

Session 7:

Formless into Form

There is a thinking stuff from which all things are made, and which, in its original state, permeates, penetrates, and fills the interspaces of the universe.

“A thinking stuff” – what a curious phrase. Let’s take a closer look at that idea.

At about the time Mr. Wattles’ was writing – the first decade of the twentieth century – our most basic understanding of the nature of the universe (as we understood it in the west, at least) was beginning to undergo dramatic transformation. The way the universe had been visualized since Newton and Descartes – as an immense machine with all the pieces working together like a giant clock ever ticking – was giving way to a new notion of dynamic ENERGY operating not in a fixed, static routine, not just rotely acting and reacting, but actually *responding* to something.

In short, that old way of thinking, that old mental image of the mindless machine was no longer adequate. It just didn’t work any more because we had progressed to a level of understanding and knowledge that required a new way of seeing and explaining. And the viewpoint that began to emerge was that we actually live in an *intelligent* universe. A universe that thinks. A universe, Mr. Wattles said, of *thinking* stuff from which and by which all things are made.

Let’s zoom in our focus on that “stuff” a bit more. You’ll recall that just a few years before Mr. Wattles put pen to paper and gave us *The Science of Getting Rich*, Albert Einstein had opened up this whole new way of seeing with a series of incredible and revolutionary ideas, the most familiar of which was simply that energy and matter are interchangeable and equivalent: $E = mc^2$. (Energy = mass \times the speed of light, squared.) In other words, matter *is* energy and everything we see is simply a form of that energy. Energy exists; it’s neither created nor destroyed but simply changes form. From formless – energy – to form – material objects and effects.

Are you with me so far? Good! Then let’s consider Mr. Wattles’ next claim:

A thought in this substance produces the thing that is imaged by the thought. A person can form things in his thought, and, by impressing his thought upon formless substance, can cause the thing he thinks about to be created.

In the last century, as physicists went to work with these new ideas many shocking discoveries were made. And we now know that the behavior of the tiniest particles of matter – if they can even really be thought of as particles – can be directly affected by the acts of measuring and observing them. We’ve learned that the scientist’s intentions and expectations about their behavior can change or predict that behavior. In other words, science has begun to recognize that our thinking – our intentions and expectations – directly influences and perhaps even directs the behavior of these tiny units of energy.

In the 1990s new theories took all this a step further and scientists began to visualize a universe in which both matter and energy are seen as pure vibration. And although everything around us – and *including* us – *appears* solid, we know it’s not. If you and I were to shake hands and if we could look at that handshake through a powerful enough electron microscope, we’d see not solid hands but a relationship in which energy in the form of my

hand is interacting with energy in the form of your hand, exchanging energy. If we look close enough, there are no edges, no boundaries, no limits to where one thing – or one person – ends and the other begins. Everything and everyone is simply part of a vast inter-related, interacting web of ever-vibrating energy that goes beyond the limits of space and time and which we have only just begun to understand.

Everything which is form – including you and me – is also formless. And what's more, everything which is form is temporary, and everything which is formless is eternal.

For westerners, these rather recent scientific discoveries lent credence to ancient eastern spiritual teachings about the nature of energy and the interconnectedness of all life. Eastern ideas that were once laughingly dismissed or forcefully opposed by scientists, for example that our attitudes and states of mind – our thinking – directly affects our physical health – are now widely accepted. Most of us taking this course can remember the way these holistic ideas were put down by the western medical establishment; it wasn't that long ago, and in fact, there are still some who deny the connection. But it becomes harder to deny as evidence mounts.

Back in the 1900s, philosopher Arthur Schoepenhauer summed this process up neatly. All truth, he said, goes through three stages. First it's ridiculed, then it's violently opposed, and then it's just accepted as common knowledge. The truth of the mind-body-spirit connection is an excellent example.

(And isn't it interesting that way back in 1910, Mr. Wattles and his very western colleagues offered us this holistic view of ourselves and our universe?)

Scientific discoveries are made by looking outward while spiritual ones come from adventuring inward, and now many are beginning to believe that the scientific and the spiritual are not so opposite after all and in many ways we see them moving closer together, toward a center. Mr. Wattles, it seems, was right on target.

With that in mind, this seems like a good place to share with you the way I've chosen to imagine and think about the formless substance – and, of course, this is just my opinion which you can accept or reject as you see fit. For me, the Formless Substance, the Thinking Stuff is both that power and principle that creates, animates, regulates and sustains the universe and everything in it AND the substance from which everything is made and to which everything returns. You could call it God. I do, but we all have such varying responses to that word and it conjures up such a variety of concepts, that it can be problematic. If I use it from time to time – as Mr. Wattles does – please translate into your own choice of language – Higher Power, the Universe, other names as well. And it may be helpful to some to know that the word God is simply a form of the Middle English word for "good."

