

THE ART OF SELF- MASTERY

11 LIFE-CHANGING
CLASSICS FEATURING

JAMES ALLEN

NEVILLE GODDARD

NORMAN
VINCENT PEALE

AND MORE

ABRIDGED AND INTRODUCED BY
MITCH HOROWITZ

THE ART OF SELF- MASTERY

11 LIFE-CHANGING CLASSICS

The Art of War by Sun Tzu

As a Man Thinketh by James Allen

Atom-Smashing Power of Mind by Charles Fillmore

In Tune with The Infinite by Ralph Waldo Trine

Magic of Faith by Joseph Murphy

The Master Mind by Theron Q. Dumont

The Power of Awareness by Neville Goddard

The Power of Concentration by Theron Q. Dumont

The Power of Faith by Norman Vincent Peale

The Prophet by Khalil Gibran

Walden by Henry David Thoreau

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Published 2022 by Gildan Media LLC
aka G&D Media
www.GandDmedia.com

THE ART OF SELF MASTERY. *The Art of War* is estimated to have been written c. 500 BC, The English translation by Lionel Giles was published 1910, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2019, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2019 by Mitch Horowitz; *As a Man Thinketh* was originally published in 1903, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2018, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2018 by Mitch Horowitz; *Atom-Smashing Power of Mind* was originally published in 1949, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2019, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2019 by Mitch Horowitz; *In Tune with the Infinite* was originally published in 1897, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2021, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2021 by Mitch Horowitz; *Magic of Faith* was originally published in 1954, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2019, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2019 by Mitch Horowitz; *The Master Mind* was originally published in 1918, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2018, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2017 by Mitch Horowitz; *The Power of Awareness* was originally published in 1952, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2019, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2019 by Mitch Horowitz; *The Power of Concentration* was originally published in 1916, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2018, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2017 by Mitch Horowitz; *The Power of Faith* was originally published as *Faith Is the Answer* by Smiley Blanton, M.D. and Norman Vincent Peale, D.D. in 1940, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2020, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2020 by Mitch Horowitz; *The Prophet* was first published in 1923, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2019, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2019 by Mitch Horowitz; *Walden* was originally published in 1854, G&D Media Condensed Classics edition published 2019, Abridgement and Introduction copyright © 2019 by Mitch Horowitz. All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce, transmit, store, perform or record the contents hereof.

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Front Cover design by David Rheinhardt of Pyrographx

Interior design by Meghan Day Healey of Story Horse, LLC

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available upon request

eISBN: 978-1-7225-2729-7

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THE ART OF WAR

*History's Greatest Work on Strategy—Now in a
Special Condensation*

by Sun Tzu

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The Unlikeliest Classic

By Mitch Horowitz

Since its first creditable English translation in 1910, the ancient Chinese martial text *The Art of War* has enthralled Western readers. First gaining the attention of military officers, sinologists, martial artists, and strategy aficionados, *The Art of War* is today read by business executives, athletes, artists, and seekers from across the self-help spectrum. This is a surprising destiny for a work on ancient warfare estimated to be written around 500 BC by Zhou dynasty general Sun Tzu, an honorific title meaning “Master Sun.” Very little is known about the author other than a historical consensus that such a figure actually existed as a commander in the dynastic emperor’s army.

What, then, accounts for the enduring popularity of a text that might have been conscripted to obscurity in the West?

Like the best writing from the Taoist tradition, *The Art of War* is exquisitely simple, practical, and clear. Its insights into life and its inevitable conflicts are so organic and sound—Taoism is based on aligning with the natural order of things—that many people who have never been on a battlefield are immediately drawn into wanting to apply Sun Tzu’s maxims to daily life.

Indeed, this gentle condensation is intended to highlight those aphorisms and lessons that have the broadest general applicability. I have no doubt that as you experience this volume you will immediately discover ideas that you want to note and use. This is because Sun Tzu’s genius as a writer is to return us to natural principles—things that we may have once understood intuitively but lost in superfluous and speculative analysis, another of life’s inevitabilities.

I have based this abridgment on the aforementioned and invaluable 1910 English translation by British sinologist Lionel Giles. Giles’ translation has

stood up with remarkable relevance over the past century. Rather than laden his words with the flourish of late-Victorian prose, Giles honored the starkness and sparseness of the original work. I have occasionally altered an obscure or antiquated term, but, overall, the economy and elegance of Giles' translation is an art form in itself, and deserves to be honored as such.

Why then a condensation at all? In some instances, Sun Tzu, a working military commander, necessarily touched upon battlefield intricacies—such as the fine points of terrain or attacking the enemy with fire—that prove less immediately applicable to modern life than his observations on the movements and motives of men. In a few spots I also add a clarifying note to bring out Sun Tzu's broader points.

I ask the reader to take special note of Sun Tzu's frequent references to adhering to the natural landscape. It is a classically Taoist approach to blend with the curvature and qualities of one's surroundings—to find your place in the organic order of things. Within the Vedic tradition this is sometimes called dharma. Transcendentalist philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson also notes the need to cycle yourself with the patterns of nature. As the great Hermetic dictum put it: "As above, so below."

Another key to Sun Tzu's popularity is the manner in which he unlocks the universality of true principles. What applies in warfare, if authentic, must apply to other areas of life. Human nature is consistent. So are the ebb and flow of events, on both macro and intimate levels. Be on the watch for this principle throughout the text.

Another central aspect of Sun Tzu's thought—again in harmony with Taoism—is that the greatest warrior prevails without ever fighting. If a fighter has observed conditions, deciphered the enemy, and diligently prepared and marshaled his forces, the ideal is to overwhelm his foe without shooting a single arrow. "Supreme excellence," Sun Tzu writes, "consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting."

If an attack does prove necessary, it should be launched with irresistible force, like a seismic shifting of the earth. After your enemy's defeat, quickly return to normalcy. "In war then," the master writes, "let your object be victory, not lengthy campaigns." Sun Tzu warns against

protracted operations. “There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare,” he writes.

Rather than seek glory, Sun Tzu counsels that the excellent commander practices subtlety, inscrutability, watchfulness, and flexibility. The good fighter, he writes, should be like water: dwelling unnoticed at his enemy’s lowest depths and then striking with overwhelming power at his weakest points, the way a torrent of water rushes downhill. This constitutes ideal preparation and formation for attack: practice patience, carefully study the enemy, know his limits and strengths and your own, never be lured or tricked into battle—and then strike with ferocity. And never fight unless victory is assured.

If I had to put *The Art of War* into a nutshell, I would use this one of the master’s maxims: “Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt.”

In a sense, *The Art of War* is about unlearning the complexities of life and returning to the simple and true. This voice from millennia ago can teach us how to strip away obfuscation. May its wisdom bring you your highest effectiveness.

Laying Plans

Sun Tzu said: The art of war is of vital importance to the State.

It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence, it is a subject of inquiry that can on no account be neglected.

The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field.

These are:

- (1) The Moral Law;
- (2) Heaven;
- (3) Earth;
- (4) The Commander;
- (5) Method and Discipline.

The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.

Heaven signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.

Earth comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.

The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness.

By method and discipline are to be understood the marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the graduations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.

These five heads should be familiar to every general: he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.

Therefore, in your deliberations, when seeking to determine the military conditions, let them be made the basis of a comparison, in this way:

- (1) Which of the two sovereigns is imbued with the Moral Law?
- (2) Which of the two generals has most ability?
- (3) With whom lie the advantages derived from Heaven and Earth?
- (4) On which side is discipline most rigorously enforced?
- (5) Which army is stronger?
- (6) On which side are officers and men more highly trained?
- (7) In which army is there the greater constancy both in reward and punishment?

By means of these seven considerations I can forecast victory or defeat.

The general that hearkens to my counsel and acts upon it, will conquer: let such a one be retained in command! The general that hearkens not to my counsel nor acts upon it, will suffer defeat—let such a one be dismissed!

While heeding the profit of my counsel, avail yourself also of any helpful circumstances over and beyond the ordinary rules.

According as circumstances are favorable, one should modify one's plans.

All warfare is based on deception.

Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.

Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him.

If he is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him.

If your opponent is bad-tempered, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant.

If he is at ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them.

Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.

These military devices, leading to victory, must not be divulged beforehand.

Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and

few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.

Waging War

When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, then men's weapons will grow dull and their ardor will be dampened. If you lay siege to a town, you will exhaust your strength.

Again, if the campaign is protracted, the resources of the State will not be equal to the strain.

Now, when your weapons are dulled, your ardor dampened, your strength exhausted and your treasure spent, other chieftains will spring up to take advantage of your extremity. Then no man, however wise, will be able to avert the consequences that must ensue.

Thus, though we have heard of stupid haste in war, cleverness has never been seen associated with long delays.

There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare.

It is only one who is thoroughly acquainted with the evils of war that can thoroughly understand the profitable way of carrying it on.

The skillful soldier does not levy a second tax, neither are his supply-wagons loaded more than twice.

Bring war material with you from home, but forage on the enemy. Thus the army will have food enough for its needs.

Poverty of the State treasury causes an army to be maintained by contributions from a distance. Contributing to maintain an army at a distance causes the people to be impoverished.

On the other hand, the proximity of an army causes prices to go up; and high prices cause the people's substance to be drained away.

When their substance is drained away, the peasantry will be afflicted by heavy exactions.

With this loss of substance and exhaustion of strength, the homes of the people will be stripped bare, and three-tenths of their income will be dissipated; while government expenses for broken chariots, worn-out horses, breast-plates and helmets, bows and arrows, spears and shields, protective mantles, draught-oxen and heavy wagons, will amount to four-tenths of its total revenue.

Hence a wise general makes a point of foraging on the enemy. One cartload of the enemy's provisions is equivalent to twenty of one's own, and likewise a single parcel from his stores is equivalent to twenty from one's own stores.

Now in order to kill the enemy, our men must be roused to anger; that there may be advantage from defeating the enemy, they must have their rewards.

Therefore in chariot fighting, when ten or more chariots have been taken, those should be rewarded who took the first. Our own flags should be substituted for those of the enemy, and the chariots mingled and used in conjunction with ours. The captured soldiers should be kindly treated and kept.

This is called, using the conquered foe to augment one's own strength.

In war, then, let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns.

Thus it may be known that the leader of armies is the arbiter of the people's fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril.

Attack by Stratagem

Sun Tzu said: In the practical art of war, the best thing of all is to take the enemy's country whole and intact; to shatter and destroy it is not so good. So, too, it is better to recapture an army entire than to destroy it, to capture a regiment, a detachment or a company entire than to destroy them.

Hence to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.

Thus the highest form of generalship is to block the enemy's plans; the next best is to prevent the junction of the enemy's forces; the next in order is to attack the enemy's army in the field; and the worst policy of all is to besiege walled cities.

The rule is, not to besiege walled cities if it can possibly be avoided. The preparation of mantlets, movable shelters, and various implements of war, will take up three whole months; and the piling up of mounds over against the walls will take three months more.

The general, unable to control his irritation, will launch his men to the assault like swarming ants, with the result that one-third of his men are slain, while the town still remains untaken. Such are the disastrous effects of a siege.

Therefore the skillful leader subdues the enemy's troops without any fighting; he captures their cities without laying siege to them; he overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field.

With his forces intact he will dispute the mastery of the Empire, and thus, without losing a man, his triumph will be complete. This is the method of attacking by stratagem.

It is the rule in war, if our forces are ten to the enemy's one, to surround him; if five to one, to attack him; if twice as numerous, to divide our army

into two.

If equally matched, we can offer battle; if slightly inferior in numbers, we can avoid the enemy; if quite unequal in every way, we can flee from him.

Hence, though an obstinate fight may be made by a small force, in the end it must be captured by the larger force.

Now the general is the bulwark of the State; if the bulwark is complete at all points, the State will be strong; if the bulwark is defective, the State will be weak.

There are three ways in which a ruler can bring misfortune upon his army:

(1) By commanding the army to advance or to retreat, being ignorant of the fact that it cannot obey. This is called hobbling the army.

(2) By attempting to govern an army in the same way as he administers a kingdom, being ignorant of the conditions which obtain in an army. This causes restlessness in the soldiers' minds.

(3) By employing the officers of his army without discrimination, through ignorance of the military principle of adaptation to circumstances. This shakes the confidence of the soldiers.

But when the army is restless and distrustful, trouble is sure to come from the other feudal princes. This is simply bringing anarchy into the army, and flinging victory away.

Thus we may know that there are five essentials for victory:

(1) He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.

(2) He will win who knows how to handle both superior and inferior forces.

(3) He will win whose army is animated by the same spirit throughout all its ranks.

(4) He will win who, prepared himself, waits to take the enemy unprepared.

(5) He will win who has military capacity and is not interfered with by the sovereign.

Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

Tactical Dispositions

Sun Tzu said: The good fighters of old first put themselves beyond the possibility of defeat, and then waited for an opportunity of defeating the enemy.

To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself.

Thus the good fighter is able to secure himself against defeat, but cannot make certain of defeating the enemy.

Hence the saying: One may know how to conquer without being able to do it.¹

Security against defeat implies defensive tactics; ability to defeat the enemy means taking the offensive.

Standing on the defensive indicates insufficient strength; attacking, a superabundance of strength.

The general who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus on the one hand we have ability to protect ourselves; on the other, a victory that is complete.

To see victory only when it is within the ken of the common herd is not the acme of excellence.

Neither is it the acme of excellence if you fight and conquer and the whole Empire says, "Well done!"

To lift an autumn hair is no sign of great strength; to see the sun and moon is no sign of sharp sight; to hear the noise of thunder is no sign of a quick ear.

What the ancients called a clever fighter is one who not only wins, but excels in winning with ease.

Hence his victories bring him neither reputation for wisdom nor credit for courage.

He wins his battles by making no mistakes. Making no mistakes is what establishes the certainty of victory, for it means conquering an enemy that is already defeated.

Hence the skillful fighter puts himself into a position which makes defeat impossible, and does not miss the moment for defeating the enemy.

Thus it is that in war the victorious strategist only seeks battle after the victory has been won, whereas he who is destined to defeat first fights and afterwards looks for victory.

The consummate leader cultivates the moral law, and strictly adheres to method and discipline; thus it is in his power to control success.²

In respect of military method, we have, firstly, Measurement; secondly, Estimation of quantity; thirdly, Calculation; fourthly, Balancing of chances; fifthly, Victory.

Measurement owes its existence to Earth; Estimation of quantity to Measurement; Calculation to Estimation of quantity; Balancing of chances to Calculation; and Victory to Balancing of chances.

A victorious army opposed to a routed one, is as a pound's weight placed in the scale against a single grain.

The onrush of a conquering force is like the bursting of pent-up waters into a chasm a thousand fathoms deep.

¹ This is natural law: where two parties are involved the outcome depends on both.—MH

² It is useful here to note that Sun Tzu adheres not to inspiration, which can come and go, but to “method and discipline,” where are permanent.—MH

Energy

Sun Tzu said: The control of a large force is the same principle as the control of a few men: it is merely a question of dividing up their numbers.

Fighting with a large army under your command is in no way different from fighting with a small one: it is merely a question of instituting signs and signals.

To ensure that your whole army may withstand the brunt of the enemy's attack and remain unshaken—this is effected by maneuvers direct and indirect.

That the impact of your army may be like a grindstone dashed against an egg—this is effected by the science of weak points and strong.

In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory.

Indirect tactics, efficiently applied, are inexhaustible as Heaven and Earth, unending as the flow of rivers and streams; like the sun and moon, they end but to begin anew; like the four seasons, they pass away to return once more.³

There are not more than five musical notes, yet the combinations of these five give rise to more melodies than can ever be heard.

There are not more than five primary colors (blue, yellow, red, white, and black), yet in combination they produce more hues than can ever been seen.

There are not more than five cardinal tastes (sour, acrid, salt, sweet, bitter), yet combinations of them yield more flavors than can ever be tasted.

In battle, there are not more than two methods of attack—the direct and the indirect; yet these two in combination give rise to an endless series of maneuvers.

The direct and the indirect lead on to each other in turn. It is like moving in a circle—you never come to an end. Who can exhaust the possibilities of their combination?

The onset of troops is like the rush of a torrent, which will even roll stones along in its course.

The quality of decision is like the well-timed swoop of a falcon, which enables it to strike and destroy its victim.

Therefore the good fighter will be terrible in his onset, and prompt in his decision.

Energy may be likened to the bending of a crossbow; decision, to the releasing of a trigger.

Amid the turmoil and tumult of battle, there may be seeming disorder and yet no real disorder at all; amid confusion and chaos, your array may be without head or tail, yet it will be proof against defeat.

Simulated disorder postulates perfect discipline, simulated fear postulates courage; simulated weakness postulates strength.

