

A DAILY READING

The Certain Way

Fifteen days with the teachings of
The Science of Getting Rich,
rendered for daily practice.

● The Creative Mind	DAYS 1–5
● The Way of Increase	DAYS 6–10
● The Practice of Gratitude	DAYS 11–14

After Wallace D. Wattles · first published 1910 · public domain

HOW TO USE THIS

One reading a day, then begin again.

This is a fifteen-day cycle drawn from three of Wattles's chapters: the creative power of thought, the impression of increase, and gratitude. Read one page each morning. Sit with the line marked *Hold this*, answer the reflection honestly, and carry the day's single practice into your hours. When you reach day fifteen, start over at day one — the readings deepen with repetition rather than wear out.

The aim is not to finish the book but to reset your attention each morning: to act, for one more day, from a clear picture rather than from whatever the day happens to show you.

A NOTE ON THIS EDITION

The core teachings are carried over faithfully. Three passages have been reframed for a modern reader. Wattles's claim that disease and poverty are "only appearances" is treated here as a discipline of attention — not a denial of real conditions, and never a reason to skip real care.

His instruction to avoid all contrary ideas and treat doubt "as a sin" is reframed as attention hygiene: curate what erodes your vision, without closing your mind. And his gratitude toward the tycoons and politicians of 1910 is generalized into gratitude for the whole web of people through whom opportunity travels.

Everything begins as a thought

Every form you will ever build begins as a picture in your mind. The chair, the company, the conversation — none of it takes shape in the world until it has first taken shape in thought. As Wattles put it, a person cannot shape a thing until they have thought that thing.

Most of us spend our days rearranging what already exists — reshaping given forms with our hands. Far rarer is the person who begins from a clear inner image and lets it organize everything that follows. Today, notice how much of what surrounds you was once only an idea someone refused to let go of.

HOLD THIS

All the forms you fashion must first exist in your thought.

REFLECT

What am I building right now that still exists only as a picture in my mind?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Name one thing you want to bring into being. Describe it in a single vivid sentence — as if it already exists.

NOTES

You are a thinking center

You are not only a reactor to the world; you are a source. “Man is a thinking center, and can originate thought.” The difference between a life that merely responds and a life that creates is whether you originate your own images or borrow the ones handed to you.

Borrowed images are easy — they arrive on their own, shaped by whatever you happened to see. Original thought is deliberate. It is the quiet, unglamorous act of deciding what to hold in mind, rather than letting the day decide for you.

HOLD THIS

You can originate thought, not only echo it.

REFLECT

Whose picture of my life am I currently living inside — mine, or one I absorbed?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Before reacting to anything important today, pause once and ask: is this my thought, or an inherited one?

NOTES

Hold to what's true, not to appearances

The hardest discipline in this whole practice is holding to what you intend when the evidence in front of you says otherwise. Wattles called it thinking truth regardless of appearances — refusing to let the visible facts of a moment dictate the whole of your inner picture.

When things look scarce, the easy move is to think scarcity. When a plan looks stalled, the easy move is to conclude it is dead. Holding a steady vision through discouraging appearances is genuine work — but it keeps you acting from possibility rather than collapsing into whatever the day happens to show you.

A note on the original: Wattles goes so far as to call disease and poverty “only appearances.” Read that as a claim about where you place your attention and stance — not as a denial of real conditions, and never as a reason to skip real care. The discipline is only this: don't let a hard appearance become your whole story.

HOLD THIS

Don't let the appearance of the moment become the whole of your picture.

REFLECT

Where am I letting a discouraging appearance define what's possible?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Pick one situation that looks stuck. Hold, for five minutes, a clear picture of it resolved — then take one small action from that stance.

NOTES

The hardest work there is

“There is no labor from which most people shrink as they do from that of sustained and consecutive thought.” Directed attention is exhausting precisely because it fights the current. The mind drifts toward whatever is loudest, easiest, most recent.

