

The Science of Being Great

"The Science of Being Great" by Wallace D. Wattles is a self-help guide that advocates for personal growth and spiritual awakening. The text emphasizes the importance of recognizing the inherent divine power within each individual and cultivating a positive mental attitude. The book suggests that by embracing a spiritual viewpoint, individuals can overcome limitations imposed by heredity, environment, and societal structures. Wattles presents a series of steps, including preparation, consecration, and identification, to help readers achieve conscious unity with the Supreme Mind, the source of all knowledge and power. The book stresses the significance of thought as a transformative force, urging readers to engage in self-reflection, to adopt a positive outlook, and to cultivate a life of service. Ultimately, the text proposes that by aligning oneself with the divine, one can achieve personal greatness and manifest a more harmonious and fulfilling life.

The book explores the concept of personal greatness and how it is achievable through spiritual awakening, the pursuit of wisdom, and a conscious connection with a higher power. Wattles argues that each individual possesses the potential for greatness and that by aligning oneself with a divine force, one can overcome limitations and achieve true fulfillment. The book outlines a series of steps towards attaining greatness, including aligning oneself with the universe and its unfolding processes, cultivating a personal attitude of unwavering faith and optimism, and cultivating a habit of positive and purposeful thought.



Main Themes

The Inherent Power Within

The central premise is that everyone possesses a "Principle of Power," a divine spark enabling unlimited growth and achievement. Wattles emphasizes that "There is no possibility in any man that is not in every man." This power, sourced from the "Original Substance" or "Mind of God," is accessible to all who consciously connect with it.

Overcoming Limitations

Heredity, circumstances, and lack of opportunity are not barriers to greatness. Wattles argues that through focused effort and the right mental attitude, one can overcome any inherited tendencies or external obstacles. He uses examples like Lincoln and Stephenson to demonstrate how individuals can rise above adversity and achieve greatness.

The Importance of Thought

Wattles stresses the significance of thought as the foundation for external manifestation. "Greatness is only attained by the constant thinking of great thoughts," he states. Habitually thinking of oneself as capable and powerful is crucial for attracting success and achieving desired outcomes.

The Power of Right Action

Right thinking must be accompanied by right action. Wattles encourages individuals to act in a "great way" in all aspects of their lives, from their home environment to their interactions with others. He highlights the importance of treating everyone with respect and consideration, seeing them as equals.

Service as the Path to Greatness

Wattles echoes Jesus' teachings by emphasizing service as a defining characteristic of true greatness. He argues that striving for positions of power and seeking recognition are ultimately self-serving and diminish true power. Instead, focusing on helping others and contributing to the betterment of society are the hallmarks of a genuinely great individual.

Key Ideas and Facts

The Source of Power

Wattles identifies "wisdom" as the essential basis of greatness. He describes wisdom as "the power to perceive the best ends to aim at and the best means for reaching those ends." This wisdom is sourced from the "Mind of God," a limitless reservoir of knowledge and truth accessible through conscious connection. "Man's knowledge is limited and uncertain; therefore he cannot have wisdom in himself. Only God knows all truth; therefore only God can have real wisdom or the right thing to do at all times, and man can receive wisdom from God."

The Importance of Faith

Unwavering faith in principle and the inherent goodness of the world is crucial for achieving greatness. Viewing the world as a perfect work in progress, evolving towards completion, fosters hope and a positive mindset. This faith fuels the belief in one's own ability to overcome challenges and contribute meaningfully to the world.

The Role of Consecration

Consecration involves aligning oneself with the highest principles and living in accordance with them. It requires abandoning harmful habits, controlling impulses, and prioritizing service to others above selfish desires. "You cannot be ruled from below if you are to be great; you must rule from above," Wattles explains.

Key Ideas and Facts (Continued)

The Practice of Idealization

Creating a clear mental picture of oneself as successful and embodying desired qualities is essential for manifesting greatness. This "thought-form," consistently held in mind, activates the creative power within and attracts corresponding external circumstances. "You internally take the form in which you think of yourself; and you surround yourself with the invisible forms of those things with which you associate in your thoughts."