For many of us, those old ideas of who and what "God" is don't serve us, but too often we've not examined them for ourselves either. We've simply heard them so often we've accepted them as truth. It can be exhilarating and liberating to step into a new point of view and begin to see that the old image of a capricious God who looks something like Michelangelo's famous image on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, sitting above it all, choosing to bless this person and curse the other, is not the image Mr. Wattles presents. Rather, he offers us a new way of seeing that is based in unchanging, reliable principle, the law of cause and effect which underlies all other natural laws. Mr. Wattles sees you as created in the image of your Creator, however you may choose to conceptualize that Creator. And because all things reproduce after their own kind, it follows that you are a powerful creator as well. If this is news to you, it's good news, my friend! It's an invitation to discover our own power as well as a reminder of the responsibility that comes with that power. While we are completely free to choose our thoughts and actions, the law of cause and effect

makes it clear that we cannot be free of the consequences of our choices. If this, then this. Always.

Now, if either the physics or the spiritual aspects of all this are fascinating to you as they are to me, you can certainly learn more, and at the end of the course I'll share some resources. But if you're the kind of person who doesn't need or even want to know all the details and theory of the internal combustion engine as long as your car starts when you turn the key, you can relax. Mr. Wattles definitely had YOU in mind! And this is about as theoretical and scientific as we're going to get – although we'll bring up some interesting examples from time to time in terms of how life progresses and expands and how our conscious and subconscious minds work together.

What we're doing together here is learning how to turn the key – and step on the gas. And we'll learn, too, a bit of "maintenance" and how to get more enjoyment of every kind out of this process.

So let's zoom in once more on this first principle that Mr. Wattles lays out for us. Everything that we see in this physical world of ours was created out of this formless substance by the action of thought. And everything operates according to the universal law or principles – along lines of growth and action already established.

He gives us the example of a house. It starts with an idea, of course, and we don't expect to see a house suddenly spring into existence. But listen to how he describes the process. He says:

The thought of a house of a certain construction, if it were impressed upon formless substance, might not cause the instant formation of the house, but it would cause the turning of creative energies already working in trade and commerce into such channels as to result in the speedy building of the house.

The thought is the thing. The flower is in the seed. The thought is the real "first creation" and the actual thing when it comes into form is merely a copy of that creation. Do you see? We acknowledge this unconsciously when we come up with an idea and make a plan. A house is a good example. If you want to build your dream house, you start with the spark of an idea. And then you nurture that spark by dreaming up exactly how you want that house to be. You make notes, sketch out rooms, find pictures that illustrate some of the features you want. Eventually you create an actual plan, a blueprint.

Now the house doesn't exist whole and complete yet, but the idea is coming into form. The moment you accept the idea and begin to give it your focus, faith, and feeling, the form has begun. Your thought is *materializing*, drawing substance to itself. You have begun to *realize* it, to make it real. This process is also called *manifestation*.

And this is the part of the process of thought into form that we're all fairly familiar with already. All the forms that we fashion with our hands, Mr. Wattles says, must first exist in our thought. We cannot shape a thing until we have thought that thing. Well, that just makes sense. That part is obvious, isn't it?

Mr. Wattles also says that the creative force that exists all through the formless substance is so strong, so powerful, and so insistent, that "if there were no existing channels through which the creative energy could work, then the house would be formed directly from primal substance, without waiting for the slow processes of the organic and inorganic world."

Imagine that! Think of a house and – zap! – there's your house. And who knows? Perhaps when we have truly learned to harness this immense power of thought, that sort of thing will become commonplace. That may sound far-fetched to us now, but then our great-great grandparents would likely find television – something we take for granted – every bit as miraculous, perhaps even frightening.

But you see, right now, in this moment, we already have access to this immense power that is within us all, because we are thinking centers and can originate thought which is the beginning of *everything*. Up 'til now, Mr. Wattles tells us we've been creating unconsciously. But now he proposes that we understand this power and begin to *choose* how we will use it.

To do that and to use this power to get rich according to the principles outlined in this book, we "must become able to think in a certain way," a conscious, directed, chosen way.

A person's way of doing things is the direct result of the way he thinks about things. To do things in a way you want to do them, you will have to acquire the ability to think the way you want to think; this is the first step toward getting rich. To think what you want to think is to think TRUTH, regardless of appearances.

So next time, my friend, we will take that first step toward getting rich as we begin to acquire the ability to think the way we now want to think.

'Til then I encourage you to visit the discussion forum and to get involved. The ongoing discussion and the live voice chats are actually the major part of this course because they're the places where YOU bring your own thinking out into the open, where the invisible becomes visible. Without your active participation, this is all just me talking – which I obviously love to do, especially on this subject! – but that's not what this is about. This course is about *you*. So please do come jump into the pool. Will you do that now and multiply the return on your investment of time and money?

I'll leave you now with today's very simple LifeLab. It'll probably take you all of 30 seconds to read, but it's not only eye-opening, it's a very practical, use-it-now technique. (And keep using it, too!) So go get it now, and put it to work, and as you do ... EXPECT Success!