you want.

If you want to attract a pizza, you can focus on a pizza, think about having it, and wish to manifest it. But just sitting there visualizing the pizza without doing something about it is relying on magic. If that's all you do, you won't manifest a pizza. If someone happens to walk into the room and offer you a pizza, it is not because of the Law of Attraction, it is because of what scientists call coincidence.

Sometimes people who have a strong belief in and need for magic convert coincidence into magic or into synchronicity. Synchronicity does exist, but the pizza's appearing isn't an example of it. People who need to believe in magic convert a coincidence into evidence. Luck is narcissism meeting chance.

When you focus on a pizza, you need to hatch ideas about what action to take in order to make your idea a reality – in other words, how to get that pizza. Focusing on what you want generates a motivation to act, coupled with the sense of how you'll feel when you get it, and together both elements can sustain the motivation to act. Then, a hard-work "miracle" occurs. As you become focused on what you want and think about the benefits and experience of having it, you will persist in the focus of your attention, the discipline, and the strategy to sustain efforts to pursue it. By this focus you will both have ideas and notice (manifest) people and resources that can help you achieve your goal. Sustaining motivation to act and developing internal qualities will help you act in an informed way.

The pen is in your hand to write your story. The world will not pay you for what you know. It will pay you for what you do. It rewards action. You need to believe

- specifically
- strategically
- systematically
- consistently.

Then, have a plan, and act on it. Once you act on a plan, you can always self-correct.

This particular secret behind The Secret is also ancient wisdom, captured best by my grandmother who said, "Wishes don't wash dishes."

4. Be of Value to Others

Your focus and your actions must bring value to others.

This is the Law of Attraction applied: You have to give value in order to get value. You get back what you put out. If just focusing your attention and "putting it out

to the universe” were enough, no one would still be wishing for more money.

5. What You Attract is Equal to What You Provide

The mantra of *The Secret*, according to the film, is: Ask, Believe, Receive. You will have much more success by converting it to the ABCs: Ask, Believe, Create. The amount of benefit you receive depends on the amount of energy you dedicate to it.

An example of this truer secret behind *The Secret* is that the amount of money you make depends on the amount of value you provide. And, of course, you have to ask for and collect what you’re worth. While there is no Pineapple Fairy, you can create immense success with planned, strategic, consistent action that is of value to yourself and others.

6. Pay in Full for Your Success

A secret to success is that you have to pay in full for that success. If you get something for which you haven’t provided value or benefit, you will still have to pay in some way. If you incur debt in order to purchase something before you’ve earned the money, you simply end up paying more for it.

So you might as well find out what the price is, pay it in full, pay it as soon as possible, and then enjoy the benefits of success. The price is always an energy, whether that energy is money, time, work, or experience.

7. The Secret behind the Secret to The Secret

People who truly enjoy getting what they want are those who have discovered how to enjoy paying the price. The enjoyment makes paying for it easy. The essential Law of Attraction is that the price is whatever you must give in order to create or attract exactly what you want. The antithesis is hoping and wishing with no energy input, which of course doesn’t work.

Intention is a good start, but intention is not all there is to the Law of Attraction.

Here’s the secret shortcut to *The Secret*: Find people who are already successfully doing what you want, getting what you want, and research what they are doing in order to do your own version of it. Ask. Learn. Question. But make it your story.