

'The Secret' to Success?

Hit Internet Movie Claims to Reveal Centuries-Old Secret to Getting What You Want in Life

By **FRANK MASTROPOLO**

Nov. 26, 2006 — - At churches, schools, community centers and homes, people are gathering to see a film that promises revelations that will change their lives.

It's called "The Secret," and it can't be seen in theaters.

Thanks to an ingenious viral video marketing campaign, using grassroots, word of mouth and the Internet, its producers say that millions of people have already learned a secret that has existed, but has been suppressed, for centuries.

The 'Law of Attraction'

The secret, says author Bob Proctor in the film, "is the law of attraction. Everything that's coming into your life you are attracting into your life. And it's attracted to you by virtue of the images you're holding in your mind."

Proctor is one of 25 writers, philosophers, doctors and scientists who explain that when you think of positive things that you want, and focus on them intently, then like a magnet, you will attract those good things you desire in health, wealth, happiness and relationships.

If your thoughts are pessimistic and negative, you will attract bad things in your life.

The film's creator, Rhonda Byrne, says she discovered the law of attraction in a 100-year-old book called "The Science of Getting Rich."

On investigation, though, she found the secret had been known for centuries by many of the great thinkers: Plato, Galileo, Edison and Einstein.

"But most people aren't aware of it at all," said marketing guru Joe Vitale, author of "The Attractor Factor." Vitale participated in the film.

'The Most Historic Moment in History'

"This is the most historic moment in history because this powerful information is being broadcast to the masses, to the people on the street in a way they can understand and relate to," Vitale told ABC News. "They sit. They watch it. They absorb it."

Success requires more than just having a positive attitude. According to the film, some of the keys to using "The Secret" are:

- **Expectation:** Expect the things you want and don't expect the things you don't want.

- **Gratitude:** Be grateful for what you already have, and you will attract more good things.
- **Visualization:** Create pictures in your mind, imagining yourself enjoying the things that you desire as if you already have them. Then you'll attract them.

The Secret to Health

Perhaps the most controversial claim in "The Secret" is that the mind wields enormous power over our health.

"I've seen kidneys regenerated. I've seen cancer dissolved," said Michael Bernard Beckwith, founder of Agape International Spiritual Center.

Byrne told ABC that she wouldn't even get a flu shot because "if you're feeling good, how can you attract any illness to you?"

"Disease cannot live in a body that's in a healthy emotional state," Proctor says in the film.

"That's a pretty strong statement," said Dr. Tanya Edwards, medical director of the Center for Integrative Medicine of Ohio's Cleveland Clinic, where meditation, deep breathing and guided imagery are used to treat patients.

"I believe it in my heart, but I don't know that I would be able to say that scientifically" without multiple randomized control trials, the gold standard in medicine, Edwards said.

Coincidentally, Edwards screened "The Secret" just days before she talked with ABC.

"I encourage my patients to live these principles if they're open to it," Edwards said. "Whatever it is that's going to help them on their path toward healing ... is of utmost importance."

Edwards says there is a proven mind-body link in medicine.

If we're consistently negative, then "negativity will be what we will get. ... Observe yourself and if you find that you are automatically going to the negative, then let's work on steering you back and breaking that automatic negative habit."

'Greatest Case Study of Viral Marketing'

"The Secret's" popularity continues to grow without the benefit of TV and magazine ads or distribution in theaters.

Sales are in the hundreds of thousands including DVD sales and direct online downloads from the film's Web site www.theseecret.tv, according to the producers.

Vitale told ABC, "I think the marketing campaign behind 'The Secret' is going to go down in history as the greatest case study of viral marketing ever done. ... Anywhere."

Vitale says that "The Secret" first posted a short trailer on its Web site.

"It was hypnotic. It was one of the most riveting teasers I had ever seen in my life. It made you drool. It made you want to know more. It made you curious. It was truly mesmerizing."

The site invited viewers who wanted to know the film's release date to submit their e-mail addresses.

The producers then asked the film's participants, like Vitale, to invite their fans to the site.

"Within one day, within hours, there were tens of thousands of people going to see that trailer. More importantly, they were all signing up to be notified when the movie was going to be released, which meant the producers of 'The Secret' suddenly had a fan base. They had a giant mailing list."

"The whole world started to take notice," Vitale said.

The producers held the movie back for months, though, Vitale says, to "let the world buzz. Let the world keep talking. Let the world keep passing this around, which is what everybody did. They said, 'Have you seen this movie? Have you seen this trailer?' And they would pass it to their friends. Their friends would pass it to other friends. This thing went viral in the most amazing way."

When the movie finally was released in March, Vitale says, "they had an instant best seller, because they had this giant mailing list of people that were almost unbearably impatient in waiting for the thing to be released."

All this positive thinking has certainly worked for the producers.

"The Secret" book and audio CD will be released on Tuesday.

"The Secret 2: The Next Step" is scheduled to go into production in January for release in August 2007.

Not bad for an idea that's been around for centuries.

To see the trailer and for more information on "The Secret" click [here](#)

For more on the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Integrative Medicine, click [here](#)

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