

The Law of Cause & Effect (Law of Karma)

Karma: The total effect of a person's actions and conduct during the successive phases of the person's existence, regarded as determining the person's destiny.

Ask a religious person to define God and they will reply that God is an omnipotent force made of energy. God cannot be created, cannot be destroyed and is eternal. Ask a scientist what he or she perceives to be the cause of creation and they will say energy. Energy cannot be created, cannot be destroyed and is eternal.

Same thing, different words. Either way we all understand that there is a creative force greater than we are and whose infinite energy force operates in the Universe and this is an orderly Universe. Regardless of what you might think, nothing - no thing - operates by chance, there are no coincidences and no accidents for the Universe - or God - operates via a system of perfect laws.

As we need laws on earth to stop things getting chaotic and to instil order in our world, so too does the Universe. The Universe operates on 7 Laws. These Laws work in perfection and they are impartial, which explains why good things happen to bad people and bad things happen to good people, and these Laws are thought and emotionally driven. When we learn how to operate within these Laws we begin to understand how things *really* work.

I reiterate the following explanation from last week because the more you hear these words, the more you understand them to be true, the more you allow them to sink into your subconscious mind, the easier you will understand the Laws and how they work.

Today we are going to talk about the Law of Cause & Effect, also known as the Law of Karma. Whenever you say 'what goes around comes around', 'whatever you sow you reap' whether you know it or not you are acknowledging the Law of Cause & Effect.

This Law states that every action causes a like reaction, so if a positive action inspires a positive reaction then it must follow that a negative action leads to a negative reaction. There is no action which stands alone because in the Universe we are all linked one to another and thought, too comes inside the remit of action for what is thought if not an action of the mind.

This Law underlines our ability to shape our Universe and that of others by our actions and by our thoughts. Never think your input is too small, too insignificant to make a difference, although in many instances we do not actively perceive what the reaction might be and sometimes we discover it

weeks, months or even years later, that a small act of ours or the throwaway comment we made had real impact on the life of another human being.

The Law of Cause & Effect, as with all of the 7 Laws, is non-judgemental, neutral and not attached to any outcome. We simply make the action, or the thought, and the Law immediately comes into force. There is no way of stopping the Law from taking effect any more than we can stop the sun rise. Once an action is completed there is no real way it can be retracted but what we can do, if we realise we have done or said something we shouldn't have, is to redress the balance as quickly as possible. This serves us in 2 ways:

- 1) By acting quickly, we have listened to the Higher Self (the God within) and have understood that there is nothing to be gained by negative or hurtful action. Ok, we may have erred in having done wrong initially but in trying to put it right, or at least soften the blow, we are showing the Universe that we accept responsibility for the wrong act and are willing to do what it takes to put it right.
- 2) The subconscious self, the repository of memory, will remember this and so the next time you are tempted to do something similar, it will pop up and remind you of what happened when you did this thing before. Subconscious memory prompting is also known as conscience awareness.

When you have done your best to mend what you have done then you let it go and move on. This is more difficult than it sounds of course, because who of us has not at some time or other, rehashed old events with the *coulda woulda shoulda's* flying around in our mind? However it is imperative that we do, when we have truly done all we can to mend the situation, let it go. Release it to the Universe and learn from the experience.

On the positive side of course the Law works equally well. Who can say how much the cheerful word you had with the old lady at the bus stop on a rainy day has made a difference to her? How can you know whether the seemingly one-sided conversation you had with your teenage son about drugs has hit home? Can you really know that the one-liner you delivered at work did not lift a colleague's mood for the entire afternoon? Of course you can know none of these things but in fact it is not in our remit to know, it is for us to put the best of ourselves out there and, like the Universal Laws, be *not* attached to the outcome.

This is of course more difficult than simply writing the words, especially if it concerns a loved one but I promise you it does get easier with practice. This is not to say we should not *care* about the outcome, rather that it is not our responsibility. If we are sure we have done the best we can do in any given situation that is where our accountability ends. Ultimately we can only ever be responsible only for ourselves.

