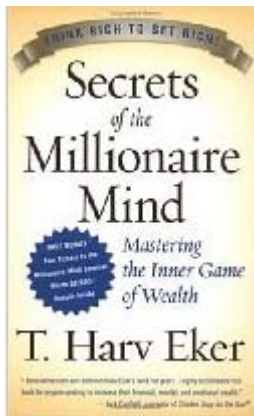


Book Review: *Secrets of the Millionaire Mind* by T Harv Eker

This is not a book that I would normally buy and read. However, it was recommended by two personal friends who I visited while in New York. It had also been highly recommended in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and USA Today. I decided to look into it. I was glad that I had done so. I am normally happy to gain one new idea out of a book to justify its cost. I was more than rewarded for the cost and time devoted to this book.



Harv Eker is known to be an inspiring speaker and his book is very easy to read. *Secrets of the Millionaire Mind* is sub-titled *Mastering the Inner Game of Wealth*. This accurately summarises the whole thrust of the book, which is that it is not what we know, or who we know, that determines how much wealth we will accumulate. Rather, it is how we think that drives everything to do with building and keeping our wealth. In this respect, Eker's prime thesis is very close to my ideas that investing results are not only driven by what we know but also by the quality of our decision-making skills. In other words, the best investors think differently to the way beginners think.

The book is divided into two parts.

Part One: Your Money Blueprint

This part begins with the assertion that "... your character, your thinking and your beliefs are a critical part of what determines the level of your success." Eker defines what he means by your money and success blueprint to the point where he boasts that being with someone for five minutes is enough for him to predict that person's financial situation from now until they die. In other words, if we do not have the right blueprint, we will not become wealthy and, if we were to come into some wealth through luck, we will not have the blueprint necessary to hang on to it. This is a variation on the commonly-known fact that most lottery winners end up just as poor as they were when they won the first prize within only a few years.

A critical concept here is that wealth is a result. So, if we say that our problem is that we do not have enough money, we are stating the issue wrongly. Lack of money is not the problem it is the result of another deeper problem. That deeper problem is inside us. It is the way we think that is causing the lack of money.

The obvious question that flows from this is: how do we change the way we think? As always, being aware of the problem is the first step. The second step is to make conscious declarations to change aspects of our thinking that is limiting us in our ability to create and keep wealth. A declaration is a decision to take some action with respect to an aspect of the way we think.

Everybody has a money blueprint. We have this blueprint from the way we have been conditioned through all life experiences from birth to the present. These influences fall under some key headings: verbal programming, modelling and specific incidents. This programming process is largely unconscious. As I read his material lots of lights came on in my mind that told me he was describing the ways that I had been programmed by my life experiences to date.

Eker has written this book and designed his teaching programs around helping us to become aware of our blueprint. Then, if we are unhappy with our results, he provides strategies for changing or reprogramming our blueprint. The central idea here is that "Nothing has meaning except for the meaning you give it." Once this is understood, it is possible to design and

undertake a program to change the meaning we give to the influences which have shaped our money blueprint.

Of course, everything is not in the book. In some senses the book is an introduction for his courses. Nevertheless, I found some very valuable insights in it. Having read the book, each of us can then decide whether to take one of Eker's courses. The important thing is that the book has provided real value and pointed the way to change.

Part Two: The Wealth Files

If Eker had only written part one of his book, it may have been of far less value. However, the second part of the book is the larger part. In it, Eker discusses in separate chapters seventeen ways that rich people think and act differently from poor people and middle class people. I found this part of the book very valuable and it has already changed one or two of the ways I think. I am still working on some of the other wealth files.

For me one of the most revealing and important of the wealth files was the first one: Rich people believe "I create my life". Poor people believe "Life happens to me." In the discussion, Eker introduces us to the three obvious clues left behind by these poor people who are playing the role of victim: They blame everything and everybody but themselves; they constantly justify or rationalise their situation; they complain endlessly about what is wrong in their lives.

Eker makes the interesting observation that when someone says that money is not that important to them (rationalising), you can bet they are broke. Further, Eker claims that he tries to distance himself physically from the "life happens to me" crowd as quickly as possible, lest they infect him. Those who stay around this crowd tend to be just waiting for their turn to blame, rationalise and complain. Instead Eker advocates taking responsibility for our situation and going about changing our ways of thinking and acting so that we attract wealth rather than repelling it.

Some other wealth files which appealed to me include:

- Rich people play the money game to win. Poor people play the money game to NOT lose.
- Rich people focus on opportunities. Poor people focus on obstacles.
- Rich people associate with positive, successful people. Poor people associate with negative or unsuccessful people.
- And this one is special: Rich people choose to get paid based on results. Poor people choose to get paid based on time.
- Rich people focus on their net worth. Poor people focus on their working income.
- Rich people act in spite of fear. Poor people let fear stop them.
- Finally, one of my favourites: Rich people constantly learn and grow. Poor people think they already know.

This book so impressed me, and taking a cue from the last point above, that I plan to keep it by me and to try to read one of the wealth files every day when I have a little time to reflect

on how I might change how I think and act. In time all seventeen wealth files will become an integral and instinctive aspect of how I think about everything in life.