

# The Master Key System

Charles F. Haanel

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## Preface

What you are about to read is the seminal text pertaining to the eternal Law of Attraction. *The Master Key System* contains all the practical methodology one needs to apply the Law of Attraction to daily life, opening the gates to happiness, health, and wealth. This edition, published by The Master Key System Institute, an international organization dedicated to the propagation of the principles herein, is the authorized text for all classes offered by the Institute.

Charles Haanel wrote *The Master Key System* in the early 1900s, and as a text from that time period, some of the language is antiquated. The Institute has edited this version to include some updated grammatical structure and vocabulary, but has kept the text as original as possible while still readable for modern audiences.

Note: Haanel uses the word “man” throughout the text. Modern readers should understand these references as referring to “humankind.” In addition, the monetary figures throughout the text should be understood in terms of early 20<sup>th</sup> century expectations.

What you are about to read is life-changing. You have been led to this moment for your benefit by the Spirit that pervades all existence. Welcome to the first step in a journey that will transform your life beyond your current imagination. We invite you to take the courses offered through the Institute so that you can learn how to most effectively apply the principles within this book. The Institute website is [www.masterkeyinstitute.org](http://www.masterkeyinstitute.org).

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## Acknowledgments

The primary praise for the creation of *The Master Key System* is due to Charles F. Haanel, a spiritual visionary and master metaphysical philosopher of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Countless lives have been transformed for the better because of the book you now hold in your hands.

We are also indebted to the Founder and Leader of The Master Key System Institute, who has dedicated his energies to teaching the principles found in this book to people all over the world. It is one thing to read the text; it is another, more beneficial experience, to be led in the practical exercise of the principles herein.





# Introduction

## I

Before any environment, successful or otherwise, can be created, action of some kind is necessary, and before any action is possible, there must be thought of some kind, either conscious or unconscious, and as thought is a product of mind, it becomes evident that Mind is the creative center from which all activities proceed.

It is not expected that any of the inherent laws which govern the modern business world as it is at present constituted can be suspended or repealed by any force on the same plane, but it is axiomatic that a higher law may overcome a lower one. Tree life causes the sap to ascend, not by repealing the law of gravity but by surmounting it.

To control circumstances a knowledge of certain scientific principles of mind-action is required. Such knowledge is a most valuable asset. It may be gained by degrees and put into practice as fast as learned. Power over circumstances is one of its fruits; health, harmony and prosperity are assets upon its balance sheet. It costs only the labor of harvesting its great resources.

The naturalist who spends much of his time observing visible phenomena is constantly creating power in that portion of his brain set apart for observation. The result is that he becomes very much more expert and skillful in knowing what he sees, and grasping an infinite number of details at a glance, than does his unobserving friend. He has reached this facility by exercising his brain. He deliberately chose to enlarge his brain power in the line of observation, so he deliberately exercised that special faculty, over and over, with increasing attention and concentration. Now we have the result: a man learned in the lore of observation far above his fellows. Or, on the other hand, one can, by stolid inaction, allow the delicate brain matter to harden and ossify until his whole life is barren and fruitless.

Every thought tends to become a material thing. Our desires are seed thoughts that have a tendency to sprout and grow and blossom and bear fruit. We are sowing these seeds every day. What shall the harvest be? Each of us to-day is the result of his past thinking. Later we shall be the result of what we are now thinking. We create our own character, personality and environment

by the thought which we originate, or entertain. Thought seeks its own. The law of mental attraction is an exact parallel to the law of atomic affinity. Mental currents are as real as electric, magnetic or heat currents. We attract the currents with which we are in harmony—are we selecting those which will be conducive to our success? This is the important question.

Lines of least resistance are formed by the constant action of the mind. The activity of the brain reacts upon the particular faculty of the brain employed. The latent power of the mind is developed by constant exercise. Each form of its activity becomes more perfect by practice. Exercises for the development of the mind present a variety of motives for consideration. They involve the development of the perceptive faculties, the cultivation of the emotions, the quickening of the imagination, the symmetrical unfolding of the intuitive faculty, which without being able to give a reason frequently impels or prohibits choice, and finally the power of the mind may be cultivated by the development of the moral character.