Hiding order beneath the cloak of disorder is simply a question of subdivision; concealing courage under a show of timidity presupposes a fund of latent energy; masking strength with weakness is to be effected by tactical dispositions.

Thus one who is skillful at keeping the enemy on the move maintains deceitful appearances, according to which the enemy will act. He sacrifices something, that the enemy may snatch at it.

By holding out baits, he keeps him on the march; then with a body of picked men he lies in wait for him.

The clever combatant looks to the effect of combined energy, and does not require too much from individuals. Hence his ability to pick out the right men and utilize combined energy.⁴

When he utilizes combined energy, his fighting men become as it were like unto rolling logs or stones. For it is the nature of a log or stone to remain motionless on level ground, and to move when on a slope; if four-cornered, to come to a standstill, but if round-shaped, to go rolling down.

Thus the energy developed by good fighting men is as the momentum of a round stone rolled down a mountain thousands of feet in height.

3 This precept should be read and contemplated carefully with the one immediately preceding it.—
MH

4 Sun Tzu is saying that you must not over-rely on any one person or factor.—MH

Weak Points and Strong

Sun Tzu said: Whoever is first in the field and awaits the coming of the enemy, will be fresh for the fight; whoever is second in the field and has to hasten to battle will arrive exhausted.⁵

Therefore the clever combatant imposes his will on the enemy, but does not allow the enemy's will to be imposed on him.

By holding out advantages to him, he can cause the enemy to approach of his own accord; or, by inflicting damage, he can make it impossible for the enemy to draw near.

If the enemy is taking his ease, he can harass him; if well supplied with food, he can starve him out; if quietly encamped, he can force him to move.

Appear at points that the enemy must hasten to defend; march swiftly to places where you are not expected.

An army may march great distances without distress, if it marches through country where the enemy is not.

You can be sure of succeeding in your attacks if you only attack places that are undefended. You can ensure the safety of your defense if you only hold positions that cannot be attacked.

Hence that general is skillful in attack whose opponent does not know what to defend; and he is skillful in defense whose opponent does not know what to attack.

O divine art of subtlety and secrecy! Through you we learn to be invisible, through you inaudible; and hence we can hold the enemy's fate in our hands.

You may advance and be absolutely irresistible, if you make for the enemy's weak points; you may retire and be safe from pursuit if your movements are more rapid than those of the enemy.

If we wish to fight, the enemy can be forced to an engagement even though he be sheltered behind a high rampart and a deep ditch. All we need do is attack some other place that he will be obliged to relieve.

If we do not wish to fight, we can prevent the enemy from engaging us even though the lines of our encampment be merely traced out on the ground. All we need do is to throw something odd and unaccountable in his way.

By discovering the enemy's dispositions and remaining invisible ourselves, we can keep our forces concentrated, while the enemy's must be divided.

We can form a single united body, while the enemy must split up into fractions. Hence there will be a whole pitted against separate parts of a whole, which means that we shall be many to the enemy's few.

And if we are able thus to attack an inferior force with a superior one, our opponents will be in dire straits.

The spot where we intend to fight must not be made known; for then the enemy will have to prepare against a possible attack at several different points; and his forces being thus distributed in many directions, the numbers we shall have to face at any given point will be proportionately few.

For should the enemy strengthen his approach, he will weaken his rear; should he strengthen his rear, he will weaken his approach; should he strengthen his left, he will weaken his right; should he strengthen his right, he will weaken his left. If he sends reinforcements everywhere, he will everywhere be weak.

Numerical weakness comes from having to prepare against possible attacks; numerical strength, from compelling our adversary to make these preparations against us.

Knowing the place and the time of the coming battle, we may concentrate from the greatest distances in order to fight.

Though the enemy be stronger in numbers, we may prevent him from fighting. Scheme so as to discover his plans and the likelihood of their success.

Rouse him, and learn the principle of his activity or inactivity. Force him to reveal himself, so as to find out his vulnerable spots.

Carefully compare the opposing army with your own, so that you may know where strength is superabundant and where it is deficient.

In making tactical dispositions, the highest pitch you can attain is to conceal them; conceal your dispositions, and you will be safe from the prying of the subtlest spies, from the machinations of the wisest brains.

How victory may be produced for them out of the enemy's own tactics—that is what the multitude cannot comprehend.

All men can see the tactics whereby I conquer, but what none can see is the strategy out of which victory is evolved.

Do not repeat the tactics that have gained you one victory, but let your methods be regulated by the infinite variety of circumstances.

Military tactics are like unto water; for water in its natural course runs away from high places and hastens downwards.

So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak.

Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe that he is facing.⁶

Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions.

He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain.

The five elements (water, fire, wood, metal, earth) are not always equally predominant; the four seasons make way for each other in turn. There are short days and long; the moon has its periods of waning and waxing.

⁵ This is one of Sun Tzu's most practical lessons: always arrive first.—MH

⁶ Sun Tzu is counseling flexibility, morphing, and response to changed circumstances. Do not be rigid.—MH

Maneuvering

Sun Tzu said: In war, the general receives his commands from the sovereign.

Having collected an army and concentrated his forces, he must blend and harmonize the different elements thereof before pitching his camp.

After that, comes tactical maneuvering, than which there is nothing more difficult. The difficulty of tactical maneuvering consists in turning the devious into the direct, and misfortune into gain.

Thus, to take a long and circuitous route, after enticing the enemy out of the way, and though starting after him, to contrive to reach the goal before him, shows knowledge of the artifice of DEVIATION.

Maneuvering with an army is advantageous; with an undisciplined multitude, most dangerous.

If you set a fully equipped army to march in order to snatch an advantage, the chances are that you will be too late. On the other hand, to detach a flying column for the purpose involves the sacrifice of its baggage and stores.

Thus, if you order your men to roll up their buff-coats, and make forced marches without halting day or night, covering double the usual distance at a stretch in order to wrest an advantage, the leaders of all your three divisions will fall into the hands of the enemy.

The stronger men will be in front, the jaded ones will fall behind, and on this plan only one-tenth of your army will reach its destination.

If you march long distances to outmaneuver the enemy, you will lose the leader of your first division, and only half your force will reach the goal. Even you modify the long distance, two-thirds of your army will arrive.

Hence it follows that an army without its baggage-train is lost; without provisions it is lost; without bases of supply it is lost.

We cannot enter into alliances until we are acquainted with the designs of our neighbors.

We are not fit to lead an army on the march unless we are familiar with the face of the country—its mountains and forests, its pitfalls and precipices, its marshes and swamps.

We shall be unable to turn natural advantage to account unless we make use of local guides.

In war, practice concealment, and you will succeed.

Whether to concentrate or to divide your troops, must be decided by circum stances.

Let your rapidity be that of the wind, your compactness that of the forest.

In raiding and plundering be like fire, as immovability is like a mountain.

Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt.

When you plunder a countryside, let the spoils be divided amongst your men; when you capture new territory, cut it up into allotments for the benefit of the soldiery.

Ponder and deliberate before you make a move.

He will conquer who has learnt the artifice of deviation. Such is the art of maneuvering.

The Book of Army Management says: On the field of battle, the spoken word does not carry far enough: hence the institution of gongs and drums. Nor can ordinary objects be seen clearly enough: hence the institution of banners and flags.

Gongs and drums, banners and flags, are means whereby the ears and eyes of the army may be focused on one particular point.

The army thus forming a single united body, it is impossible either for the brave to advance alone, or for the cowardly to retreat alone. This is the art of handling large masses of men.

In night-fighting, then, make much use of signal-fires and drums, and in fighting by day, of flags and banners, as a means of influencing the ears and eyes of your army.

A whole army may be robbed of its spirit; a commander-in-chief may be robbed of his presence of mind.

Now a soldier's spirit is keenest in the morning; by noonday it has begun to flag; and in the evening, his mind is bent only on returning to camp.

A clever general, therefore, avoids an army when its spirit is keen, but attacks it when it is sluggish and inclined to return. This is the art of studying moods.

Disciplined and calm, to await the appearance of disorder and hubbub amongst the enemy—this is the art of retaining self-possession.

To be near the goal while the enemy is still far from it, to wait at ease while the enemy is toiling and struggling, to be well-fed while the enemy is famished—this is the art of husbanding one's strength.

To refrain from intercepting an enemy whose banners are in perfect order, to refrain from attacking an army drawn up in calm and confident array—this is the art of studying circumstances.

It is a military axiom not to advance uphill against the enemy, nor to oppose him when he comes downhill.

Do not pursue an enemy who simulates flight; do not attack soldiers whose temper is keen.

Do not swallow bait offered by the enemy. Do not interfere with an army that is returning home.

When you surround an army, leave an outlet free. Do not press a desperate foe too hard.⁷

Such is the art of warfare.

⁷ By pressing a desperate foe, and leaving him no way out, you ensure he will fight to the death.—MH

Variation in Tactics

Sun Tzu said: In war, the general receives his commands from the sovereign, collects his army, and concentrates his forces

When in difficult country, do not encamp. In country where high roads intersect, join hands with your allies. Do not linger in dangerously isolated positions. In hemmed-in situations, you must resort to stratagem. In desperate position, you must fight.

There are roads that must not be followed, armies that must be not attacked, towns that must be besieged, positions that must not be contested, commands of the sovereign that must not be obeyed.

The general who thoroughly understands the advantages that accompany variation of tactics knows how to handle his troops.

The general who does not understand these may be well acquainted with the configuration of the country, yet he will not be able to turn his knowledge to practical account.

So, the student of war who is unversed in the art of war of varying his plans, even though he is acquainted with the Five Advantages, will fail to make the best use of his men.⁸

Hence in the wise leader's plans, considerations of advantage and of disadvantage will be blended together.

If our expectation of advantage is tempered in this way, we may succeed in accomplishing the essential part of our schemes.

If, on the other hand, in the midst of difficulties we are always ready to seize an advantage, we may extricate ourselves from misfortune.

Reduce the hostile chiefs by inflicting damage on them; and make trouble for them, and keep them constantly engaged; hold out specious allurements, and make them rush to any given point.

The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy's not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position unassailable.

There are five dangerous faults which may affect a general:

- (1) Recklessness, which leads to destruction;
- (2) cowardice, which leads to capture;
- (3) a hasty temper, which can be provoked by insults;
- (4) a delicacy of honor which is sensitive to shame;
- (5) over-solicitude for his men, which exposes him to worry and trouble.

These are the five besetting sins of a general, ruinous to the conduct of war.

When an army is overthrown and its leader slain, the cause will surely be found among these five dangerous faults. Let them be a subject of meditation.

⁸ For the "Five Advantages," see Sun Tzu's note on the "five essentials for victory" in chapter III.—MH

The Army on the March

Sun Tzu said: We come now to the question of encamping the army, and observing signs of the enemy. Pass quickly over mountains, and keep in the neighborhood of valleys.

Camp in high places, facing the sun. Do not climb heights in order to fight.

After crossing a river, you should get far away from it.

When an invading force crosses a river in its onward march, do not advance to meet it in midstream. It will be best to let half the army get across, and then deliver your attack.

If you are anxious to fight, you should not go to meet the invader near a river that he has to cross.⁹

Moor your craft higher up than the enemy, and facing the sun. Do not move upstream to meet the enemy.

In crossing saltmarshes, your sole concern should be to get over them quickly, without any delay.

If forced to fight in a saltmarsh, you should have water and grass near you, and get your back to a clump of trees.

In dry, level country, take up an easily accessible position with rising ground to your right and on your rear, so that the danger may be in front, and safety lie behind.

All armies prefer high ground to low and sunny places to dark.

If you are careful of your men, and camp on hard ground, the army will be free from disease of every kind, and this will spell victory.

When you come to a hill or a bank, occupy the sunny side, with the slope on your right rear. Thus you will at once act for the benefit of your soldiers and utilize the natural advantages of the ground.

When, in consequence of heavy rains up-country, a river you wish to ford is swollen and flecked with foam, you must wait until it subsides.

Country in which there are precipitous cliffs with torrents running between, deep natural hollows, confined places, tangled thickets, quagmires and crevasses, should be left with all possible speed and not approached.

While we keep away from such places, we should get the enemy to approach them; while we face them, we should let the enemy have them on his rear.

If in the neighborhood of your camp there should be any hilly country, ponds surrounded by aquatic grass, hollow basins filled with reeds, or woods with thick undergrowth, they must be carefully routed out and searched; for these are places where men in ambush or insidious spies are likely to be lurking.

When the enemy is close at hand and remains quiet, he is relying on the natural strength of his position.

When he keeps aloof and tries to provoke a battle, he is anxious for the other side to advance.

If his place of encampment is easy of access, he is tendering a bait.

Movement amongst the trees of a forest shows that the enemy is advancing. The appearance of a number of screens in the midst of thick grass means that the enemy wants to make us suspicious.

The rising of birds in their flight is the sign of an ambush. Startled beasts indicate that a sudden attack is coming.

Humble words and increased preparations are signs that the enemy is about to advance. Violent language and driving forward as if to the attack are signs that he will retreat.

When the light chariots come out first and take up a position on the wings, it is a sign that the enemy is forming for battle.

Peace proposals unaccompanied by a sworn covenant indicate a plot.

When there is much running about and the soldiers fall into rank, it means that the critical moment has come.

When some are seen advancing and some retreating, it is a lure.

When the soldiers stand leaning on their spears, they are faint from want of food.

If those who are sent to draw water begin by drinking themselves, the army is suffering from thirst.

If the enemy sees an advantage to be gained and makes no effort to secure it, the soldiers are exhausted.

If birds gather on any spot, it is unoccupied. Clamor by night betokens nervousness.

If there is disturbance in the camp, the general's authority is weak. If the banners and flags are shifted about, sedition is afoot. If the officers are angry, it means that the men are weary.

When an army feeds its horses with grain and kills its cattle for food, and when the men do not hang their cooking-pots over the camp-fires, showing that they will not return to their tents, you may know that they are determined to fight to the death.¹⁰

The sight of men whispering together in small knots or speaking in subdued tones points to disaffection amongst the rank and file.

Too frequent rewards signify that the enemy is at the end of his resources; too many punishments betray a condition of dire distress.

To begin by bluster, but afterwards to take fright at the enemy's numbers, shows a supreme lack of intelligence.

When envoys are sent with compliments in their mouths, it is a sign that the enemy wishes for a truce.

If the enemy's troops march up angrily and remain facing ours for a long time without either joining battle or taking themselves off again, the situation is one that demands great vigilance and circumspection.

If our troops are no more in number than the enemy that is amply sufficient; it only means that no direct attack can be made. What we can do is simply to concentrate all our available strength, keep a close watch on the enemy, and obtain reinforcements.

He who exercises no forethought but makes light of his opponents is sure to be captured by them.

If soldiers are punished before they have grown attached to you, they will not prove submissive; and, unless submissive, then will be practically useless. If, when the soldiers have become attached to you, punishments are not enforced, they will still be useless.

Therefore soldiers must be treated in the first instance with humanity, but kept under control by means of iron discipline. This is a certain road to victory.

If in training soldiers commands are habitually enforced, the army will be well disciplined; if not, its discipline will be bad.

If a general shows confidence in his men but always insists on his orders being obeyed, the gain will be mutual.

⁹ In these passages, Sun Tzu is staying that you must exhaust your enemy by enticing him to cross a river. —MH

¹⁰ Men eat grain; horses eat grass. Hence, the slaying of cattle means a preparation for the end.—MH

Dangers and Opportunities

Now an army is exposed to six varying calamities, not arising from natural causes, but from faults for which the general is responsible. These are: (1) flight; (2) insubordination; (3) collapse; (4) ruin; (5) disorganization; (6) rout.

Other conditions being equal, if one force is hurled against another ten times its size, the result will be the flight of the former.

When the common soldiers are too strong and their officers too weak, the result is insubordination. When the officers are too strong and the common soldiers too weak, the result is collapse.

When the higher officers are angry and insubordinate, and on meeting the enemy give battle on their own account from a feeling of resentment, before the commander-in-chief can tell whether or not he is in a position to fight, the result is ruin.

When the general is weak and without authority; when his orders are not clear and distinct; when there are no fixed duties assigned to officers and men, and the ranks are formed in a slovenly haphazard manner, the result is utter disorganization.

When a general, unable to estimate the enemy's strength, allows an inferior force to engage a larger one, or hurls a weak detachment against a powerful one, and neglects to place picked soldiers in the front rank, the result must be rout.

These are six ways of courting defeat, which must be carefully noted by the general who has attained a responsible post.

The natural formation of the country is the soldier's best ally; but a power of estimating the adversary, of controlling the forces of victory, and of shrewdly calculating difficulties, dangers, and distances, constitutes the test of a great general.