The Significance of Realization

Realization involves actively expressing one's idealized self in all actions, no matter how small. It requires acting with confidence and courage, trusting one's inner guidance, and utilizing all available resources to achieve goals. "I appropriate to myself the power to become what I want to be, and to do what I want to do. I exercise creative energy; all the power there is, is mine."

Notable Quotes

"Genius is Omniscience flowing into man."

"The brain does not make the man; the man makes the brain."

"Your place in life is not fixed by heredity."

"There is a genius in every man and woman, waiting to be brought forth."

"There are no 'bad' or 'evil' people. There are perfectly good people who are off the track."

"The only way to develop a perception of truth in large things is to trust absolutely to your present perception of Truth in small things."

"Hurry is a manifestation of fear; he who fears not has plenty of time."

"Habit rules us all."

"Thinking, not mere knowledge or information, makes personality."

"Do not talk about your greatness; you are really, in essential nature, no greater than those around you."

"Big things will come to you, asking to be done."

"Every man and woman is perfect."

Key Concepts

Cosmic Intelligence

The universal, all-encompassing intelligence that permeates all things; also referred to as the Mind of God.

Idealization

The process of forming a clear and vivid mental picture of one's desired self and circumstances.

Thought-Form

A mental construct created through focused thought, believed to possess the power to manifest in the material world.

Consecration

The act of dedicating oneself to the service of the highest good within, aligning thoughts and actions with the soul's guidance.

Realization

The act of translating idealized thoughts and visions into tangible actions and outcomes in the external world.

Viewpoint

The perspective from which an individual perceives the world, influencing their thoughts, beliefs, and actions.

Identification

The conscious recognition of one's unity with God, acknowledging the inherent divine potential within every individual.

Principle of Power

The inherent divine force within every individual, capable of guiding and empowering individuals towards greatness.

Wisdom

The ability to discern the right course of action, stemming from a connection to divine knowledge and understanding.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Cosmic Intelligence:** The universal, all-encompassing intelligence that permeates all things; also referred to as the Mind of God.
- **Consecration:** The act of dedicating oneself to the service of the highest good within, aligning thoughts and actions with the soul's guidance.
- **Identification:** The conscious recognition of one's unity with God, acknowledging the inherent divine potential within every individual.
- **Idealization:** The process of forming a clear and vivid mental picture of one's desired self and circumstances.
- **Realization:** The act of translating idealized thoughts and visions into tangible actions and outcomes in the external world.
- **Principle of Power:** The inherent divine force within every individual, capable of guiding and empowering individuals towards greatness.
- **Thought-Form:** A mental construct created through focused thought, believed to possess the power to manifest in the material world.
- **Viewpoint:** The perspective from which an individual perceives the world, influencing their thoughts, beliefs, and actions.
- **Wisdom:** The ability to discern the right course of action, stemming from a connection to divine knowledge and understanding.

Conclusions

Wattles' "Science of Being Great" offers a compelling roadmap for individuals seeking to unlock their full potential. The book encourages readers to cultivate a mindset of abundance and faith, to prioritize service and self-development, and to consistently align their actions with their highest ideals. By understanding and implementing these principles, anyone can embark on the journey towards personal greatness and contribute meaningfully to the world.

The Inherent Power Within: The central premise is that everyone possesses a "Principle of Power," a divine spark enabling unlimited growth and achievement. Wattles emphasizes that "There is no possibility in any man that is not in every man." This power, sourced from the "Original Substance" or "Mind of God," is accessible to all who consciously connect with it. **The Source of Power:** Wattles identifies "wisdom" as the essential basis of greatness. He describes wisdom as "the power to perceive the best ends to aim at and the best means for reaching those ends." This wisdom is sourced from the "Mind of God," a limitless reservoir of knowledge and truth accessible through conscious connection. "Man's knowledge is limited and uncertain; therefore he cannot have wisdom in himself. Only God knows all truth; therefore only God can have real wisdom or the right thing to do at all times, and man can receive wisdom from God."

The book explores the inherent potential for greatness within every individual and outlines the principles and practices required to unlock this potential.