To keep a single clear intention in view across a whole day — returning to it each time the noise pulls you off — is the real work. Not the inbox, not the busyness. The quiet return, again and again, to what you actually mean to build.

HOLD THIS

Sustained, directed thought is the hardest and most valuable work you do.

REFLECT

How many times today did I return to my real aim after drifting?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Set one intention this morning. Each time you notice you've drifted, return to it — without self-criticism. Count the returns.

NOTES

Guard your attention

Wattles warns against filling your mind with what erodes your vision. In his era he framed it harshly — avoid every contrary idea, treat doubt as sin. Taken literally that is a recipe for a closed mind, and worth setting aside.

But the sound core remains: attention is finite, and what you steep it in shapes what you become. You needn't wall yourself off from other ideas. You do need to notice what reliably leaves you smaller — the feeds, the conversations, the loops of comparison — and stop marinating in them. Curate your inputs the way you'd curate what you eat.

HOLD THIS

What you steep your attention in, you become.

REFLECT

What input in my daily diet reliably leaves me feeling smaller or more scattered?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Identify one such input. Cut or reduce it for today, and notice what fills the space.

NOTES

Everyone is seeking more life

“Increase is what all men and all women are seeking.” Beneath the specific things people chase — more money, more comfort, more knowledge — is a single desire: more life, fuller expression. It is not greed; it is the basic pulse of everything alive.

Once you see it, you see it everywhere. Whatever the person across the table is asking for, they are really asking for a sense of increase. One question reorganizes all your dealings with people: does this person leave our exchange with more life, or less?

HOLD THIS

The desire behind every desire is the desire for more life.

REFLECT

In my exchanges today, will people leave with more, or less?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

In one interaction today, aim consciously to leave the other person larger than you found them.

NOTES

Be a center of increase

“You are a creative center, from which increase is given off to all.” This is not a technique to deploy in meetings; it is a way of carrying yourself. When you genuinely operate from the conviction that you are advancing — and advancing everyone you touch — people feel it without a word being said.

Wattles is blunt that this cannot be faked: “true faith is never boastful.” You don’t announce it. You simply let the quiet certainty that things are growing express itself in how you act, and people are drawn to it.

HOLD THIS

Carry the quiet certainty that you advance everyone you deal with.

REFLECT

Do the people around me experience me as someone who makes things grow?

TODAY’S PRACTICE

Drop one instance of proving or boasting today. Let the work convey the increase instead.

NOTES

Give more than you take

Here is the whole ethic in one line: “give them a use value greater than the cash value you are taking from them.” Whatever someone pays you — in money, time, or attention — they should walk away with more than they gave.

This is the opposite of extracting, and it isn’t charity either; it is the most durable way to build anything. People return to, and bring others to, whoever consistently gives them more than they take. Do this without exception and, Wattles promises, “you will have no lack of customers.”

HOLD THIS

Give a use-value greater than the price you take.

REFLECT

In my work, does each person receive more value than they pay?

TODAY’S PRACTICE

Find one exchange today where you can quietly give more than expected.

NOTES

The impression of advancement

How you carry yourself is itself a message. Wattles asks you to convey “the impression of increase” in everything you do — not through display or performance, but through a settled sense that you are moving forward and bringing others with you.

The counterfeit is the boaster, who is “secretly doubtful and afraid.” The real thing is quieter: a look, a tone, a steadiness that lets people feel, in your presence, that associating with you is a gain. That feeling brings them back.

HOLD THIS

Let every act and tone express quiet, unboastful advancement.

REFLECT

What does my manner communicate before I even speak?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Notice your tone in one exchange today. Aim for quiet assurance over either apology or display.

NOTES

Create, don't compete

“The mind that seeks for mastery over others is the competitive mind; and the competitive mind is not the creative one.” The moment your aim becomes winning against someone — out-doing, dominating, sitting above the crowd — you have left the creative game for a zero-sum one.