He who knows these things, and in fighting puts his knowledge into practice, will win his battles. He who knows them not, nor practices them, will surely be defeated.

If fighting is sure to result in victory, then you must fight, even though the ruler forbid it; if fighting will not result in victory, then you must not fight, even at the ruler's bidding.

The general who advances without coveting fame and retreats without fearing disgrace, whose only thought is to protect his country and do good service for his sovereign, is the jewel of the kingdom.

Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys; look upon them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death.

If, however, you are indulgent, but unable to make your authority felt; kind-hearted, but unable to enforce your commands; and incapable, moreover, of quelling disorder: then your soldiers must be likened to spoilt children; they are useless for any practical purpose.

If we know that our own men are in a condition to attack, but are unaware that the enemy is not open to attack, we have gone only halfway towards victory.

If we know that the enemy is open to attack, but are unaware that our own men are not in a condition to attack, we have gone only halfway towards victory.

If we know that the enemy is open to attack, and also know that our men are in a condition to attack, but are unaware that the nature of the ground makes fighting impracticable, we have still gone only halfway towards victory.

Hence the experienced soldier, once in motion, is never bewildered; once he has broken camp, he is never at a loss.

Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, your victory will not stand in doubt; if you know Heaven and know Earth, you may make your victory complete.

If asked how to cope with a great army of the enemy in orderly array and on the point of marching to the attack, I should say: "Begin by seizing something which your opponent holds dear; then he will be amenable to your will."

Rapidity is the essence of war: take advantage of the enemy's unreadiness, make your way by unexpected routes, and attack unguarded spots.

The following are the principles to be observed by an invading force: The further you penetrate into a country, the greater will be the solidarity of your troops, and thus the defenders will not prevail against you.

Make forays in fertile country in order to supply your army with food.

Carefully study the wellbeing of your men, and do not overtax them. Concentrate your energy and hoard your strength. Keep your army continually on the move, and devise unfathomable plans.

Throw your soldiers into positions whence there is no escape, and they will prefer death to flight. If they will face death, there is nothing they may not achieve. Officers and men alike will put forth their uttermost strength.

Soldiers when in desperate straits lose the sense of fear. If there is no place of refuge, they will stand firm. If they are in hostile country, they will show a stubborn front. If there is no help for it, they will fight hard.

Thus, without waiting to be marshaled, the soldiers will be constantly on the alert; without waiting to be asked, they will do your will; without restrictions, they will be faithful; without giving orders, they can be trusted.

Prohibit the taking of omens, and do away with superstitious doubts. Then, until death itself comes, no calamity need be feared.

If our soldiers are not overburdened with money, it is not because they have a distaste for riches; if their lives are not unduly long, it is not because they are disinclined to longevity.

On the day they are ordered out to battle, your soldiers may weep. But let them once be brought to bay, and they will display great courage.

The principle on which to manage an army is to set up one standard of courage which all must reach.

How to make the best of both strong and weak—that is a question involving the proper use of ground.

Thus the skillful general conducts his army just as though he were leading a single man, in all places, by the hand.

It is the business of a general to be quiet and thus ensure secrecy; upright and just, and thus maintain order.

He must be able to mystify his officers and men by false reports and appearances, and thus keep them in total ignorance.

By altering his arrangements and changing his plans, he keeps the enemy without definite knowledge. By shifting his camp and taking circuitous routes, he prevents the enemy from anticipating his purpose.

At the critical moment, the leader of an army acts like one who has climbed up a height and then kicks away the ladder behind him. He carries his men deep into hostile territory before he shows his hand.

He burns his boats and breaks his cooking-pots; like a shepherd driving a flock of sheep, he drives his men this way and that, and nothing knows whither he is going.¹¹

To muster his army and bring it into danger—this may be termed the business of the general.

It is the soldier's disposition to offer an obstinate resistance when surrounded, to fight hard when he cannot help himself, and to obey promptly when he has fallen into danger.

We cannot enter into alliance with neighboring princes until we are acquainted with their designs. We are not fit to lead an army on the march unless we are familiar with the face of the country—its mountains and forests, its pitfalls and precipices, its marshes and swamps. We shall be unable to turn natural advantages to account unless we make use of local guides.

To be ignorant of any one of the following four or five principles does not befit a warlike prince.

When a warlike prince attacks a powerful state, his generalship shows itself in preventing the concentration of the enemy's forces. He overawes his opponents, and their allies are prevented from joining against him.

Hence he does not strive to ally himself with all and sundry, nor does he foster the power of other states. He carries out his own secret designs, keeping his antagonists in awe. Thus he is able to capture their cities and overthrow their kingdoms.

Bestow rewards without regard to rule, issue orders without regard to previous arrangements; and you will be able to handle a whole army as though you had to do with but a single man.

Confront your soldiers with the deed itself; never let them know your design. When the outlook is bright, bring it before their eyes; but tell them nothing when the situation is gloomy.¹²

Place your army in deadly peril, and it will survive; plunge it into desperate straits, and it will come off in safety.

For it is precisely when a force has fallen into harm's way that is capable of striking a blow for victory.

Success in warfare is gained by carefully accommodating ourselves to the enemy's purpose.

By persistently hanging on the enemy's flank, we shall succeed in the long run in killing the commander-in-chief.

This is called ability to accomplish a thing by sheer cunning.

If the enemy leaves a door open, you must rush in.

Forestall your opponent by seizing what he holds dear, and subtly contrive to time his arrival on the ground.

Walk in the path defined by rule, and accommodate yourself to the enemy until you can fight a decisive battle.

At first, then, exhibit the coyness of a maiden, until the enemy gives you an opening; afterwards emulate the rapidity of a running hare, and it will be too late for the enemy to oppose you.

Unhappy is the fate of one who tries to win his battles and succeed in his attacks without cultivating the spirit of enterprise; for the result is waste of time and general stagnation.

Hence the saying: The enlightened ruler lays his plans well ahead; the good general cultivates his resources.

Move not unless you see an advantage; use not your troops unless there is something to be gained; fight not unless the position is critical.

No ruler should put troops into the field merely to gratify his own spleen; no general should fight a battle simply out of irritation.

If it is to your advantage, make a forward move; if not, stay where you are.

Anger may in time change to gladness; vexation may be succeeded by content.

But a kingdom that has once been destroyed can never come again into being; nor can the dead ever be brought back to life.

Hence the enlightened ruler is heedful, and the good general full of caution.

This is the way to keep a country at peace and an army intact.

11 The reference to burning boats and breaking cooking pots is akin to the Western expression to “burn the fleet”—in other words, to eliminate any way out and thus to guarantee victory or demise. This also makes a show of determination to troops and foes.—MH

12 In the first part of this principle, Sun Tzu is saying to focus troops on the goal not on the means to the goal.—MH

The Use of Spies

Hostile armies may face each other for years, striving for the victory that is decided in a single day. This being so, to remain in ignorance of the enemy's condition simply because one grudges the outlay of a hundred ounces of silver in honors and payments is the height of inhumanity.

One who acts thus is no leader of men, no present help to his sovereign, no master of victory.

Thus, what enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is foreknowledge.

Now this foreknowledge cannot be elicited from spirits; it cannot be obtained inductively from experience, nor by any deductive calculation.

Knowledge of the enemy's dispositions can only be obtained from other men.

Spies cannot be usefully employed without a certain intuitive sagacity.

They cannot be properly managed without benevolence and straightforwardness.

Without subtle ingenuity of mind, one cannot make certain of the truth of their reports.

Be subtle! be subtle! and use your spies for every kind of business.

Whether the object be to crush an army, to storm a city, or to assassinate an individual, it is always necessary to begin by finding out the names of the attendants, the aides-de-camp, and doorkeepers and sentries of the general in command. Our spies must be commissioned to ascertain these.

The enemy's spies who have come to spy on us must be sought out, tempted with bribes, led away, and comfortably housed. Thus they will become converted spies and available for our service.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Little is known about SUN TZU, who is estimated to have been born in 544 BC in the latter-era of China's Zhou dynasty, and died in 496 BC. Historians generally agree that Sun Tzu—an honorific title meaning “Master Sun”—was a commander in the dynastic army. His ancient treatise on strategy is one of the most widely read works of antiquity.

LIONEL GILES, whose groundbreaking 1910 translation of Sun Tzu is used in this abridgment, was a British sinologist and curator who also translated the works of Confucius and Lao Tzu. Born in 1875, he died in 1958.

AS A MAN THINKETH

*The Extraordinary Classic on Remaking Your Life
Through Your Thoughts*

by James Allen

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Why James Allen Still Matters

By Mitch Horowitz

James Allen's literary career was short, ranging roughly from the publication of his first book in 1901 to his death in 1912. Yet these few years of output resulted in nearly twenty books, including one of the most widely read inspirational works of our time: *As a Man Thinketh*.

Allen's book became read in households where few or no other positive-mind books were found. His methods of mental creativity and ethical self-seeking set the template for much of the metaphysical culture in America in the twentieth century. In a sense, the key to understanding Allen's work appears in the details of his own life. The writer's journey from "poverty to power," to use his phrase, was Allen's greatest creation.

* * *

James Allen was born in 1864 in Leicester, an industrial town in central England. His father, William, was a successful knitting manufacturer who cultivated James's taste in books and philosophy. A downturn in the textile trade drove William out of business, and in 1879 he traveled to New York City to look for new work. His plan was to get settled and pay for the rest of the family to join him. But the unthinkable occurred. On the brink of the Christmas season, just after James had turned 15, word came back to the Allen household that the family patriarch was dead. William had been found robbed and murdered two days after reaching New York. His battered body, with pockets emptied, lay in a city hospital.

James's mother, Martha, a woman who could not read or write, found herself in charge of James and his two younger brothers, with no means of support. "Young Jim" would have to leave school and find work as a factory knitter. The teenager had been his father's favorite. An avid reader, James had spent hours questioning him about life, death, religion, politics,

and Shakespeare. “My boy,” William told him, “I’ll make a scholar of you.” Those hopes were gone.

James took up employment locally as a framework knitter, a job that occupied his energies for the next nine years. He sometimes worked fifteen-hour days. But even amid the strains of factory life, he retained the refined, studious bearing that his father had cultivated. When his workmates went out drinking, or caught up on sleep, Allen studied and read two to three hours a day. Coworkers called him “the Saint” and “the Parson.”

Allen read through his father’s collected works of Shakespeare, as well as books of ethics and religion. He grew determined to discover the “central purpose” of life. At age twenty-four, he found the book that finally seemed to reveal it to him: *The Light of Asia* by Edwin Arnold. The epic poem introduced Allen, along with a generation of Victorians, to the ideas of Buddhism. Under its influence, Allen came to believe that the true aim of all religion is self-development and inner refinement.

Shortly after discovering *The Light of Asia*, Allen experienced a turning point in his outer life, as well. Around 1889 he found new employment in London as a private secretary and stationer—markedly friendlier vocations to the bookish man than factory work. In London he also met his wife and intellectual partner, Lily.

By the mid-1890s, Allen had deepened his inquiry into spiritual philosophies, immersing himself in the works of John Milton, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, and early translations of the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Tao Te Ching*, and the sayings of Buddha.

He marveled over the commonalities in the world’s religions. “The man who says, ‘My religion is true, and my neighbor’s is false,’ has not yet discovered the truth in his own religion,” he wrote, “for when a man has done that, he will see the Truth in all religions.”

Allen also grew interested in the ideas of America’s New Thought culture through the work of Ralph Waldo Trine, Orison Swett Marden, and, later, Christian D. Larson. His reading of New Thought, or positive-mind, literature sharpened his spiritual outlook—in particular his idea that our thoughts are causative and determine our destiny.

By 1898, Allen found an outlet for his intellectual interests. He began writing for the *Herald of the Golden Age*. In addition to metaphysical topics, the journal was an early voice for vegetarianism and humane

treatment of animals, ideas that Allen had discovered in Buddhism. In 1901, he published his first book of practical philosophy, *From Poverty to Power*. The work extolled the creative agencies of the mind, placing equal emphasis on Christian ethics and New Thought metaphysics. The following year, Allen launched his own mystical magazine, the *Light of Reason*, and soon came another book, *All These Things Added*.

It was a period of tremendous productivity, capped in 1903 by Allen's third and most influential work—the short, immensely powerful meditation, *As a Man Thinketh*, which you are about to experience. The title is loosely adapted from a caution against hypocrisy in Proverbs 23:7: “As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” In Allen's eyes, that brief statement captured his core philosophy—that a man's thought, if not the cause of his circumstances, is the cause of *himself*, and shapes the tenor of his life.

The phrase “as a man thinketh” became the informal motto of the New Thought movement, adopted and repeated by motivational writers throughout the century. Allen's book is marked by memorable, aphoristic lessons, which have withstood the passage of time. *As a Man Thinketh* defines achievement in deeply personal terms: “You will become as small as your controlling desire; as great as your dominant aspiration.”

Toward the end of *As a Man Thinketh*, Allen writes in a manner that amounts to autobiography:

Here is a youth hard pressed by poverty and labor; confined long hours in an unhealthy workshop; unschooled, and lacking all the arts of refinement. But he dreams of better things: he thinks of intelligence, of refinement, of grace and beauty. He conceives of, mentally builds up, an ideal condition of life; vision of a wider liberty and a larger scope takes possession of him; unrest urges him to action, and he utilizes all his spare time and means, small though they are, to the development of his latent powers and resources. Very soon so altered has his mind become that the workshop can no longer hold him.

As a personal rule, Allen always used his life experiences as the backbone of his teaching. “He never wrote *theories*,” Lily noted in 1913, “or for the sake of writing; but he wrote when he had a message, and it

became a message *only when he had lived it out in his own life*, and knew that it was good.”

The impact of *As a Man Thinketh* was not fully felt during Allen’s lifetime, but the book brought him enough of an audience (and sufficient pay) so that he was able to quit secretarial work and commit himself to writing and editing fulltime. On its publication, Allen, Lily, and their daughter, Nora, moved to the southern English coastal town of Ilfracombe, where he spent the remainder of his life. He wrote books at a remarkable pace, often more than one a year, producing nineteen works. Allen’s days assumed a meticulous routine of meditating, writing, walking in nature, and gardening. He work habits never flagged. “Thoroughness is genius,” he wrote in 1904.

For all of his creative output, Allen struggled with fragile health. Lily wrote of her husband faltering from an illness in late 1911. On January 24, 1912, Allen died at home in Ilfracombe at age 47, probably of tuberculosis.

In an obituary of January 27, the *Ilfracombe Chronicle* noted: “Mr. Allen’s books ... are perhaps better known abroad, especially in America, than in England.” Indeed, the twentieth century’s leading American writers of motivational thought—from Napoleon Hill to Norman Vincent Peale—read and noted the influence of *As a Man Thinketh*. Dale Carnegie said the book had “a lasting and profound effect on my life.” The cofounder of Alcoholics Anonymous, Bob Smith, called it a favorite. The black-nationalist pioneer Marcus Garvey embraced the book’s do-for-self ethic and adapted the slogan “As Man Thinks So Is He” on the cover of his newspaper, *Blackman*. In years ahead, the book’s influence showed up in myriad places: An adolescent Michael Jackson told a friend that it was his “favorite book in the world;” NFL Hall of Famer Curtis Martin credited *As a Man Thinketh* with helping him overcome pain and injury; businessman and Oprah Winfrey partner Stedman Graham said Allen’s work helped him attain “real freedom.”

Yet the full impact of *As a Man Thinketh* can best be seen in the successive generations of everyday readers who embraced its aphoristic lessons in directing one’s thoughts to higher aims, and to understanding success as the outer manifestation of inner development.

“Men do not attract that which they *want*,” Allen told readers, “but that which they *are*.” In that sense, Allen attracted a vast following of people

who mirrored the ordinary circumstances from which he arose—and whose hopes for a better, nobler existence were reflected back to them in the example of his life.

This gentle abridgement of *As a Man Thinketh* is intended to make the work and its message available to you in a single sitting. I have based it upon the earliest American edition of *As a Man Thinketh*, published in Chicago in 1905, and it contains the full nature of Allen's message. My one significant excision has been his short chapter on health, in which I think the author drew too complete and hasty a confluence, at least in my mind as an observer and lover of New Thought, between thoughts and disease. With this excision, I believe the book functions better as a moral philosophy, and it is possible that in hindsight, the author, himself a publisher and editor, would have agreed.

What you are about to experience is a philosophy of spiritual and mental governance of character and circumstance, which may prove as life-altering to you as it has to countless devotees of this powerful meditation for more than a century.