"The greatest man," said Seneca, "is he who chooses right with invincible determination." The greatest power of the mind, then, depends upon its exercise in moral channels, and therefore requires that every conscious mental effort should involve a moral end. A developed moral consciousness modifies consideration of motives, and increases the force and continuity of actions; consequently the well developed symmetrical character necessitates good physical, mental and moral health, and this combination creates initiative, power, resistless force, and necessarily success.

It will be found that Nature is constantly seeking to express Harmony in all things, is forever trying to bring about an harmonious adjustment, for every discord, every wound, every difficulty; therefore when thought is harmonious, nature begins to create the material conditions, the possession of which is necessary in order to make up an harmonious environment.

When we understand that the mind is the great creative power, what does not become possible? With Desire as the great creative energy, can we not see why Desire should be cultivated, controlled and directed in our lives and destinies? Men and women of strong mentality, who dominate those around them, and often those far removed from them, really emanate currents charged with power which, coming in contact with the minds of others, causes the desires of the latter to be in accord with the mind of the strong individuality. Great masters of men possess this power to a marked degree.

Their influence is felt far and near, and they secure compliance with their wishes by making others "want" to act in accord with them. In this way men of strong Desire and Imagination may exert powerful influence over the minds of others, leading the latter in the way desired. The magnetic persons attract, allure and draw. They are emotional, and capture the will of others.

No man is ever created without the inherent power in himself to help himself. The personality that understands its own intellectual and moral power of conquest will certainly assert itself. It is this truth which an enfeebled world craves to-day. The possibility of asserting a slumbering intellectual courage that clearly discerns, and a moral courage that grandly undertakes is open to all. There is a divine potency in every human being.

We speak of the sun as "rising" and "setting," though we know that this is simply an appearance of motion. To our senses the earth is apparently standing still, and yet we know it is revolving rapidly. We speak of a bell as a "sounding body," yet we know that all that the bell can do is to produce vibrations in the air. When these vibrations come at the rate of sixteen a second they cause a sound to be heard in the mind. It is possible for the mind to hear vibrations up to the rate of 38,000 a second. When the number increases beyond this all is silence again; so that we know that the sound is not in the bell; it is in our own mind.

We speak and even think of the sun as "giving light," yet we know it is simply giving forth energy which produces vibrations in the ether at the rate of four hundred trillion a second, causing what are termed light waves, so that we know that what we call light is simply a mode of motion, and the only light that there is, is the sensation caused in the mind by the motion of these waves. When the number of vibrations increases, the light changes in color, each change in color being caused by shorter and more rapid vibrations; so that although we speak of the rose as being red, the grass as being green, or the sky as being blue, we know that these colors exist only in our minds, and are the sensation experienced by us as the result of the vibrations of light. When the vibrations are reduced below four hundred trillion a second, they no longer affect us as light but we experience the sensation of heat.

So we have come to know that appearances exist for us only in our consciousness. Even time and space become annihilated, time being only the experience of succession, there being no past or future except as a thought relation to the present. In the last analysis, therefore, we know that one

principle governs and controls all there is. Every atom is forever conserved; whatever is parted with must inevitably be received somewhere. It cannot perish and it only exists for use. It can go only where it is attracted, and therefore required. We can receive only what we give, and we may give only to those who can receive; and it remains with us to determine our rate of growth and the degree of harmony that we shall express.

The laws under which we live are designed solely for our advantage. These laws are immutable and we cannot escape from their operation. All the great eternal forces act in solemn silence, but it is in our power to place ourselves in harmony with them and thus express a life of comparative peace and happiness.

Difficulties, disharmony, obstacles, indicate that we are either refusing to give out what we no longer need, or refusing to accept what we require. Growth is attained through an exchange of the old for the new, of the good for the better; it is a conditional or reciprocal action, for each of us is a complete thought entity and the completeness makes it possible for us to receive only as we give. We cannot obtain what we lack if we tenaciously cling to what we have.