A Parable to Explain the Law of Cause & Effect

Jeannie was a cantankerous soul. Everyone said so. And while this drove her family and friends crazy, it also had a damaging effect on Jeannie herself. She was discontented, short-tempered and was famous for saying the wrong thing at the wrong time.

That was the outward Jeannie, inside she was as nice a soul as you could meet but outwardly Jeannie acted before she thought and made up opinions before she had gathered all the facts. Jeannie had an opinion on everything. The government, young people, old people, middle-aged people, people in general, bus-drivers, the weather... you name it, Jeannie had an opinion on it. But carrying a lifetime's worth of opinions can get pretty heavy and now that Jeannie was of retirement age, she felt pains in her back, her legs, her joints – little did she know it was from carrying all those opinions which grew heavier by the year.

When Jeannie became a widow she gathered opinions ever more voraciously and added then to her burden. She was blessed with 3 grandchildren, all boys and although with them she tended to forget her opinions for a while she always made sure she compensated by giving the full weight of her opinions to her son and daughter-in-law whenever they brought the boys over for a visit.

'Martin' she'd say. 'You might be a clever lawyer son, but whatever are you doing letting Jason out without a coat in this weather? And Ellie, not that I am one to interfere but are you sure Callum is ready for nursery? He's such a little boy still; you don't want them to grow up too quickly you know. And Michael, I know he's ten now but don't you think those skateboard things are dangerous?' On and on she went from the minute Martin and Ellie walked in the door until the visit was over. Needless to say Martin and Ellie did not take the boys to visit their grandmother as often as they might have done.

Since she'd lost her husband Jack six months before, Jeannie had slowly lost her friends too. Not that they'd all passed away (although some of them had, no one was as young as they used to be) but in the main their friends were actually the gregarious and easy-going Jack's friends and it wasn't until she lost Jack that Jeannie fully understood this and that revelation was hoisted into her invisible (and by now extremely heavy) sack of opinions and carried on her back.

One day Martin found himself visiting a client's office near his mother's house and, even though he knew he'd be berated for not calling enough, not visiting enough, not doing *something* enough, decided to pop in for lunch. He knocked the door but there was no reply. 'Strange,' he thought. His mother

usually made it a point to be home to listen to the midday news (so she could have more things to complain about Martin privately thought, but wisely he kept this particular opinion to himself). He knocked again loudly. 'I'm coming, I'm coming,' Jeannie called in a voice Martin did not recognise as her own. 'Mum, is something wrong?' he asked when faced with Jeannie's teary-eyed face. 'What happened?' 'Oh I wasn't expecting you -' Jeannie replied in that strange quiet voice and Martin began to feel unnerved. 'Mum, what is it? Have you been burgled? Attacked? What happened?'

Jeannie smiled and for a split second Martin saw the ghost of the young, vibrant mother Jeannie once was (in the days before the invisible sack of course). 'I'm all right son,' she promised, leading him into the kitchen 'I'll just put the kettle on. Have you had lunch?' 'I'll make the tea Mum and don't worry about food,' Martin took charge and surprisingly Jeannie stayed in the chair into which her son had pressed her.

When two cups of tea and a plate of biscuits found their way onto the table, Martin tried again. 'What's upset you Mum?' 'Oh nothing,' Jeannie waved a hand and Martin fancied she looked a little sheepish. 'I wasn't expecting you, you see,' she explained 'and you caught me out.'

'Caught you out in what way?'

'This,' awkwardly Jeannie passed a hand across her face 'crying like a baby, I feel so silly now, but I just miss your Dad that's all.'

Instantly Martin was at Jeannie's side. 'Oh Mum. Why didn't you say? You could come to us for a while, Ellie wouldn't mind and the boys would love it.' Martin knew neither of those two statements were true but once he'd said the words he knew he'd have to suffer the consequences.