*Mind is the Master power that moulds and makes, And Man is Mind,
and evermore he takes The tool of Thought, and, shaping what he
wills, Brings forth a thousand joys, a thousand ills:—He thinks in
secret, and it comes to pass: Environment is but his looking-glass.*

FOREWORD

This little volume (the result of meditation and experience) is not intended as an exhaustive treatise on the much-written-upon subject of the power of thought. It is suggestive rather than explanatory, its object being to stimulate men and women to the discovery and perception of the truth that

“They themselves are makers of themselves”

by virtue of the thoughts which they choose and encourage; that mind is the master-weaver, both of the inner garment of character and the outer garment of circumstance, and that, as they may have hitherto woven in ignorance and pain they may now weave in enlightenment and happiness.

—James Allen

Thought and Character

The aphorism, “As a man thinketh in his heart so is he,” not only embraces the whole of a man’s being, but is so comprehensive as to reach out to every condition and circumstance of his life. A man is literally *what he thinks*, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts.

As the plant springs from, and could not be without the seed, so every act of a man springs from the hidden seeds of thought, and could not have appeared without them. This applies equally to those acts called “spontaneous” and “unpremeditated,” as to those that are deliberately executed.

Act is the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruits; thus does a man garner in the sweet and bitter fruitage of his own husbandry.

Man is a growth by law, and not a creation by artifice, and cause and effect is as absolute and undeviating in the hidden realm of thought as in the world of visible and material things. A noble and Godlike character is not a thing of favor or chance, but is the natural result of continued effort in right thinking, the effect of long-cherished association with Godlike thoughts. An ignoble and bestial character, by the same process, is the result of the continued harboring of groveling thoughts.

Man is made or unmade by himself; in the armory of thought he forges the weapons by which he destroys himself; he also fashions the tools with which he builds for himself heavenly mansions of joy and strength and peace. By the right choice and true application of thought, man ascends to the Divine Perfection; by the abuse and wrong application of thought, he descends below the level of the beast. Between these two extremes are all the grades of character, and man is their maker and master.

Of all the beautiful truths pertaining to the soul which have been restored and brought to light in this age, none is more gladdening or fruitful of

divine promise and confidence than this—that man is the master of thought, the moulder of character, and the maker and shaper of condition, environment, and destiny.

As a being of Power, Intelligence, and Love, and the lord of his own thoughts, man holds the key to every situation, and contains within himself that transforming and regenerative agency by which he may make himself what he wills.

Man is always the master, even in his weaker and most abandoned state; but in his weakness and degradation he is the foolish master who misgoverns his “household.” When he begins to reflect upon his condition, and to search diligently for the Law upon which his being is established, he then becomes the wise master, directing his energies with intelligence, and fashioning his thoughts to fruitful issues. Such is the *conscious* master, and man can only thus become by discovering *within himself* the laws of thought; which discovery is totally a matter of application, self analysis, and experience.

Only by much searching and mining, are gold and diamonds obtained, and man can find every truth connected with his being, if he will dig deep into the mine of his soul; and that he is the maker of his character, the moulder of his life, and the builder of his destiny, he may unerringly prove, if he will watch, control, and alter his thoughts, tracing their effects upon himself, upon others, and upon his life and circumstances, linking cause and effect by patient practice and investigation, and utilizing his every experience, even to the most trivial, everyday occurrence, as a means of obtaining that knowledge of himself which is Understanding, Wisdom, Power. In this direction, as in no other, is the law absolute that “He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened;” for only by patience, practice, and ceaseless importunity can a man enter the Door of the Temple of Knowledge.

Effect of Thought on Circumstances

A man's mind may be likened to a garden, which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild; but whether cultivated or neglected, it must, and will, *bring forth*. If no useful seeds are *put* into it, then an abundance of useless weed-seeds will *fall* therein, and will continue to produce their kind.

Just as a gardener cultivates his plot, keeping it free from weeds, and growing the flowers and fruits which he requires, so may a man tend the garden of his mind, weeding out all the wrong, useless, and impure thoughts, and cultivating toward perfection the flowers and fruits of right, useful, and pure thoughts. By pursuing this process, a man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life. He also reveals, within himself, the laws of thought, and understands, with ever-increasing accuracy, how the thought-forces and mind elements operate in the shaping of his character, circumstances, and destiny.

Thought and character are one, and as character can only manifest and discover itself through environment and circumstance, the outer conditions of a person's life will always be found to be harmoniously related to his inner state. This does not mean that a man's circumstances at any given time are an indication of his *entire* character, but that those circumstances are so intimately connected with some vital thought-element within himself that, for the time being, they are indispensable to his development.

Every man is where he is by the law of his being; the thoughts which he has built into his character have brought him there, and in the arrangement of his life there is no element of chance, but all is the result of a law which cannot err. This is just as true of those who feel "out of harmony" with their surroundings as of those who are contented with them.

As a progressive and evolving being, man is where he is that he may learn that he may grow; and as he learns the spiritual lesson that any circumstance contains for him, it passes away and gives place to other circumstances.

Man is buffeted by circumstances so long as he believes himself to be the creature of outside conditions, but when he realizes that he is a creative power, and that he may command the hidden soil and seeds of his being out of which circumstances grow, he then becomes the rightful master of himself.

The soul attracts that which it secretly harbors; that which it loves, and also that which it fears; it reaches the height of its cherished aspirations; it falls to the level of its unchastened desires—and circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own.

Every thought-seed sown or allowed to fall into the mind, and to take root there, produces its own, blossoming sooner or later into act, and bearing its own fruitage of opportunity and circumstance. Good thoughts bear good fruit, bad thoughts bad fruit.

The outer world of circumstance shapes itself to the inner world of thought, and both pleasant and unpleasant external conditions are factors, which make for the ultimate good of the individual. As the reaper of his own harvest, man learns both by suffering and bliss.

Following the inmost desires, aspirations, thoughts, by which he allows himself to be dominated, a man at last arrives at their fruition and fulfillment in the outer conditions of his life. The laws of growth and adjustment everywhere obtain.

Circumstance does not make the man; it reveals him to himself. No such conditions can exist as descending into vice and its attendant sufferings apart from vicious inclinations, or ascending into virtue and its pure happiness without the continued cultivation of virtuous aspirations; and man, therefore, as the lord and master of thought, is the maker of himself, the shaper and author of environment. Even at birth the soul comes to its own, and through every step of its earthly pilgrimage it attracts those combinations of conditions which reveal itself, which are the reflections of its own purity and impurity, its strength and weakness.

Men do not attract that which they *want*, but that which they *are*. Their whims, fancies, and ambitions are thwarted at every step, but their inmost

thoughts and desires are fed with their own food, be it foul or clean. The “divinity that shapes our ends” is in ourselves; it is our very self. Man is manacled only by himself: thought and action are the jailers of Fate—they imprison, being base; they are also the angels of Freedom—they liberate, being noble. Not what he wishes and prays for does a man get, but what he justly earns. His wishes and prayers are only gratified and answered when they harmonize with his thoughts and actions.

In the light of this truth, what, then, is the meaning of “fighting against circumstances?” It means that a man is continually revolting against an *effect* without, while all the time he is nourishing and preserving its *cause* in his heart. That cause may take the form of a conscious vice or an unconscious weakness; but whatever it is, it stubbornly retards the efforts of its possessor, and thus calls aloud for remedy.

Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; they therefore remain bound. The man who does not shrink from self-crucifixion can never fail to accomplish the object upon which his heart is set. This is as true of earthly as of heavenly things. Even the man whose sole object is to acquire wealth must be prepared to make great personal sacrifices before he can accomplish his object; and how much more so he who would realize a strong and well-poised life?

Here is a man who is wretchedly poor. He is extremely anxious that his surroundings and home comforts should be improved, yet all the time he shirks his work, and considers he is justified in trying to deceive his employer on the ground of the insufficiency of his wages. Such a man does not understand the simplest rudiments of those principles which are the basis of true prosperity, and is not only totally unfitted to rise out of his wretchedness, but is actually attracting to himself a still deeper wretchedness by dwelling in, and acting out, indolent, deceptive, and unmanly thoughts.

Here is a rich man who is the victim of a painful and persistent disease as the result of gluttony. He is willing to give large sums of money to get rid of it, but he will not sacrifice his gluttonous desires. He wants to gratify his taste for rich and unnatural viands and have his health as well. Such a man is totally unfit to have health, because he has not yet learned the first principles of a healthy life.

Here is an employer of labor who adopts crooked measures to avoid paying the regulation wage, and, in the hope of making larger profits, reduces the wages of his work-people. Such a man is altogether unfitted for prosperity, and when he finds himself bankrupt, both as regards reputation and riches, he blames circumstances, not knowing that he is the sole author of his condition.

I have introduced these three cases merely as illustrative of the truth that man is the causer (though nearly always unconsciously) of his circumstances, and that, whilst aiming at a good end, he is continually frustrating its accomplishment by encouraging thoughts and desires which cannot possibly harmonize with that end. Such cases could be multiplied and varied almost indefinitely, but this is not necessary, as the reader can, if he so resolves, trace the action of the laws of thought in his own mind and life, and until this is done, mere external facts cannot serve as a ground of reasoning.

Circumstances, however, are so complicated, thought is so deeply rooted, and the conditions of happiness vary so vastly with individuals, that a man's entire soul-condition (although it may be known to himself) cannot be judged by another from the external aspect of his life alone. A man may be honest in certain directions, yet suffer privations; a man may be dishonest in certain directions, yet acquire wealth; but the conclusion usually formed that the one man fails *because of his particular honesty*, and that the other prospers *because of his particular dishonesty*, is the result of a superficial judgment, which assumes that the dishonest man is almost totally corrupt, and the honest man almost entirely virtuous. In the light of a deeper knowledge and wider experience, such judgment is found to be erroneous. The dishonest man may have some admirable virtues, which the other does not possess; and the honest man obnoxious vices which are absent in the other. The honest man reaps the good results of his honest thoughts and acts; he also brings upon himself the sufferings which his vices produce. The dishonest man likewise garners his own suffering and happiness.

Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results. This is but saying that nothing can come from corn but corn, nothing from nettles but nettles. Men understand this law in the natural world, and work with it; but few

understand it in the mental and moral world (though its operation there is just as simple and undeviating), and they, therefore, do not cooperate with it.

Suffering is *always* the effect of wrong thought in some direction. It is an indication that the individual is out of harmony with himself, with the Law of his being. The sole and supreme use of suffering is to purify, to burn out all that is useless and impure. Suffering ceases for him who is pure. There could be no object in burning gold after the dross had been removed, and a perfectly pure and enlightened being could not suffer.

The circumstances that a man encounters with suffering are the result of his own mental inharmony. The circumstances that a man encounters with blessedness are the result of his own mental harmony. Blessedness, not material possessions, is the measure of right thought; wretchedness, not lack of material possessions, is the measure of wrong thought. A man may be cursed and rich; he may be blessed and poor. Blessedness and riches are only joined together when the riches are rightly and wisely used; and the poor man only descends into wretchedness when he regards his lot as a burden unjustly imposed.

Indigence and indulgence are the two extremes of wretchedness. They are both equally unnatural and the result of mental disorder. A man is not rightly conditioned until he is a happy, healthy, and prosperous being; and happiness, health, and prosperity are the result of a harmonious adjustment of the inner with the outer, of the man with his surroundings.

A man only begins to be a man when he ceases to whine and revile, and commences to search for the hidden justice that regulates his life. And as he adapts his mind to that regulating factor, he ceases to accuse others as the cause of his condition, and builds himself up in strong and noble thoughts; ceases to kick against circumstances, but begins to *use* them as aids to his more rapid progress, and as a means of discovering the hidden powers and possibilities within himself.

Law, not confusion, is the dominating principle in the universe; justice, not injustice, is the soul and substance of life; and righteousness, not corruption, is the moulding and moving force in the spiritual government of the world. This being so, man has but to right himself to find that the universe is right; and during the process of putting himself right he will find

that as he alters his thoughts towards things and other people, things and other people will alter towards him.

Let a man radically alter his thoughts, and he will be astonished at the rapid transformation it will effect in the material conditions of his life. Men imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot; it rapidly crystallizes into habit, and habit solidifies into circumstance. A particular train of thought persisted in, be it good or bad, cannot fail to produce its results on the character and circumstances. A man cannot *directly* choose his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances.

Nature helps every man to the gratification of the thoughts which he most encourages, and opportunities are presented which will most speedily bring to the surface both the good and evil thoughts.

Let a man cease from his sinful thoughts, and all the world will soften towards him, and be ready to help him; let him put away his weakly and sickly thoughts, and lo! opportunities will spring up on every hand to aid his strong resolves; let him encourage good thoughts, and no hard fate shall bind him down to wretchedness and shame. The world is your kaleidoscope, and the varying combinations of colors, which at every succeeding moment it presents to you, are the exquisitely adjusted pictures of your ever-moving thoughts.

Thought and Purpose

Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment. With the majority the bark of thought is allowed to “drift” upon the ocean of life. Aimlessness is a vice, and such drifting must not continue for him who would steer clear of catastrophe and destruction.

They who have no central purpose in their life fall an easy prey to petty worries, fears, troubles, and self-pityings, all of which are indications of weakness, which lead, just as surely as deliberately planned sins (though by a different route) to failure, unhappiness, and loss, for weakness cannot persist in a power-evolving universe.

A man should conceive of a legitimate purpose in his heart, and set out to accomplish it. He should make this purpose the centralizing point of his thoughts. It may take the form of a spiritual ideal, or it may be a worldly object, according to his nature at the time being; but whichever it is, he should steadily focus his thought-forces upon the object which he has set before him. He should make this purpose his supreme duty, and should devote himself to its attainment, not allowing his thoughts to wander away into ephemeral fancies, longings, and imaginings. This is the royal road to self-control and true concentration of thought. Even if he fails again and again to accomplish his purpose (as he necessarily must until weakness is overcome), the *strength of character gained* will be the measure of his *true* success, and this will form a new starting-point for future power and triumph.

Those who are not prepared for the apprehension of a *great* purpose should fix the thoughts upon the faultless performance of their duty, no matter how insignificant their task may appear. Only in this way can the thoughts be gathered and focused, and resolution and energy be developed, which being done, there is nothing which may not be accomplished.

The weakest soul, knowing its own weakness, and believing this truth—*that strength can only be developed by effort and practice*, will, thus believing, at once begin to exert itself, and, adding effort to effort, patience to patience, and strength to strength, will never cease to develop, and will at last grow divinely strong.

As the physically weak man can make himself strong by careful and patient training, so the man of weak thoughts can make them strong by exercising himself in right thinking.

To put away aimlessness and weakness, and to begin to think with purpose, is to enter the ranks of those strong ones who only recognize failure as one of the pathways to attainment; who make all conditions serve them, and who think strongly, attempt fearlessly, and accomplish masterfully.

Having conceived of his purpose, a man should mentally mark out a *straight* pathway to its achievement, looking neither to the right nor the left. Doubts and fears should be rigorously excluded; they are disintegrating elements, which break up the straight line of effort, rendering it crooked, ineffectual, useless. Thoughts of doubt and fear never accomplished anything, and never can. They always lead to failure. Purpose, energy, power to do, and all strong thoughts cease when doubt and fear creep in.

The will to do springs from the knowledge that we *can* do. Doubt and fear are the great enemies of knowledge, and he who encourages them, who does not slay them, thwarts himself at every step.

He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered failure. His every thought is allied with power, and all difficulties are bravely met and wisely overcome. His purposes are seasonably planted, and they bloom and bring forth fruit, which does not fall prematurely to the ground.

Thought allied fearlessly to purpose becomes creative force: he who *knows* this is ready to become something higher and stronger than a mere bundle of wavering thoughts and fluctuating sensations; he who *does* this has become the conscious and intelligent wielder of his mental powers.

The Thought-Factor in Achievement

All that a man achieves and all that he fails to achieve is the direct result of his own thoughts. In a justly ordered universe, where loss of equipoise would mean total destruction, individual responsibility must be absolute. A man's weakness and strength, purity and impurity, are his own, and not another man's; they are brought about by himself, and not by another; and they can only be altered by himself, never by another. His condition is also his own, and not another man's. His suffering and his happiness are evolved from within. As he thinks, so he is; as he continues to think, so he remains.

A strong man cannot help a weaker unless that weaker is *willing* to be helped, and even then the weak man must become strong of himself; he must, by his own efforts, develop the strength which he admires in another. None but himself can alter his condition.

It has been usual for men to think and to say, "Many men are slaves because one is an oppressor; let us hate the oppressor." Now, however, there is amongst an increasing few a tendency to reverse this judgment, and to say, "One man is an oppressor because many are slaves; let us despise the slaves." The truth is that oppressor and slave are cooperators in ignorance, and, while seeming to afflict each other, are in reality afflicting themselves. A perfect Knowledge perceives the action of law in the weakness of the oppressed and the misapplied power of the oppressor; a perfect Love, seeing the suffering, which both states entail, condemns neither; a perfect Compassion embraces both oppressor and oppressed.