The Principle of Attraction operates to bring to us only what may be to our advantage. We are able consciously to control our conditions as we come to sense the purpose of what we attract, and are able to extract from each experience only what we require for our further growth. Our ability to do this determines the degree of harmony or happiness we attain.

The ability to appropriate what we require for our growth continually increases as we reach higher planes and broader visions, and the greater our ability to know what we require, the more certain we shall be to discern its presence, to attract it and to absorb it. Nothing may reach us except what is necessary for our growth. All conditions and experiences that come to us do so for our benefit. Difficulties and obstacles will continue to come until we absorb their wisdom and gather from them the essentials of further growth. That we reap what we sow, is mathematically exact. We gain permanent strength exactly to the extent of the effort required to overcome our difficulties.

The inexorable requirements of growth demand that we exert the greatest degree of attraction for what is perfectly in accord with us. Our highest

happiness will be best attained through our understanding of and conscious cooperation with natural laws.

Our mind-forces are often bound by the paralyzing suggestions that come to us from the crude thinking of the race, and which are accepted and acted upon without question. Impressions of fear, of worry, of disability and of inferiority are given us daily. These are sufficient reasons in themselves why men achieve so little—why the lives of multitudes are so barren of results, when all the time there are possibilities within them which need only the liberating touch of appreciation and wholesome ambition to expand into real greatness.

Women, perhaps even more than men, have been subject to these conditions. This is true because of their finer susceptibilities making them more open to thought-vibrations from other minds, and because the flood of negative and repressive thoughts has been aimed more especially at them.

But it is being overcome. Florence Nightingale overcame it when she rose in the Crimea to heights of tender sympathy and executive ability before unknown among women. Clara Barton, the head of the Red Cross, overcame it when she wrought a similar work in the armies of the Union. Jenny Lind overcame it when she showed her ability to command enormous financial rewards while at the same time gratifying the passionate desire of her nature and reaching the front rank of her day in musical art. And there is a long list of women singers, philanthropists, writers and actresses who have proved themselves capable of reaching the greatest literary, dramatic, artistic and sociological achievement.

Women as well as men are beginning to do their own thinking. They have awakened to some conception of their possibilities. They demand that if life holds any secrets, these shall be disclosed. At no previous time has the influence and potency of thought received such careful and discriminating investigation. While a few seers have grasped the great fact that mind is the universal substance, the basis of all things, never before has this vital truth penetrated the more general consciousness. Many minds are now striving to give this wonderful truth definite utterance. Modern science has taught us that light and sound are simply different intensities of motion, and this may lead to discoveries of forces within man that could not have been conceived of until this revelation was made.

A new era has dawned, and now, standing in its light, man sees something of the vastness of the meaning of life—something of its grandeur. Within that life is the germ of infinite potencies. One feels convinced that man's possibility of attainment cannot be measured, that boundary lines to his onward march are unthinkable. Standing on this height he finds that he can draw new power to himself from the infinite energy of which he is a part.

## II

Some men seem to attract success, power, wealth, attainment, with very little conscious effort; others conquer with great difficulty; still others fail altogether to reach their ambitions, desires and ideals. Why is this so? Why should some men realize their ambitions easily, others with difficulty, and still others not at all? The cause cannot be physical, else the most perfect men, physically, would be the most successful. The difference, therefore, must be mental—must be in the mind; hence mind must be the creative force, and must constitute the sole difference between men. It is the mind, therefore, which overcomes the environment and every other obstacle in the path of men.

It is the actualizing of interior quality through the creative power of thought which has given us great leaders like Alexander, Napoleon, Cromwell, Marlborough and Washington; captains of industry like Carnegie, Morgan, Rockefeller and Leverhulme; inventors like Stephenson, Morse, Marconi, Edison, Tesla, and hosts of others. If, then, the only difference between men lies in their ability to think, to use and control their thought, to develop it—if the secret of all success, all power, all attainment is the creative power of mind, the force of thought—surely the ability of think correctly should become the paramount object of every man.