Wattles is severe about this: the lust for power over others “has been the curse of the world.” You don't need to rule anyone to build what you want. In fact, the scramble for high places hands your fate to chance. Create, and you need no one to lose.

HOLD THIS

You don't have to beat anyone to build what you want.

REFLECT

Where am I competing when I could be creating?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Catch one impulse today to prove yourself against someone. Redirect that energy into making something instead.

NOTES

What I want for myself, I want for everyone

The chapter closes on a line Wattles borrowed and loved: “What I want for myself, I want for everybody.” It is the test that separates creative desire from the competitive kind.

If the good you want is one that others must be denied for you to enjoy it, it belongs to the old scramble. If it is a good you would gladly see everyone share, it belongs to the way of increase. Hold your ambitions up to this line and keep the ones that pass.

HOLD THIS

Want for yourself only what you'd want for everyone.

REFLECT

Would I be glad to see everyone have what I'm reaching for?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Run today's main ambition through the line. If it fails, reshape it until it passes.

NOTES

Gratitude keeps you connected

“The whole process of mental adjustment and atonement can be summed up in one word — gratitude.” Wattles treats gratitude not as good manners but as the connective tissue between you and the source of everything good in your life.

His image is vivid: people who receive a gift and fail to acknowledge it “cut the wires” that connect them to more. Gratitude keeps the wires live. It keeps your attention turned toward where good things actually come from, instead of drifting toward lack.

HOLD THIS

Gratitude keeps you connected to the source of what you want.

REFLECT

What have I received lately without truly acknowledging?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Name three specific things you're grateful for right now — out loud or in writing.

NOTES

Gratitude fixes attention on the best

“The grateful mind is constantly fixed upon the best; therefore it tends to become the best.” The mechanism is simple, and we now know it is well-founded: whatever you dwell on trains what you notice, and what you notice shapes what you do.

Dwell on the mean and the squalid and you tune yourself to find more of it. Dwell with gratitude on what is working and you tune yourself toward more of that. “To permit your mind to dwell upon the inferior is to become inferior.” Gratitude is how you keep the dial set to the best.

HOLD THIS

What you dwell on with gratitude, you move toward.

REFLECT

Where has my attention been dwelling — on what’s lacking, or on what’s working?

TODAY’S PRACTICE

Each time you catch yourself cataloguing what’s wrong today, name one thing that’s right.

NOTES

Gratitude becomes faith

“Faith is born of gratitude. The grateful mind continually expects good things, and expectation becomes faith.” Practiced consistently, gratitude does something beyond the moment: it builds a durable expectancy that good things are coming.

This isn’t wishful thinking — it is the quiet confidence that comes from repeatedly noticing that things have, in fact, worked out and grown. That expectancy is what lets you act boldly. Without it, Wattles says, you can’t sustain the creative work at all.

HOLD THIS

Consistent gratitude grows into steady expectancy.

REFLECT

Do I move through my day expecting good, or bracing for loss?

TODAY’S PRACTICE

Before something you’re anxious about today, recall three past things that worked out. Enter it expecting good.

NOTES

Be grateful for the whole web

Wattles ends by insisting gratitude include everything — even the flawed systems and people you would never choose. His examples are dated; he names the tycoons and politicians of 1910. But the principle is durable: your opportunities arrive through an enormous web of people and arrangements you didn't build and can't fully see.

You don't have to approve of all of it to be grateful for your place in it. Gratitude for the whole web — “the good in everything” — keeps you in harmony with it, and, as Wattles puts it, “the good in everything will move toward you.” Tomorrow the cycle begins again.

HOLD THIS

Include everything in your gratitude — even what you'd change.

REFLECT

What part of the web that carries my opportunities have I been resenting instead of using?

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Name one system or person you rely on but resent. Hold, for a moment, genuine gratitude for the good they make possible.

NOTES