He who has conquered weakness, and has put away all selfish thoughts, belongs neither to oppressor nor oppressed. He is free.

A man can only rise, conquer, and achieve by lifting up his thoughts. He can only remain weak, and abject, and miserable by refusing to lift up his thoughts.

Before a man can achieve anything, even in worldly things, he must lift his thoughts above slavish animal indulgence. He may not, in order to succeed, give up *all* animality and selfishness, by any means; but a portion of it must, at least, be sacrificed. A man whose first thought is bestial indulgence could neither think clearly nor plan methodically; he could not find and develop his latent resources, and would fail in any undertaking. Not having commenced to manfully control his thoughts, he is not in a position to control affairs and to adopt serious responsibilities. He is not fit to act independently and stand alone. But he is limited only by the thoughts which he chooses.

There can be no progress, no achievement without sacrifice, and a man's worldly success will be in the measure that he sacrifices his confused animal thoughts, and fixes his mind on the development of his plans, and the strengthening of his resolution and self-reliance. And the higher he lifts his thoughts, the more manly, upright, and righteous he becomes, the greater will be his success, the more blessed and enduring will be his achievements.

The universe does not favor the greedy, the dishonest, the vicious, although on the mere surface it may sometimes appear to do so; it helps the honest, the magnanimous, the virtuous. All the great Teachers of the ages have declared this in varying forms, and to prove and know it a man has but to persist in making himself more and more virtuous by lifting up his thoughts.

Intellectual achievements are the result of thought consecrated to the search for knowledge, or for the beautiful and true in life and nature. Such achievements may be sometimes connected with vanity and ambition, but they are not the outcome of those characteristics; they are the natural outgrowth of long and arduous effort, and of pure and unselfish thoughts.

Spiritual achievements are the consummation of holy aspirations. He who lives constantly in the conception of noble and lofty thoughts, who dwells upon all that is pure and unselfish, will, as surely as the sun reaches its zenith and the moon its full, become wise and noble in character, and rise into a position of influence and blessedness.

Achievement, of whatever kind, is the crown of effort, the diadem of thought. By the aid of self-control, resolution, purity, righteousness, and

well-directed thought a man ascends; by the aid of animality, indolence, impurity, corruption, and confusion of thought a man descends.

A man may rise to high success in the world, and even to lofty altitudes in the spiritual realm, and again descend into weakness and wretchedness by allowing arrogant, selfish, and corrupt thoughts to take possession of him.

Victories attained by right thought can only be maintained by watchfulness. Many give way when success is assured, and rapidly fall back into failure.

All achievements, whether in the business, intellectual, or spiritual world, are the result of definitely directed thought, are governed by the same law and are of the same method; the only difference lies in *the object of attainment*.

He who would accomplish little must sacrifice little; he who would achieve much must sacrifice much; he who would attain highly must sacrifice greatly.

Visions and Ideals

The dreamers are the saviors of the world. As the visible world is sustained by the invisible, so men, through all their trials and sins and sordid vocations, are nourished by the beautiful visions of their solitary dreamers. Humanity cannot forget its dreamers; it cannot let their ideals fade and die; it lives in them; it knows them as the *realities* which it shall one day see and know.

Composer, sculptor, painter, poet, prophet, sage, these are the makers of the after-world, the architects of heaven. The world is beautiful because they have lived; without them, laboring humanity would perish.

He who cherishes a beautiful vision, a lofty ideal in his heart, will one day realize it. Cherish your visions; cherish your ideals; cherish the music that stirs in your heart, the beauty that forms in your mind, the loveliness that drapes your purest thoughts, for out of them will grow all delightful conditions, all heavenly environment; of these, if you but remain true to them, your world will at last be built.

To desire is to obtain; to aspire is to achieve. Shall man's basest desires receive the fullest measure of gratification, and his purest aspirations starve for lack of sustenance? Such is not the Law: such a condition of things can never obtain: "Ask and receive."

Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become. Your Vision is the promise of what you shall one day be; your Ideal is the prophecy of what you shall at last unveil.

The greatest achievement was at first and for a time a dream. The oak sleeps in the acorn; the bird waits in the egg; and in the highest vision of the soul a waking angel stirs. Dreams are the seedlings of realities.

Your circumstances may be uncongenial, but they shall not long remain so if you but perceive an Ideal and strive to reach it. You cannot travel

within and stand still *without*. Here is a youth hard pressed by poverty and labor; confined long hours in an unhealthy workshop; unschooled, and lacking all the arts of refinement. But he dreams of better things; he thinks of intelligence, of refinement, of grace and beauty. He conceives of, mentally builds up, an ideal condition of life; the vision of a wider liberty and a larger scope takes possession of him; unrest urges him to action, and he utilizes all his spare time and means, small though they are, to the development of his latent powers and resources. Very soon so altered has his mind become that the workshop can no longer hold him. It has become so out of harmony with his mentality that it falls out of his life as a garment is cast aside, and, with the growth of opportunities which fit the scope of his expanding powers, he passes out of it forever.

And you, too, will realize the Vision (not the idle wish) of your heart, be it base or beautiful, or a mixture of both, for you will always gravitate toward that which you, secretly, most love. Into your hands will be placed the exact results of your own thoughts; you will receive that which you earn; no more, no less. Whatever your present environment may be, you will fall, remain, or rise with your thoughts, your Vision, your Ideal. You will become as small as your controlling desire; as great as your dominant aspiration.

The thoughtless, the ignorant, and the indolent, seeing only the apparent effects of things and not the things themselves, talk of luck, of fortune, and chance. Seeing a man grow rich, they say, "How lucky he is!" Observing another become intellectual, they exclaim, "How highly favored he is!" And noting the saintly character and wide influence of another, they remark, "How chance aids him at every turn!" They do not see the trials and failures and struggles which these men have voluntarily encountered in order to gain their experience; have no knowledge of the sacrifices they have made, of the undaunted efforts they have put forth, of the faith they have exercised, that they might overcome the apparently insurmountable, and realize the Vision of their heart. They do not know the darkness and the heartaches; they only see the light and joy, and call it "luck." They do not see the long and arduous journey, but only behold the pleasant goal, and call it "good fortune," do not understand the process, but only perceive the result, and call it "chance."

In all human affairs there are *efforts*, and there are *results*, and the strength of the effort is the measure of the result. Chance is not. “Gifts,” powers, material, intellectual, and spiritual possessions are the fruits of effort; they are thoughts completed, objects accomplished, visions realized.

The Vision that you glorify in your mind, the Ideal that you enthrone in your heart—this you will build your life by, this you will become.

CHAPTER SIX

Serenity

Calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom. It is the result of long and patient effort in self-control. Its presence is an indication of ripened experience, and of a more than ordinary knowledge of the laws and operations of thought.

A man becomes calm in the measure that he understands himself as a thought-evolved being, for such knowledge necessitates the understanding of others as the result of thought, and as he develops a right understanding, and sees more and more clearly the internal relations of things by the action of cause and effect, he ceases to fuss and fume and worry and grieve, and remains poised, steadfast, serene.

The calm man, having learned how to govern himself, knows how to adapt himself to others; and they, in turn, reverence his spiritual strength, and feel that they can learn of him and rely upon him. The more tranquil a man becomes, the greater is his success, his influence, his power for good. Even the ordinary trader will find his business prosperity increase as he develops a greater self-control and equanimity, for people will always prefer to deal with a man whose demeanor is strongly equable.

The strong, calm man is always loved and revered. He is like a shade-giving tree in a thirsty land, or a sheltering rock in a storm. “Who does not love a tranquil heart, a sweet-tempered, balanced life? It does not matter whether it rains or shines, or what changes come to those possessing these blessings, for they are always sweet, serene, and calm. That exquisite poise of character, which we call serenity, is the last lesson of culture; it is the flowering of life, the fruitage of the soul. It is precious as wisdom, more to be desired than gold—yea, than even fine gold. How insignificant mere money seeking looks in comparison with a serene life—a life that dwells in

the ocean of Truth, beneath the waves, beyond the reach of tempests, in the Eternal Calm!

“How many people we know who sour their lives, who ruin all that is sweet and beautiful by explosive tempers, who destroy their poise of character, and make bad blood! It is a question whether the great majority of people do not ruin their lives and mar their happiness by lack of self-control. How few people we meet in life who are well balanced, who have that exquisite poise which is characteristic of the finished character!”

Yes, humanity surges with uncontrolled passion, is tumultuous with ungoverned grief, is blown about by anxiety and doubt. Only the wise man, only he whose thoughts are controlled and purified, makes the winds and the storms of the soul obey him.

Tempest-tossed souls, wherever ye may be, under whatsoever conditions ye may live, know this—in the ocean of life the isles of Blessedness are smiling, and the sunny shore of your ideal awaits your coming. Keep your hand firmly upon the helm of thought. In the bark of your soul reclines the commanding Master; He does but sleep: wake Him. Self-control is strength; Right Thought is mastery; Calmness is power. Say unto your heart, “Peace, be still!”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JAMES ALLEN was born in Leicester, in central England's industrial heartland, on November 28, 1864. He took his first job at age 15 to support his family after his father was murdered while looking for work in America in 1879. Allen worked as a factory knitter and later as a private secretary with various manufacturing companies. In 1901, he published his first book, *From Poverty to Power*. The following year, he left secretarial work to devote himself fulltime to writing, and in 1903 published his third and best-known work, *As a Man Thinketh*. At this time, Allen moved with his wife, Lily, and daughter, Nora, to Ilfracombe, England, where he continued to write books and articles, and, with Lily, to publish his spiritual journal, *The Light of Reason*, later retitled *The Epoch*. He died at age 47 on January 24, 1912, most likely of tuberculosis. Allen completed nineteen books during his career, several of which were published posthumously. *As a Man Thinketh* is considered one of the formative classics of modern inspirational thought.

ATOM-SMASHING POWER OF MIND

The Life-Changing Classic on Your Power Within

by Charles Fillmore

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The End of the Age

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charles Fillmore: The Man Who Never Stood Still

By Mitch Horowitz

Spiritual experimenters through the ages, from ancient astrologers and alchemists to contemporary chaos magicians and mind-power mystics, have always availed themselves of the latest technologies of their eras. The New Thought pioneer Charles Fillmore, who founded the vibrant and ongoing Unity movement, was a great example of this.

Born in 1854 on an Indian reservation near St. Cloud, Minnesota, Fillmore and his wife and intellectual partner Myrtle, organized their Kansas City-based Unity ministry into one of the nation's first mass-media ministries. As early as 1907, the Fillmores staffed phone banks with round-the-clock volunteers ready to assist callers with distance prayers. The Unity ministry made early use of radio, targeted mailings, correspondence courses, pamphlets, and well-produced magazines aimed at the large demographic range of Unity's congregants. This included the children's monthly *Wee Wisdom*, which launched the literary career of bestselling novelist Sidney Sheldon when it published the ten-year-old's first poem in 1927.

Up to the eve of his death in 1948, Charles Fillmore remained well versed in the science and technology of the newly dawned atomic era. Fillmore sought to unite the insights of science and practical mysticism in the collection of writings that make up *Atom-Smashing Power of the Mind*, which appeared the year after his death.

This 1949 book is one of Fillmore's finest literary efforts. It serves as a powerful and stirring summation of his theology of mind-power metaphysics. At the same time, Fillmore relates the higher abilities of

thought to the revolutions in atomic energy that entered public awareness in the years immediately preceding his death. Of this, Fillmore makes a creditable effort, foreseeing future developments in wireless, microwave, and cellular technology. When I consider my failings to stay fully versed in the digital technology of our own era, I am all the more admiring of a frontier boy who grew up not only to establish a major religious denomination but who never stopped learning about the radically changing world around him. Within those changes, Fillmore discovered confirmation of his own universal ideals.

This condensation of *Atom-Smashing Power of Mind* captures the verve, spirit, and soaring language of his original, while retaining his key points and practical insights. I consider Fillmore's book one of the finest mid-century statements of New Thought philosophy. It is the kind of work that should inspire those of us today who believe that all knowledge—scientific, technological, psychological, medical, and spiritual—ultimately converge. Of this, Charles Fillmore was absolutely certain.

The Atomic Age

The majority of people have crude or distorted ideas about the character and the location of Spirit. They think that Spirit plays no part in mundane affairs and can be known by a person only after his death.

But Jesus said, “God is Spirit;” He also said, “The kingdom of God is within you.” Science tells us that there is a universal life that animates and sustains all the forms and shapes of the universe. Science has broken into the atom and revealed it to be charged with tremendous energy that may be released and be made to give the inhabitants of the earth powers beyond expression when its law of expression is discovered.

Jesus evidently knew about this hidden energy in matter and used His knowledge to perform so-called miracles.

Our modern scientists say that a single drop of water contains enough latent energy to blow up a ten-story building. This energy, existence of which has been discovered by modern scientists, is the same kind of spiritual energy that was known to Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus, and used by them to perform miracles.

By the power of his thought Elijah penetrated the atoms and precipitated an abundance of rain. By the same law he increased the widow’s oil and meal. This was not a miracle—that is, it was not a divine intervention supplanting natural law—but the exploitation of a law not ordinarily understood. Jesus used the same dynamic power of thought to break the bonds of the atoms composing the few loaves and fishes of a little lad’s lunch—and five thousand people were fed.

Science is discovering the miracle-working dynamics of religion, but science has not yet comprehended the dynamic directive power of man’s thought. All so-called miracle workers claim that they do not of themselves produce the marvelous results; that they are only the instruments of a

superior entity. It is written in I Kings, “The jar of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spake by Elijah.” Jesus called Jehovah Father. He said, “The works that I do in my Father’s name, these bear witness of me.”

Jesus did not claim to have the exclusive supernatural power that is usually credited to Him. He had explored the ether energy, which He called the “kingdom of the heavens;” His understanding was beyond that of the average man, but He knew that other men could do what He did if they would only try. He encouraged His followers to take Him as a center of faith and use the power of thought and word. “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.”

Have faith in the power of your mind to penetrate and release the energy that is pent up in the atoms of your body, and you will be astounded at the response. Paralyzed functions anywhere in the body can be restored to action by one’s speaking to the spiritual intelligence and life within them. Jesus raised His dead bodies in this way, and Paul says that we can raise our body in the same manner if we have the same spiritual contact.

What have thought concentration and discovery of the dynamic character of the atom to do with prayer? They have everything to do with prayer, because prayer is the opening of communication between the mind of man and the mind of God. Prayer is the exercise of faith in the presence and power of the unseen God. Supplication, faith, meditation, silence, concentration, are mental attitudes that enter into and form part of prayer. When one understands the spiritual character of God and adjusts himself mentally to the omnipresent God-Mind, he has begun to pray rightly.

Audible prayers are often answered but the most potent are silently uttered in the secret recesses of the soul. Jesus warned against wordy prayers—prayer uttered to be heard of men. He told His disciples not to be like those who pray on the housetop. “When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.”

The times are ripe for great changes in our estimate of the abiding place and the character of God. The six-day creation of the universe (including man) described in Genesis is a symbolic story of the work of the higher realms of mind under divine law. It is the privilege of everyone to use his mind abilities in the superrealms, and thereby carry out the prayer formula

of Jesus: "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Of all the comments on or discussions of the indescribable power of the invisible force released by the atomic bomb none that we have seen mentions its spiritual or mental character. All commentators have written about it as a force external to man to be controlled by mechanical means, with no hint that it is the primal life that animates and interrelates man's mind and body.

The next great achievement of science will be the understanding of the mental and spiritual abilities latent in man through which to develop and release these tremendous electrons, protons, and neutrons secreted in the trillions of cells in the physical organism.

Here is involved the secret, as Paul says, "hid for ages and generations ... which is Christ [superman] in you, the hope of glory." It is through release of these hidden life forces in his organism that man is to achieve immortal life, and in no other way. When we finally understand the facts of life and rid our minds of the delusion that we shall find immortal life after we die, then we shall seek more diligently to awaken the spiritual man within us and strengthen and build up the spiritual domain of our being until, like Jesus, we shall be able to control the atomic energy in our bodies and perform so-called miracles.

The fact is that all life is based upon the interaction between the various electrical units of the universe. Science tells us about these activities in terms of matter and no one understands them, because they are spiritual entities and their realities can only be understood and used wisely by the spiritually developed man. Electricians do not know what electricity is, although they use it constantly. The Christian uses faith and gets marvelous results, the electrician uses electricity and also gets marvelous results, and neither of them knows the real nature of the agent he uses so freely.