'Oh no, I couldn't,' Jeannie sniffed. 'I'd just be a burden.'

'Nonsense,' replied her son with a conviction he did not feel 'I mean it. Come on now, I have an hour or so before I'm needed in the office. Grab a few things together and I'll drive you to the house now.'

Jeannie blinked. 'Are you sure?'

Martin smiled. 'Of course Mum. Now go and pack a bag.'

With Martin at work all day Jeannie spent most of her time with Ellie and although she did her best to help out with the boys, the weight of her opinions became heavier and heavier as she reiterated what was wrong with parents today. But Ellie, one of those fortunate women whose wisdom is innate, did not complain but turned the situation over and over in her mind before deciding on a plan of action.

One day when Jeannie was having her hair done Ellie purchased a jigsaw. It was one of those 1,000 piece puzzles of a country cottage, roses round the door, the whole works. When she showed it to Martin he frowned 'Isn't that

a bit advanced for the boys?' 'It's not for the boys,' Ellie winked but she would say no more.

The next day was Friday and the boys were at school so Ellie took the opportunity to present her gift. 'What is it?' Jeannie asked.

'Open it and see.'

'A jigsaw?'

Ellie nodded.

'For me?' Jeannie was nonplussed.

'For you,' Ellie confirmed.

'I don't do jigsaws.'

'Why not?'

Jeannie had no answer to that.

'Let's open it up,' Ellie was already opening the box and laying out the pieces on the kitchen table.

'Why are we doing this?' Jeannie complained.

'We're not doing it, *you're* doing it,' Ellie replied serenely 'and perhaps when the boys get home they might help you.'

Although she never actively helped, Ellie sat all morning by Jeannie's elbow commenting encouragingly. 'You have a hidden talent for jigsaws.'

'Much good that'll do me,' the older woman grumbled.

'Don't you think jigsaws are like life?'

'That's ridiculous,' Jeannie spluttered 'honestly Ellie sometimes I wonder about you. Imagine saying something like that! Really! Life is a struggle, trying to fit everything in, trying to make everyone happy...'

Wise Ellie did not allow her face to change expression at her scolding mother-in-law's perception of herself as she cut in gently 'Isn't that like a jigsaw? Isn't it true of life that you can't always see the big picture until at the little pieces are slotted together and isn't it also true that when we are too close to the puzzle we don't see anything at all but when we step back we see' she held up the box to display the finished article of the country cottage 'a beautiful picture.'

Jeannie nodded.

'And it's also true,' Ellie went on smoothly 'that a jigsaw is like people. We all have our small part to play in life and each piece joins perfectly into the next one.'

'Unless we don't fit,' Jeannie said quietly.

'Oh but every piece fits,' Ellie countered 'every single piece fits. Look at this piece,' she lifted from the box an awkward looking one-coloured piece 'now from where we are at the moment we cannot see where on earth this piece fits in but when the jigsaw is more complete we will find the exact spot for this one to be and when it's in its rightful place -'

'It won't be difficult any more,' Jeannie supplied.

Ellie smiled. 'As I said, jigsaws are a lot like people too.'

By the time the boys arrived home the puzzle was $\frac{3}{4}$ completed and, as Ellie predicted, the awkward looking one-coloured piece fitted into the azure sky above the cottage perfectly. Ellie left the boys with their grandmother while she went to make tea. 'You could have been a lawyer too Ellie. You're smart enough,' Jeannie's smiling face appeared in the doorway. 'Ah no,' Ellie laughed 'your son is the lawyer in this family.'
'Well there are different types of lawyers I suppose,' Jeannie quipped but when Ellie pressed her for an explanation she would give no answer.

When Jeannie went back to her puzzle with her grandsons all clamouring to help, Ellie noticed that the old lady's back was much straighter now, as if an invisible weight had been lifted from her.

The Law of Cause & Effect states that whatever we send out we get back but sometimes it takes a private moment of vulnerability to allow our true self to shine through the defences we have taken a lifetime to build.