



The Secret of the Shadow: The Power of Owning Your Whole Story

By Debbie Ford

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Oprah had a lightbulb moment when she connected with Debbie Ford's shadow work. Now, Debbie deepens our shadow work and shows how our shadow side holds the key to our happiness. Each of us has a shadow that whispers stories of our own self-defeating fears to us—for example: that we aren't enough, that we are unworthy of being loved, that we will be deserted by those whom we care about. Debbie guides us to hear those stories and find the positive message within each of them. She shows how understanding our own shadow side can lead us to lives of tremendous fulfillment and peace. Full of case studies and exercises, this book complements her first book on shadow work, which has sold almost half a million copies.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The past is more than prologue, says bestselling author and Chopra Center for Well Being counselor Debbie Ford. *The Secret of the Shadow* urges readers to create a fresh meaning about their formative experiences, especially the painful ones, and use them to plan a more purposeful and authentic life. Ford believes that each person is born with unique gifts and a divine purpose, which are lost when we create a "story"--a collection of beliefs--that manufactures a false self and casts a shadow to hide our uniqueness and prevent us from success in work and love. As she explains, "the key is to stop chasing the feel-good moments and make peace with our stories so we can understand, accept and embrace everything in the past that has caused us pain." Once we stop trying to change the painful parts of our story, we will discover the divine plan for our lives.

Writing in the voice of the wounded healer, Ford tells her own story of embracing the wisdom and direction she found in facing family and addiction problems. She skillfully offers examples from participants in her workshops at the Chopra center who have leveraged the lessons of a painful past into a purposeful life. She invites readers to "own their *whole* story" by asking: What is the secret [about you] that your story conceals? What wisdom can you contribute to the world that you couldn't if the events in your life hadn't happened?"

At times, Ford's approach seems derivative of 12-step programs and ersatz Buddhism. And she mixes metaphors of shadows and light with those of a recipe and ingredients. Readers also know that self-reflection, acceptance of life's mixed blessings, and making lemonade from lemons are not new ideas. Yet Ford's passion and persuasiveness make a fresh case for daring to be yourself, learning from experience, and discovering the divine spark that is beyond our understanding. --Barbara Mackoff

From Publishers Weekly

In her latest book, the author of the bestselling *The Dark Side of the Light Chasers* decries that so many people have spent so much money in an attempt to gain deep inner peace to no avail. Presumably, Ford considers this treacly volume will be money well spent: employing stories both from her unhappy past and from the lives of people she counsels in her workshops at the Chopra Center for Well Being, she illustrates the steps she claims will lead a person to discover his or her "Divine truth." What initially sounds like the final answer in self-help books is in fact a sincere but cloying mix of Ford's spiritual views and suggested exercises that are all too familiar to dedicated soul-searchers. Incorporating perspectives from various religions, 12-step programs and pop psychology, Ford's advice urges readers to stop blaming other people for their own problems, take responsibility for their own actions and make amends to balance their "karmic scales." The final lesson here is that everything that happens is a blessing, no matter how painful or difficult it may be. Ford advises readers to "step outside" their stories the limited and limiting meanings they have given to events in their lives and to instead realize that they are "Divine" beings with a unique purpose in life and contribution to make. She makes it sound easy and therein lies the problem. (Jan.) Forecast: Ford's previous book, *Spiritual Divorce*, focused on applying her tenets in specific ways to a specific experience. While her relative fame will guarantee sales, this latest volume offers little more than the well-worn edict to find something good in all "bad" experiences.

From Library Journal

A divorced mother and recovered drug addict who currently teaches at the Chopra Center for Well Being in La Jolla, CA, Ford introduced her concept of the "shadow" (i.e., what's really going on in our lives) in her best-selling *The Dark Side of the Light Chasers*. Here, she builds on that concept, incorporating it into the idea of one's "story," or the set of negative attitudes and beliefs that prevent people from being happy. To free oneself from that baggage and discover the true self, Ford offers some sensible methods. Unfortunately, in doing so, she also annoyingly discounts other best-selling self-help titles and their key concepts, claiming that her competitors' ideas will only lead people to hide from the truth. Mystical and underlined with ying and yang ideas, her book is not groundbreaking, but it is written in an engagingly ethereal and poetic style. It has a place in public libraries, bookstores, and personal growth collections. Given the print and broadcast advertising campaign and Ford's connection with Deepak Chopra, there will be demand. Susan Burdick, Media, PA

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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