The man who called electricity faith doubtless thought that he was making a striking comparison when in fact he was telling a truth, that faith is of the mind and it is the match that starts the fire in the electrons and protons of innate Spirit forces. Faith has its degrees of voltage; the faith of the child and the faith of the most powerful spiritual adept are far apart in their intensity and results. When the trillions of cells in one's body are

roused to expectancy by spiritual faith, a positive spiritual contact results and marvelous transformations take place.

Sir James Jeans, the eminent British scientist, gives a prophecy of this in one of his books. He says in substance that it may be that the gods determining our fate are our own minds working on our brain cells and through them on the world about us.

This will eventually be found to be true, and the discovery of the law of release of the electronic vitality wrapped up in matter will be the greatest revelation of all time.

When we awake to the fact that every breath we draw is releasing this all-potent electronic energy and it is shaping our lives for good or ill, according to our faith, then we shall begin to search for the law that will guide us aright in the use of power.

The Restorative Power of the Spirit

Not only our Bible but the scriptures of all the nations of the world testify to the existence of an invisible force moving men and nature in their various activities. Not all agree as to the character of this omnipresent force, universal Spirit, but it serves the purpose of being their god under whatever name it may appear. Different nations ostensibly believe in the same scriptures, but they have various concepts of the universal Spirit; some conceive it to be nature and others God. Robert Browning says, "What I call God ... fools call Nature."

Our Bible plainly teaches that God implanted in man His perfect image and likeness, with executive ability to carry out all the creative plans of the Great Architect. When man arrives at a certain point in spiritual understanding it is his office to cooperate with the God principle in creation.

As the animating life of all things God is a unit, but as the mind that drives this life He is diverse. Every man is king in his own mental domain, and his subjects are his thoughts.

People in this atomic-age civilization ask why God does not reveal Himself now as He did in Bible days. The fact is that God is talking to people everywhere, but they do not understand the message and brush it aside as an idle dream. We need to divest ourselves of the thought that Daniel and Joseph, in fact all the unusually wise men of the Bible, were especially inspired by God, that they were divinely appointed by the Lord to do His work. Everything points to their spiritual insight as the result of work on their part to that end.

The body is the instrument of the mind, and the mind looks to the Spirit for its inspiration. Not only the Scriptures that we look to for authority in our daily living but also the experience of ourselves and our neighbors

proves that those who cultivate communion with the Father within become conscious of a guiding light, call it what you will.

Those who scoff at this and say that it is all the work of the imagination are deluding themselves and ignoring a source of instruction and progress that they need above all things. If this sense world were the only world we shall ever know, the attainment of its ambitions might be sufficient for a man of meager outlook and small capacity, but the majority of us see ourselves and the world about us in a process of transformation that will culminate in conditions here on the earth far superior to those we have imagined for heaven.

Jesus was very advanced, and His radiant body was developed in larger degree than that of anyone in our race, but we all have this body, and its development is in proportion to our spiritual culture. In Jesus this body of light glowed "as he was praying." Jesus' body did not go down to corruption, but He, by the intensity of His spiritual devotion, restored every cell to its innate state of atomic light and power. When John was in the state of spiritual devotion Jesus appeared to him, "and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass." Jesus lives today in that body of glorified electricity in a kingdom that interpenetrates the earth and its environment. He called it the kingdom of the heavens.

We do not have to look to the many experiences recorded in the Bible of the spiritually illumined to prove the existence of the spiritual supersubstance. People everywhere are discovering it, as they always have in every age and clime.

The metaphysical literature of our day is very rich with the experiences of those who have found through various channels the existence of the radiant body. This prompts me to tell of my development of the radiant body, during half a century's experience. It began when I was mentally affirming statements of Truth. Just between my eyes, but above, I felt a "thrill" that lasted a few moments, then passed away. I found I could repeat this experience with affirmations. As time went on I could set up this "thrill" at other points in my body and finally it became a continuous current throughout my nervous system. I called it "the Spirit" and found that it was connected with a universal life force whose source was the Christ. As taught in the Bible, we have through wrong thinking and living lost contact with the parent life. Jesus Christ incarnated in the flesh and

thereby introduced us by His Word into the original Father life. He said, "If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death." I have believed that and affirmed His words until they have become organized in my body. Sometimes when I make this claim of Christ life in the body I am asked if I expect to live always in this flesh. My answer is that I realize that the flesh is being broken down every day and its cells transformed into energy and life, and a new body is being formed of a very superior quality. That new body in Christ will be my future habitation.

I have found that the kingdom of God is within man and that we are wasting our time and defeating the work of the Spirit if we look for it anywhere else.

Spiritual Obedience

Zeal is the great universal force that impels man to spring forward in a field of endeavor and accomplish the seemingly miraculous. It is the inward fire that urges man onward, regardless of the intellectual mind of caution and conversation.

Zeal should be tempered with wisdom. It is possible to be so zealously active on the intellectual plane that one's vitality is consumed and there is nothing left for spiritual growth. "Take time to be holy." Never neglect your soul. To grow spiritually you should exercise your zeal in spiritual ways.

Above all other Bible writers Paul emphasizes the importance of the mind in the transformation of character and body. In this respect he struck a note in religion that had been mute up to this time; that is, that spirit and mind are akin and that man is related to God through his thought. Paul sounds again and again in various forms this silent but very essential chord in the unity of God and man and man and his body.

When the scientific world investigates the so-called miracles of religion and discovers that they are being duplicated continually, the power of mind over matter will be heralded as of great importance to both religion and science.

Prayer gives spiritual poise to the ego, and it brings forth eternal life when spiritually linked with the Christ. "If a man keep my word, he shall never see death."

To one who gains even a meager quickening of the Spirit, Christianity ceases to be a theory; it becomes a demonstrable science of the mind.

We must not anticipate better social and economic conditions until we have better men and women to institute and sustain those conditions.

Jesus said that He was the bread and substance that came down from heaven. When will our civilization begin to realize and appropriate this

mighty ocean of substance and life?

A finer civilization than now exists has been conceived by many from Plato in his "Republic" to Edward Bellamy in "Looking Backward." But a new and higher civilization will be developed only through the efforts of higher and finer types of men and women. Philosophers and seers have looked forward to a time when this earth would produce superior men and women, but save Jesus none has had the spiritual insight to declare, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished."

"Behold, the man!" Jesus Christ is the type of a new race now forming in the earth. Those who incorporate into consciousness the Christ principles are its members.

The dominion that God gave to man in the beginning, as recorded in Genesis, is a dominion over spiritual ideas, which are represented in the allegory by material symbols.

Hence to exercise his dominion man must understand the metaphysical side of everything in existence.

Divine Mind is the one and only reality. When we incorporate the ideas that form Divine Mind into our mind and persevere in those ideas, a mighty strength wells up within us. Then we have a foundation for the spiritual body, the body not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When the spiritual body is established in consciousness, its strength and power is transmitted to the visible body and to all the things that we touch in the world about us.

In the economy of the future man will not be a slave to money. Humanity's daily needs will be met in ways not now thought practical.

In the new economy we shall serve for the joy of serving, and prosperity will flow to us and through us in rippling streams of plenty. The supply and support that love and zeal set in motion are not yet largely used by man, but those who have tested this method are loud in their praise of its efficiency.

I AM or Superconsciousness

Superconsciousness is the goal toward which humanity is working. Regardless of appearances there is an upward trend continually active throughout all creation. The superconsciousness is the realm of divine ideas. Its character is impersonal. It therefore has no personal ambitions; knows no condemnation; but is always pure, innocent, loving, and obedient to the call of God.

The superconsciousness has been perceived by the spiritually wise in every age, but they have not known how to externalize it and make it an abiding state of consciousness. Jesus accomplished this, and His method is worthy of our adoption, because as far as we know, it is the only method that has been successful. It is set forth in the New Testament, and whoever adopts the life of purity and love and power there exemplified in the experiences of Jesus of Nazareth will in due course attain the place that He attained.

Jesus acknowledged Himself to be the Son of God. Living in the superconsciousness calls for nothing less on our part than a definite recognition of ourselves as sons of God right here and now, regardless of appearances to the contrary. We know that we are sons of God; then why not acknowledge it and proceed to take possession of our God heirdom? That is what Jesus did in the face of the most adverse conditions. Conditions today are not so inertly material as they were in Jesus' time. People now know more about themselves and their relation to God. They are familiar with thought processes and how an idea held in mind will manifest itself in the body and in affairs; hence they take up this problem of spiritual realization under vastly more favorable conditions. An idea must work out just as surely as a mathematical problem, because it is under immutable law. The factors are all in our possession, and the method was

demonstrated in one striking instance and is before us. By following the method of Jesus and doing day-by-day work that comes to us, we shall surely put on Christ as fully and completely as did Jesus of Nazareth.

The method by which Jesus evolved from sense consciousness to God consciousness was, first, the recognition of the spiritual selfhood and a constant affirmation of its supremacy and power. Jesus loved to make the highest statements: "I and the Father are one." "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." He made these statements, so we know that at the time He was fully aware of their reality. Secondly, by the power of His word He penetrated deeper into omnipresence and tapped the deepest resources of His mind, whereby He released the light, life, and substance of Spirit, which enabled Him to get the realization that wholly united His consciousness with the Father Mind.

In the light of modern science the miracles of the Bible can be rationally explained as Mind acting in an omnipresent spiritual field, which is open to all men who develop spiritually. "Ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

"He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne."

Overcoming is a change of mind from error to Truth. The way of overcoming is first to place one's self by faith in the realization of Sonship, and second, to demonstrate it in every thought and act.

The Word is man's I AM. The Holy Spirit is the "outpouring" or activity of the living Word. The work of the Holy Spirit is the executive power of Father (mind) and Son (idea), carrying out the creative plan. It is through the help of the Holy Spirit that man overcomes. The Holy Spirit reveals, helps, and directs in this overcoming. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." It finally leads man into the light.

Science rightly understood is of inestimable value to religion, and Christianity in order to become the world power that its founder envisioned, must stress the unfoldment of the spiritual mind in man in order that he may do the mighty works promised by Jesus.

When Jesus went up into the mount to pray He was transfigured before His apostles

Peter, James, and John. True prayer brings about an exalted radiation of energy, and when it is accompanied by faith, judgment, and love, the word of Truth bursts forth in a stream of light that, when held in mind, illumines, uplifts, and glorifies.

Jesus recognized Mind in everything and called it "Father." He knew that there is a faith center in each atom of so-called matter and that faith in man can move upon the faith center in so-called matter and can remove mountains.

Jesus taught that the realities of God are capable of expression here in this world and that man within himself has God capacity and power. Jesus was crucified because He claimed to be the Son of God. Yet the Scriptures, which the Pharisees worshiped, had this bold proclamation, which Jesus quoted to them from Psalms 82:

*"I said, Ye are gods,
And all of you sons of the Most High."*

The reports by His followers of what He taught clearly point to two subjects that He loved to discourse upon. The first was the Son of God: He was the Son of God. Secondly: We might all become as He was and demonstrate our dominion by following Him in the regeneration.

In order to follow Jesus in the regeneration we must become better acquainted with the various phases of mind and how they function in and through the body.

In spiritual understanding we know that all the forces in the body are directed by thought and that they work in a constructive or a destructive way, according to the character of the thought. Medicine, massage, and all the material means accomplish but incomplete, unsatisfactory, temporary results, because they work only from the outside and do not touch the inner springs that control the forces. The springs can only be touched by thought. There must be a unity between the mind of man and Divine Mind so that ideas and thoughts that work constructively unto eternal life may be quickened in the mind and organism of man.

We are told in John that the world could not contain the books that would be written if all the things that Jesus did were put into writing. But enough is given in the story of His life and in the writings of the apostles concerning Him to bear witness to that which is daily being revealed in this

day of fulfillment. Those who are consecrated to Truth and fully resolved to follow Jesus all the way are spiritualizing the whole man, including the body, which is being redeemed from corruption. Those who are living as Jesus lived are becoming like Him. “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” Resurrection takes place in people who are alive.

The Day of Judgment

It is said we are to be judged after death according to deeds done in the body, which are kept on record like books that are balanced; and if the balance is found to be in our favor we go up, and if against us we go down. But if we are spiritual now—divine—this spiritual part has dominion, and we begin to exercise this dominion. The moment we catch sight of this we begin to judge. We begin to put the thoughts that are good on the right and the others on the left. All our ideas of the attributes of our divine self we put on the right hand of power, while the thoughts of disease, death, limitation and lack we put on the left—denied, cut off.

This is not to occur after death. It is to begin right now!

Now is the time to plant the seed thought of the conditions we desire by saying, “Come my good thoughts, let us inherit our kingdom.”

We do not fear anything, for we have separated our sheep from our goats; we have set our true thoughts on the right and have denied our error thoughts any power whatever.

Come into the kingdom of mind. Here everything that is in Principle is yours.

Everything, all good, is to be gathered up, and everything is good at its center. The essence of your body is good and of true substance. When you sift your consciousness of all but the real and true, the body becomes full of light.

The diamond owes its brilliance to the perfect arrangement of the innumerable little prisms within it, each of which refracts the light of the other. Man’s body is made up of centers of consciousness—of light—and if arranged so they radiate the light within you, you will shine like the diamond. All things are in the consciousness and you have to learn to separate the erroneous from the true, darkness from light. The I AM must

separate the sheep from the goats. This sifting begins right now and goes on until the perfect child of God is manifest and you are fully rounded out in all your Godlike attributes

Thou Shalt Decree a Thing

To decree with assurance is to establish and fix an ideal in substance. The force behind the decree is invisible, like a promise to be fulfilled at a future time; but it binds with its invisible chains the one who makes it. We have only a slight conception of the strength of the intangible. We compare and measure strength by some strong element in nature. We say “strong as steel.” But a very little thought will convince us that mental affirmations are far stronger than the strongest visible thing in the world. The reason for this is that visible things lack livingness. They are not linked with energy and intelligence as are words. Words charged with power and intelligence increase with use, while material things decrease.

It is not necessary to call the attention of metaphysicians to the fact that all visible things had their origin in the invisible. The visible is what remains of an idea that has gradually lost its energy. Scientists say that this so-called solid earth under our feet was once radiant substance. Nothing is really “solid” but the atomic energy latent in everything. They tell us that it takes some six billion years for uranium to disintegrate and become lead, and this rate of disintegration has helped scientists determine the age of the earth as about two billion years.

Since nothing is lost in the many transformations that occur in nature, what becomes of the energy that is being released in the disintegration that is going on in our earth? The answer is that a new earth is being formed in which matter will be replaced by atomic energy. This process of refining matter into radiant substance is taking place not only in the natural world but in our bodies also. In fact the speed with which the transformation takes place depends on the character of the thoughts that we project into our brains and through them into our bodies and the world about us. This is why

we should spiritualize our thoughts and refine the food we eat to correspond.

At the present writing there is a housing shortage everywhere and the lack of materials and competent labor indicate that several years will elapse before the need is met. This is counted a calamity; but is it? The inventive genius of man is planning houses of glass and other materials that will be much less expensive—more durable and in every respect superior to the present homes. When man gets his ingenious mind into action he always meets every emergency with something better. Every adverse situation can be used as a spur to urge one to greater exertion and the ultimate attainment of some ideal that has lain dormant in the subconsciousness.

Thinking in the Fourth Dimension

Scientists tell us that the discoveries that their efforts are revealing convince them that they are just on the verge of stupendous truths. Christianity spiritually interpreted shows that Jesus understood the deeper things of God's universe. He understood exactly what the conditions were on the invisible side of life, which is termed in His teaching the "kingdom of God" or the "kingdom of the heavens." We are trying to connect His teaching with modern science in order to show the parallel; but as He said in Mark 4:23, "if any man hath ears to hear, let him hear." This means that we must develop a capacity for understanding in terms of the atomic structure of the universe.

Unless we have this spiritual capacity we do not understand. We think we have ears, but they are attuned to materiality. They do not get the radiations from the supermind, the Christ Mind. Physiology working with psychology is demonstrating that hearing and seeing can be developed in every cell in the body, independent of ears and eyes. We hear and see with our minds working through our bodies. This being true, the capacity to hear may extend beyond the physical ear into the spiritual ethers, and we should be able to hear the voice of God. This extension of hearing is what Jesus taught. "If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Then we are told that we must "take heed" what we hear. Many of us have found that as we develop this inner, spiritual hearing, we hear voices sometimes that do not tell the truth. These deceptive voices can be hushed by affirming the presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As you unfold your spiritual nature, you will find that it has the same capacity for receiving vibrations of sound as your outer, physical ear has. You do not give attention to all that you hear in the external; you

discriminate as you listen. So in the development of this inner, spiritual ear take heed what you hear: discriminate.