When the creative power of thought is fully understood, its effect will be seen to be marvelous. But such results cannot be secured without proper application, diligence and concentration. The student will find that the laws governing in the mental and spiritual world are as fixed and infallible as in the material world. To secure the desired results, then, it is necessary to know the law and to comply with it. A proper compliance with the law will be found to produce the desired result with invariable exactitude. The student who learns that power comes from within, that he is weak only because he has depended on help from outside, and who unhesitatingly throws himself on his own

thought, instantly rights himself, stands erect, assumes a dominant attitude, and works miracles.

Scientists tell us that we live in the universal ether. This is formless, of itself, but it is pliable, and forms about us, in us and around us, according to our thought and word. We set it into activity by thinking about it. Then that which manifests to us objectively is that we have thought or said.

Thought is governed by law. The reason we have not manifested more faith is because of lack of understanding. We have not understood that everything works in exact accordance with definite law. The law of thought is as definite as the law of mathematics, or the law of chemistry, or the law of electricity, or the law of gravitation. When we begin to understand that happiness, health, success, prosperity and every other condition or environment are results, and that these results are created by right thinking, either consciously or unconsciously, we shall realize the importance of a working knowledge of the laws governing thought.

Those coming into a conscious realization of the power of thought find themselves in possession of the best that life can give; substantial things of a higher order become theirs, and these sublime realities are so constituted that they can be made tangible parts of daily personal life. They realize a world of higher power, and keep that power constantly working. This power is inexhaustible, limitless, and they are therefore carried forward from victory to victory. Obstacles that seem insurmountable are overcome. Enemies are changed to friends, conditions are overcome, elements transformed, fate is conquered.

The supply of Good is inexhaustible, and the demand can be made along whatever lines we may desire. This is the mental law of demand and supply.

Our circumstances and environment are formed by our thoughts. We have, perhaps, been creating these conditions unconsciously. If they are unsatisfactory, the remedy is to consciously alter our mental attitude and see our circumstances adjust themselves to the new mental condition. There is nothing strange or supernatural about this; it is simply the Law of Being. The thoughts which take root in the mind will certainly produce fruit after their kind. The greatest schemer cannot "gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles." To improve our conditions we must first improve ourselves. Our thoughts and desires will be the first to show improvement.



To be in ignorance of the laws governing in the mental world is to be like a child playing with fire, or a man manipulating powerful chemicals without a knowledge of their nature and relations. This is universally true, because Mind is the one great cause which produces all conditions in the lives of men and women.

Admitting that you agree with everything that has been stated, thus far, and most persons will take no exception to anything that has been said, it still remains to make a practical application of the law.

In order to take advantage of this law, and put ourselves into a harmonious relationship with it, so that the benefit may be made manifest in our lives, it is necessary to see that the conditions are all met for its proper operation. We may know the laws governing electricity, we may have all the proper mechanism, the lamps, the wires, the switches, and we may even know how to generate the power, but if the connections are not properly made, we can work the switch till doomsday and no light will appear; so with the law of attraction—it is in operation all the time, everywhere, something is constantly being created, something is appearing, everything is continually changing, but to take advantage of this process, it is just as necessary to comply with the law as it is in the case of electricity or gravitation.

Mind is creative and operates through the law of attraction. We are not to try to influence any to do what we think they should do. Each individual has a right to choose for himself, but aside from this we would be operating under the law of force, which is destructive in its nature and just the opposite of the law of attraction. A little reflection will convince you that all of the great laws of nature operate in silence and that the underlying principle is the law of attraction. It is only destructive processes such as earthquakes and catastrophes that employ force. Nothing good is ever accomplished in that way.

To be successful, attention must invariably be directed to the creative plane; it must never seek to deprive. You do not wish to take anything away from anyone else, you want to create something for yourself, and what you want for yourself you are perfectly willing that everyone else should have.

You know that it is not necessary to take from one to give to another, but that the supply for all is abundant. Nature's storehouse of wealth is inexhaustible and if there seems to be a lack of supply anywhere it is only because the channels of distribution are as yet imperfect.

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