Jesus said, "For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." How can what a man has not be taken away? We believe in our mortal consciousness that we have attained a great deal, but if we have not this inner, spiritual consciousness of reality our possessions are impermanent. Then we must be careful what we accumulate in our consciousness, because "he that hath, to him shall be given." The more spiritual Truth you pile up in your mind, the more you have of reality, and the larger is your capacity for the unlimited; but if you have nothing of a spiritual character, what little you have of intellectual attainment will eventually be taken away from you.

The mysteries of the supermind have always been considered the property of certain schools of occultists and mystics who were cautious about giving their truths to the masses for fear that in their ignorance these might misuse them. But now the doors are thrown wide open, and whosoever will may enter in.

Our attention in this day is being largely called to the revolution that is taking place in the economic world, but a revolution of even greater worth is taking place in the mental and spiritual worlds. A large and growing school of metaphysicians has made its advent in this generation, and it is radically changing the public mind toward religion. In other words, we are developing spiritual understanding, and this means that religion and its sources in tradition and in man are being inquired into and its principles applied in the development of a new cosmic mind for the whole human family.

Is This God's World?

Why doesn't God do something about it?" This oft-repeated query, uttered by the skeptical and unbelieving, is heard day in and day out. Imitating the skeptics, Christian believers everywhere are looking to God for all kinds of reforms in every department of manifest life and also are charging Him with death and destruction the world over.

One who thinks logically and according to sound reason wonders at the contradictions set up by these various queries and desires.

Is God responsible for all that occurs on this earth, and if not all, how much of it?

The Bible states that God created the earth and all its creatures, and last of all man, to whom He gave dominion over everything. Observation and experience prove that man is gaining dominion over nature wherever he applies himself to that end. But so much remains to be gained, and he is so small physically that man counts himself a pygmy instead of the mental giant that he is.

All the real mastery that man attains in the world has its roots in his mind, and when he opens up the mental realm in his being there are no unattainables. If the conquests of the air achieved in the last quarter century had been prophesied, the prophets would have been pronounced crazy. The fact is that no one thinking in the old mind realm can have any conception of the transformation of sound waves into electromagnetic waves and back again into words and messages of intelligence. Edison admitted that his discovery of the phonograph was an accident and that he never fully understood how mechanical vibrations could be recorded and be reproduced in all forms of intelligent communication.

Now that man has broken away from his limited visualizations and mentally grasped the unhampered ideas of the supermind, he is growing

grandly bold and his technical pioneers are telling him that the achievements of yesterday are as nothing compared to those of tomorrow. For example, an article by Harland Manchester condensed in the *Reader's Digest* from *Scientific American* tells of the "microwaves" that are slated for a more spectacular career in the realm of the unbelievable than anything that has preceded them. This article describes in detail some of the marvels that will evolve out of the utilization of microwaves, among which may be mentioned "private phone calls by the hundreds of thousands sent simultaneously over the same wave band without wires, poles or cables. Towns where each citizen has his own radio frequency, over which he can get voice, music, and television, and call any phone in the country by dialing. Complete abolition of static and interference from electrical devices and from other stations. A hundred times as much 'space on the air' as we now have in the commercial radio band. A high-definition and color television network to cover the country. And, perhaps most important of all, a nationwide radar network, geared to television, to regulate all air traffic and furnish instantaneous visual weather reports to airfields throughout the land."

Add to this the marvels promised by the appliers of atomic energy and you have an array of miracles unequaled in all the bibles of all the nations of the world.

It is admitted by those who are most familiar with the dynamic power of these newly discovered forces that we do not yet know how to protect our body cells from the destructiveness of their vibrations. Very thick concrete walls are required to protect those who experiment with atomic forces. One scientist says that the forces released from the bombs that were used on the Japanese cities in 1945 may affect those who were subjected to them and their descendants for a thousand years. Experimentation proves that we have tapped a kingdom that we do not know how to handle safely.

Truth Radiates Light

Spiritual light transcends in glory all the laws of matter and intellect. Even Moses could not enter the Tabernacle when it was aglow with this transcendent light.

It is written that the Israelites did not go forward on days when the cloud remained over the Tabernacle, but when the cloud was taken up they went forward. This means that there is no soul progress for man when his body is under the shadow of a “clouded” mind, but when the cloud is removed there is an upward and forward movement of the whole consciousness (all the people).

We are warned of the effect of thoughts that are against or opposed to the commandments of Jehovah. When we murmur and complain we cloud our minds, and Divine Mind cannot reach us or help us. Then we usually loaf until something turns up that causes us to think on happier things, when we go forward again.

Instead of giving up to circumstances and outer events we should remember that we are all very close to a kingdom of mind that would make us always happy and successful if we would cultivate it and make it and its laws a vital part of our life. “The joy of Jehovah is your strength.”

You ask, “How can I feel the joy of Jehovah when I am poor, or sick, or unhappy?”

Jesus said, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Here is the first step in getting out of the mental cloud that obscures the light of Spirit. Take the promises of Jesus as literally and spiritually true. Right in the midst of the most desperate situation one can proclaim the presence and power of Christ, and that is the first mental move in dissolving the darkness. You cannot think of Jesus without a feeling of freedom and

light. Jesus taught freedom from mortality and proclaimed His glory so persistently that He energized our thought atmosphere into light.

The Scriptures state that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments his face shone so brilliantly that the Children of Israel and even Aaron, his own brother, were afraid to come near him until he put a veil over his face. The original Hebrew says his face sent forth beams or horns of light.

The Vulgate says that Moses had “a horned face;” which Michelangelo took literally, in his statue of Moses representing him with a pair of horns projecting from the head. Thus we see the ludicrous effect of reading the Bible according to the letter.

Our men of science have experimented with the brain in action, and they tell us that it is true that we radiate beams when we think. The force of these beams has been measured.

Here we have further confirmation of the many statements in the Bible that have been taken as ridiculous and unbelievable or as miracles.

Persons who spend much time in prayer and meditate a great deal on spiritual things develop the same type of face that Moses is said to have had. We say of them that their faces fairly shine when they talk about God and His love. John saw Jesus on the island of Patmos, and he says, “His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.”

I have witnessed this radiance in the faces of Truth teachers hundreds of times. I well remember one class lesson during which the teacher became so eloquent that beams of light shot forth from her head and tongues of fire flashed through the room, very like those which were witnessed when the followers of Jesus were gathered in Jerusalem.

We now know that fervent words expressed in prayer and song and eloquent proclamations of spiritual Truth release the millions of electrons in our brain cells and through them blend like chords of mental music with the Mind universal.

This tendency on our part to analyze and scientifically dissect the many supposed miracles recorded in the Bible is often regarded as sacrilegious, or at least as making commonplaces of some of the very spectacular incidents recorded in Scripture.

In every age preceding this the priesthood has labored under the delusion that the common people could not understand the real meaning of life and

that they should therefore be kept in ignorance of its inner sources; also that the masses could not be trusted with sacred truths, that imparting such truths to them was like casting pearls before swine.

But now science is delving into hidden things, and it is found that they all arise in and are sustained by universal principles that are open to all men who seek to know and apply them.

Anyone who will search for the science in religion and the religion in science will find that they harmonize and prove each other. The point of unity is the Spiritmind common to both. So long as religion assumes that the Spirit that creates and sustains man and the universe can be cajoled and by prayer or some other appeal can be induced to change its laws, it cannot hope to be recognized by those who know that unchangeable law rules everywhere and in everything.

Again, so long as science ignores the principle of intelligence in the evolutionary and directive forces of man and the universe, just so long will it fail to understand religion and the power of thought in the changes that are constantly taking place in the world, visible and invisible.

The Only Mind

I say, "An idea comes to me." Where did it come from? It must have had a source of like character with its own. Ideas are not visible to the eye, they are not heard by the ear, nor felt, nor tasted, yet we talk about them as having existence. We recognize that they live, move, and have being in the realm that we term mind.

This realm of mind is accepted by everybody as in some way connected with the things that appear, but because it is not describable in terms of length, breadth, and thickness, it is usually passed over as something too vague for consideration.

But those who take up the study of this thing called mind find that it can be analyzed and its laws and modes of operation understood.

To be ignorant of mind and its laws is to be a child playing with fire, or a man manipulating powerful chemicals without knowing their relation to one another.

This is universally true; and all who are not learning about mind are in like danger, because all are dealing with the great cause from which spring forth all the conditions that appear in the lives of all men and women. Mind is the one reservoir from which we draw all that we make up into our world, and it is through the laws of mind that we form our lives. Hence nothing is as important as a knowledge of mind, its inherencies, and the mode of their expression.

The belief that mind cannot be understood is fallacious. Man is the expression of mind, dwells in mind, and can know more clearly and definitely about the mind than the things that appear in the phenomenal world.

Mind is the great storehouse of good from which man draws all his supplies. If you manifest life, you are confident that it had a source. If you

show forth intelligence you know that somewhere in the economy of Being there is a fount of intelligence. So you may go over the elements that go to make up your being and you will find that they draw their sustenance from an invisible and, to your limited understanding, incomprehensible source.

This source we term Mind, because it is as such that our comprehension is best related to it. Names are arbitrary, and we should not stop to note differences that are merely technical. We want to get at the substance which they represent.

So if we call this invisible source Mind it is because it is of like character with the thing within our consciousness that we call our mind. Mind is manifold in its manifestations. It produces all that appears. Not that the character of all that appears is to be laid to the volition of Mind; no, but some of its factors enter into everything that appears. This is why it is so important to know about Mind, and how its potentialities are made manifest.

And this is where we have set up a study that makes of every atom in the universe a living center of wisdom as well as life and substance.

We claim that on its plane of comprehension man may ask the atom or the mountain the secret that it holds and it will be revealed to him. This is the communication of mind with Mind; hence we call Mind the universal underlying cause of existence and study it from that basis.

God is Mind, and man made in the image and likeness of God is Mind, because there is but one Mind, and that is the Mind of God. The person in sense consciousness thinks he has a mind of his own and that he creates thought from its own inherent substance. This is a suppositional mind that passes away when the one and only real Mind is revealed. This one and only Mind of God that we study is the only creator. It is that which originates all that is permanent; hence it is the source of all reality. Its creations are of a character hard for the sense man to comprehend, because his consciousness is cast in a mold of space and time. These are changeable and transient, while the creations of the one Mind are substantial and lasting. But it is man's privilege to understand the creations of the one Mind, for it is through them that he makes his world. The creations of the one Mind are ideas. The ideas of God are potential forces waiting to be set in motion through proper formative vehicles. The thinking faculty in man is such a vehicle, and it is through this that the visible universe has existence.

Man does not “create” anything if by this term is meant the producing of something from nothing; but he does make the formless up into form; or rather it is through his conscious cooperation that the one Mind forms its universe.

Mind is the storehouse of ideas. Man draws all his ideas from this omnipresent storehouse. The ideas of God, heaven, hell, devils, angels, and all things have their clue in Mind. But their form in the consciousness depends entirely upon the plane from which man draws his mental images. If he gets a “clue” to the character of God and then proceeds to clothe this clue idea with images from without, he makes God a mortal. If he looks within for the clothing of his clue idea he knows God to be the omnipresent Spirit of existence.

So it is of the utmost importance that we know how we have produced this state of existence which we call life; and we should be swift to conform to the only method calculated to bring harmony and success into our life, namely to think in harmony with the understanding derived from communion with the God-Mind.

The Body

You see at once that man is not body, but that the body is the declaration of man, the substantial expression of his mind. We see so many different types of men that we are bound to admit that the body is merely the individual's specific interpretation of himself, whatever it may be. Man is an unknown quantity; we see merely the various ideas of man expressed in terms of body, but not man himself. The identification of man is determined by the individual himself, and he expresses his conception of man in his body.

Some persons have tall bodies; some have short ones. Some have fat bodies; some have slim ones. Some have distorted bodies, some have symmetrical ones. Now, if the body is the man, as claimed by sense consciousness, which of these many bodies is man?

The Bible declares that man is made in the "image" and after the "likeness" of God. Which of the various bodies just enumerated is the image and likeness of God?

Let us repeat that the body of man is the visible record of his thoughts. It is the individual's interpretation of his identity, and each individual shows in his body just what his views of man are. The body is the corporeal record of the mind of its owner, and there is no limit to its infinite differentiation. The individual may become any type of being that he elects to be. Man selects the mental model and the body images it. So the body is the image and likeness of the individual's idea of man. We may embody any conception of life or being that we can conceive. The body is the exact reproduction of the thoughts of its occupant. As a man thinks in his mind so is his body.

You can be an Adam if you choose, or you can be a Christ or any other type of being that you see fit to ideate. The choice lies with you. The body merely executes the mandates of the mind. The mind dictates the model

according to which the body shall be manifested. Therefore as man “thinketh within himself [in his vital nature], so is he.” Each individual is just what he believes he is.

It is safe to say that nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of every thousand believe that the resurrection of the body has something specifically to do with the getting of a new body after death; so we find more than ninety-nine per cent of the world’s population waiting for death to get something new in the way of a body. This belief is not based on the principles of Truth, for there is no ready-made-body factory in the universe, and thus none will get the body that he expects. Waiting for death in order to get a new body is the folly of ignorance. The thing to do is to improve the bodies that we now have; it can be done, and those who would follow Jesus in the regeneration must do it.

The “resurrection” of the body has nothing whatever to do with death, except that we may resurrect ourselves from every dead condition into which sense ignorance has plunged us. To be resurrected means to get out of the place that you are in and to get into another place. Resurrection is a rising into new vigor, new prosperity; a restoration to some higher state. It is absurd to suppose that it applies only to the resuscitation of a dead body.

It is the privilege of the individual to express any type of body that he sees fit to ideate. Man may become a Christ in mind and in body by incorporating into his every thought the ideas given to the world by Jesus.

Divine mind has placed in the mind of everyone an image of the perfect-man body. The imaging process in the mind may well be illustrated by the picture that is made by light on the photographic plate, which must be “developed” before it becomes visible. Or man’s invisible body may be compared to the blueprint of a building that the architect delivers to the builder. Man is a builder of flesh and blood. Jesus was a carpenter. Also He was indeed the master mason. He restored the Lord’s body (“the temple of Jehovah”) in His mind and heart (in Jerusalem).

The resurrection of the body is not dependent for its demonstration on time, evolution, or any of the man-made means of growth. It is the result of the elevation of the spiritually emancipated mind of the individual.

Step by step, thought added to thought, spiritual emotion added to spiritual emotion—eventually the transformation is complete. It does not come in a day, but every high impulse, every pure thought, every upward

desire adds to the exaltation and gradual personification of the divine in man and to the transformation of the human. The “old man” is constantly brought into subjection, and his deeds forever put off, as the “new man” appears arrayed in the vestments of divine consciousness.

How to accomplish the resurrection of the body has been the great stumbling block of man. The resurrection has been a mere hope, and we have endeavored to reconcile a dying body with a living God, but have not succeeded. No amount of Christian submission or stoical philosophy will take away the sting of death. But over him who is risen in Christ “death no more hath dominion.”

Faith Precipitations

When asked what electricity is, a scientist replied that he had often thought of it as an adjunct to faith, judging from the way it acts.

This linking of faith and electricity seems at first glance fantastic, but when we observe what takes place when certain substances in solution and an electric current are brought in conjunction, there seems to be a confirmation of the Scripture passage: “Now faith is assurance of things hoped for.”

Just as the electric current precipitates certain metals in solution in acid, so faith stirs into action the electrons of man’s brain; and acting concurrently with the spiritual ethers, these electrons hasten nature and produce quickly what ordinarily requires months of seedtime and harvest.

Speedy answers to prayer have always been experienced and always will be when the right relations are established between the mind of the one who prays and the spiritual realm, which is like an electrical field. The power to perform what seems to be miracles has been relegated to some God-selected one; but now we are inquiring into the law, since God is no respecter of persons, and we find that the fulfillment of the law rests with man or a group of men, when they quicken by faith the spiritual forces latent within them.

The reason why some prayers are not answered is lack of proper adjustment of the mind of the one who prays to the omnipresent creative spiritual life.

Jesus was the most successful demonstrator of prayer of whom we have any record, and He urged persistence in prayer. If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. Like Lincoln, Jesus loved to tell stories to illustrate His point, and He emphasized the value of persistence in prayer. He told of a woman

who demanded justice of a certain judge and importuned him until in sheer desperation he granted her request.

Every Christian healer has had experiences where persistent prayer saved his patient. If he had merely said one prayer, as if giving a prescription for the Lord to fill, he would have fallen far short of demonstrating the law. Elijah prayed persistently until the little cloud appeared or, as we should say, he had a “realization;” then the manifestation followed.

The End of the Age

In all ages and among all people, there have been legends of prophets and saviors and predictions of their coming.

The fact that all who believe in the principle of divine incarnation have long strained their eyes across the shining sands in an effort to catch sight of the coming of one clothed with the power of heaven, should make us pause and consider the cause of such universality of opinion among peoples widely separated. To dismiss the subject as a religious superstition is not in harmony with unprejudiced reason. To regard these prophecies merely as religious superstitions rules out traditions that are as tenable and as reliable as the facts of history. There is a cause for every effect, and the cause underlying this almost unanimous expectation of a messiah must have some of the omnipresence of a universal law.

In considering a subject like this, which demonstrates itself largely on metaphysical lines, it is necessary to look beyond the material plane to the realm of causes.

The material universe is but the shadow of the spiritual universe. The pulsations of the spiritual forces impinge upon and sway men, nations, and planets, according to laws whose sweep in space and time is so stupendous as to be beyond the ken or comprehension of astronomy. But the fact should not be overlooked that higher astronomy had its votaries in the past. The Magi and the illumined sages of Chaldea and Egypt had astronomical knowledge of universal scope. It was so broad, so gigantic, so far removed from the comprehension of the common mind of their day that it always remained the property of the few. It was communicated in symbols, because of the poverty of language to express its supermundane truths. In the sacred literature of the Hindus are evidences of astronomical erudition covering such vast periods of time that modern philosophers cannot or do not give

them credence, and they are relegated to the domain of speculation rather than of science. However the astronomers of the present age have forged along on material lines until now they are beginning to impinge upon the hidden wisdom of the mighty savants of the past.

There is evidence that proves that the ages of the distant past knew a higher astronomy than do we of this age, and that they predicted the future of this planet through cycles and aeons—its nights of mental darkness and the dawn of its spiritual day—with the same accuracy that our astronomers do its present-day planetary revolutions.

Jesus evidently understood the aeons or ages through which earth passes. For example, in Matthew 13:39, our English Bible reads: “The enemy that sowed them is the devil: and the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels.” In the Diaglott version, which gives the original Greek and a word-for-word translation, this reads: “THAT ENEMY who SOWED them is the ADVERSARY; the HARVEST is the End of the Age; and the REAPERS are Messengers.” In this as in many other passages where Jesus used the word “age,” it has been translated “world,” leading the reader to believe that Jesus taught that this planet was to be destroyed.

So we see that the almost universally accepted teaching of the end of the world is not properly founded on the Bible. The translators wanted to give the wicked a great scare, so they put “the end of the world” into Jesus’ mouth in several instances where He plainly said “the end of the age.”

The Bible is a textbook of absolute Truth; but its teachings are veiled in symbol and understood only by the illumined.

In accordance with the prophecies of the ancients, our planetary system has just completed a journey of 2,169 years, in which there has been wonderful material progress without its spiritual counterpart. But old conditions have passed away and a new era has dawned. A great change is taking place in the mentality of the race, and this change is evidenced in literature, science, and religion. There is a breaking away from old creeds and old doctrines, and there is a tendency to form centers along lines of scientific spiritual thought. The literature of the first half of the twentieth century is so saturated with occultism as to be an object of censure by conservatives, who denounce it as a “lapse into the superstition of the past.” Notwithstanding the protests of the conservatives, on every hand are

evidences of spiritual freedom; it crops out in so many ways that an enumeration would cover the whole field of life.

It is evident that Jesus and His predecessors had knowledge of coming events on lines of such absolute accuracy as to place it in the realm of truth ascertained, that is, exact science.

Do you belong to the old, or are you building anew from within and keeping time with the progress of the age? The “harvest” or “consummation of the age” pointed out by Jesus is not far off. This is no theological scare; it is a statement based on a law that is now being tested and proved.

Listen to your inner voice; cultivate the good, the pure, the God within you. Do not let your false beliefs keep you in the darkness of error until you go out like a dying ember. The divine spark is within you. Fan it into flame by right thinking, right living, and right doing, and you will find the “new Jerusalem.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

One of the pioneering leaders of the New Thought movement, CHARLES FILLMORE (1884–1948), with his wife Myrtle, founded the worldwide Unity ministry. An early visionary in using mass media to spread religious and inspirational messages, Fillmore was widely known for his metaphysical interpretations of the Bible, and for his books including *Prosperity; Christian Healing; Talks on Truth; Atom-Smashing Power of Mind;* and *The Twelve Powers*.

IN TUNE WITH THE INFINITE

*The Timeless Classic on the Power of Your Eternal
Mind*

Ralph Waldo Trine

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bringing the Infinite to Earth

by Mitch Horowitz

In one of my favorite scenes from *The Wizard of Oz* Dorothy is running away from home and happens upon the wagon of a Professor Marvel who sympathetically invites her inside to his fortunetelling parlor. Seating Dorothy before a crystal ball, Professor Marvel tells the wide-eyed girl:

That's right. Here—sit right down here. That's it. Ha ha! This—this is the same genuine, magic, authentic crystal used by the Priests of Isis and Osiris in the days of the Pharaohs of Egypt—in which Cleopatra first saw the approach of Julius Caesar and Marc Antony, and—and so on—and so on. Now, you—you'd better close your eyes, my child, for a moment—in order to be better in tune with the infinite.

In tune with the infinite. The title of Ralph Waldo Trine's 1897 book retained posterity as a catchphrase for numinous realities in the 1939 movie, more than a generation after its publication. (Neither the scene nor phrase appears in Theosophist L. Frank Baum's original novel from 1900.) The reference testifies to the enormity of the book's cultural reach and recognition in the first half of the twentieth century. In many respects, *In Tune With the Infinite* was the nation's first mass bestseller of therapeutic spirituality, laying the template for future works such as *Alcoholics Anonymous* in 1939 and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* in 1952, both of which use Trine's phraseology, if not always with attribution.

Although the *Oz* screenwriters were poking gentle fun at the author, the movie also presented the perfect framing of Trine's metaphysics, which echoed and augmented the popular spiritual vision of the nation itself: belief

in the innocence of the individual, the capacity to break through to other realms, and the transcendent promise of self-improvement.

Indeed, many of Trine's phrases and themes entered the lexicon of American spirituality. The term "Higher Power"—central to Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12-step movement—probably came from *In Tune With the Infinite*, where Trine repeatedly used the phrase with particular reference to alcohol: "In the degree that we come into the realization of the higher powers of the mind and spirit ... there also falls away the desire for the heavier, grosser, less valuable kinds of food and drink, such as the flesh of animals, alcoholic drinks ..." Trine helped popularize the term "Law of Attraction," which until his book was a little-known phrase from deep within the folds of metaphysical culture (and was only just coming into coinage for the concept of like thoughts attracting like circumstances). Many writers, including Neville Goddard, adopted Trine's term "enter the silence" to signal communion with the infinite. William James mentioned Trine as among the New Thought figures who moved him to conclude that "it really looks as if a good start might be made in the direction of changing our American mental habit into something more indifferent and strong." (By *indifferent* James meant serviceable and utilitarian.) Henry Ford called the book a major factor in his success and pressed copies on friends and visitors to his office. Even televangelist Oral Roberts echoed Trine, encouraging readers to reflect: "I am in tune with God."

The man who started it all was born in Northern Illinois in 1866, the same year as the death of mental-healing pioneer Phineas Quimby. Ralph Waldo Trine, named for Transcendentalist philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, studied history and political science at Johns Hopkins University and later won a \$100 prize for an essay on "The Effects of Humane Education on the Prevention of Crime." Little is known about Trine personally, including the mystical influences that led to his signature work soon after he turned 31. What is evident is that beneath the placid, almost priestly exterior that appears in his photographs burned a desire to unite mysticism and social reform. A 1902 profile in the New Thought magazine *Mind* said that Trine believed in the cooperative ethos of socialism and that he planned to write a

book “from the viewpoint of a socialist who is such because of his New Thought philosophy.”

It is not clear that Trine ever wrote such a book, but something very close appeared under his byline in 1910: *Land of Living Men*. While *In Tune With the Infinite* employed a gentle, folksy tone emphasizing gratitude and generosity, *Land of Living Men* revealed different colors. The New Thought pioneer called for “a great people’s movement to bring back to the people the immense belongings that have been taken away from them.” Trine advocated busting up monopolies, striking for higher wages, and placing essential utilities and industries into public hands. This was one book that Henry Ford didn’t give away to friends. In fact, *Land of Living Men* seemed to make little impact at all on Trine’s followers. By 1928, Trine was an honored guest in Ford’s office, where he engaged in an almost fawning interview with the automaker. Their conversation was turned into a popular book, *The Power That Wins*, which ranged from Ford’s love for avocados to his belief in reincarnation. Whatever Trine’s innermost commitments, he would never again be seen—nor succeed as—a political Jeremiah.

The power of *In Tune With the Infinite* rests on two counts. The first is that Trine created perhaps not the earliest but the most effective and widely accessible iteration of the New Thought gospel that thoughts are causative. Trine’s popularization remained unmatched until Norman Vincent Peale published *The Power of Positive Thinking* more than fifty years later. But Trine’s book was something that Peale’s was not—and this forms the second basis of its achievement. Although Trine’s reference points are chiefly Christian, *In Tune With the Infinite* is one of the first widely popular works of *religious universalism*.

Peale’s book was explicitly Christian; the Dutch Reform minister reimagined New Thought in language that was reassuringly familiar to the church-going public. (Although even in this regard Peale snuck in some radically mystical concepts and references.) Trine, by contrast, incorporated principles, if not always language, from broad-spanning religious traditions. In some respects, *In Tune With the Infinite* is as much a popularization of New Thought as it is of Hermetic philosophy. Hermeticism is a late-ancient Greek-Egyptian mystical school that taught that the individual is an

extension of a higher mind, or *Nous*, and possesses the same creative potentials. You'll see this on display in chapter three, "The Supreme Fact of Human Life," where Trine talks about the nature of the "God-man." In chapter four, "Fullness of Life—Bodily Health and Vigor," Trine remakes the core Hermetic dictum "As above, so below" into "As within, so without; cause, effect." The Hermetic outlook is likewise present when Trine talks about a "divine inflow" into the individual. This also echoes eighteenth-century mystic Emanuel Swedenborg's concept of a "Divine influx."

Trine, for all his folksy language, was a radical thinker. And *In Tune With the Infinite*, a book that ultimately sold more than two million copies when the nation itself was far less populous than today, brought everyday Americans ideas that were jarring, fresh, anti-mainstream, and transcendent. That such themes of spiritual possibility sound so familiar to us today is testament to the author's legacy.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

There is a golden thread that runs through every religion in the world. There is a golden thread that runs through the lives and the teachings of all the prophets, seers, sages, and saviors in the world's history, through the lives of all men and women of truly great and lasting power. All that they have ever done or attained to has been done in full accordance with law. What one has done, all may do.

This same golden thread must enter into the lives of all who today, in this busy work-a-day world of ours, would exchange impotence for power, weakness and suffering for abounding health and strength, pain and unrest for perfect peace, poverty of whatever nature for fullness and plenty.

Each is building his own world. We both build from within and we attract from without. Thought is the force with which we build, for thoughts are forces. Like builds like and like attracts like. In the degree that thought is spiritualized does it become more subtle and powerful in its workings. This spiritualizing is in accordance with law and is within the power of all.

Everything is first worked out in the unseen before it is manifested in the seen, in the ideal before it is realized in the real, in the spiritual before it shows forth in the material. The realm of the unseen is the realm of cause. The realm of the seen is the realm of effect. The nature of effect is always determined and conditioned by the nature of its cause.

There is a divine sequence running throughout the universe. Within and above and below the human will incessantly works the Divine will. To come into harmony with it and thereby with all the higher laws and forces, to come then into league and to work in conjunction with them, in order that they can work in league and in conjunction with us, is to come into the chain of this wonderful sequence. This is the secret of all success.

Fullness of Peace, Power and Plenty

The optimist is right. The pessimist is right. The one differs from the other as the light from the dark. Yet both are right. Each is right from his own particular point of view, and this point of view is the determining factor in the life of each. It determines as to whether it is a life of power or of impotence, of peace or of pain, of success or of failure.

The optimist has the power of seeing things in their entirety and in their right relations. The pessimist looks from a limited and a one-sided point of view. The one has his understanding illumined by wisdom, the understanding of the other is darkened by ignorance. Each is building his world from within, and the result of the building is determined by the point of view of each. The optimist, by his superior wisdom and insight, is making his own heaven, and in the degree that he makes his own heaven is he helping to make one for all the world beside. The pessimist, by virtue of his limitations, is making his own hell, and in the degree that he makes his own hell is he helping to make one for all mankind.

You and I have the predominating characteristics of an optimist or the predominating characteristics of a pessimist. We then are making, hour by hour, our own heaven or our own hell; and in the degree that we are making the one or the other for ourselves are we helping make it for all the world beside.

The Supreme Fact of the Universe

The great central fact of the universe is that Spirit of Infinite Life and Power is behind all, animates all, manifests itself in and through all; that self-existent principle of life is that from which all has come, and not only from which all has come, but from which all is continually coming. If there is an individual life, there must of necessity be an infinite source of life from which it comes. If there is a quality or a force of love, there must of necessity be an infinite source of love whence it comes. If there is wisdom, there must be the all-wise source behind it from which it springs. The same is true in regard to peace, the same in regard to power, the same in regard to what we call material things.

There is, then, this Spirit of Infinite Life and Power behind all, which is the source of all. This Infinite Power is creating, working, ruling through the agency of great immutable laws and forces that run through all the universe, that surround us on every side. Every act of our every-day lives is governed by these same great laws and forces. Every flower that blooms by the wayside, springs up, grows, blooms, fades, according to certain great immutable laws. Every snowflake that plays between earth and heaven, forms, falls, melts, according to certain great unchangeable laws.

In a sense there is nothing in all the great universe but law. If this is true there must of necessity be a force behind it all that is the maker of these laws and a force greater than the laws that are made. This Spirit of Infinite Life and Power that is behind all is what I call God. I care not what term you may use, be it Kindly Light, Providence, the Over Soul, Omnipotence, or whatever term may be most convenient. I care not what the term may be as long as we are agreed in regard to the great central fact itself.

God, then, is this Infinite Spirit which fills all the universe with Himself alone, so that all is from Him and in Him, and there is nothing that is

outside. Indeed and in truth, then, in Him we live and move and have our being. He is the life of our life, our very life itself. We have received, we are continually receiving our life from Him. We are partakers of the life of God; and though we differ from Him in that we are individualized spirits, while He is the Infinite Spirit including us as well as all else beside, yet *in essence the life of God and the life of man are identically the same, and so are one*. They differ not in essence, in quality; they differ in degree.

There have been and are highly illumined souls who believe that we receive our life from God after the manner of a divine inflow. And again, there have been and are those who believe that our life is one with the life of God, and so that God and man are one. Which is right? Both are right; both right when rightly understood.

In regard to the first: if God is the Infinite Spirit of Life behind all, whence all comes, then clearly our life as individualized spirits is continually coming from this Infinite Source by means of this divine inflow. In the second place, if our lives as individualized spirits are directly from, are parts of this Infinite Spirit of Life, then the degree of the Infinite Spirit that is manifested in the life of each must be identical in quality with that Source, the same as a drop of water taken from the ocean is, in nature, in characteristics, identical with that ocean, its source. And how could it be otherwise? The liability to misunderstanding in this latter case, however, is this: in that although the life of God and the life of man in essence are identically the same, the life of God so far transcends the life of individual man that it includes all else beside. In other words, so far as the quality of life is concerned, in essence they are the same; so far as the degree of life is concerned, they are vastly different.

There is a reservoir in a valley which receives its supply from an inexhaustible reservoir on the mountain side. It is then true that the reservoir in the valley receives its supply by virtue of the inflow of the water from the larger reservoir on the mountain side. It is also true that the water in this smaller reservoir is in nature, in quality, in characteristics identically the same as that in the larger reservoir which is its source. The difference, however, is this: the reservoir on the mountain side, in the *amount* of its water, so far transcends the reservoir in the valley that it can supply an innumerable number of like reservoirs and still be unexhausted.

If this is true, does it not then follow that in the degree that man opens himself to this divine inflow does he approach to God? If so, it then necessarily follows that in the degree that he makes this approach does he take on the God-powers. And if the God-powers are without limit, does it not then follow that the only limitations man has are the limitations he sets to himself, by virtue of not knowing himself?

The Supreme Fact of Human Life

From the great central fact of the universe in regard to which we have agreed, namely, this Spirit of Infinite Life that is behind all and from which all comes, we are led to inquire as to what is the great central fact in human life. From what has gone before, the question almost answers itself.

The great central fact in human life, in your life and in mine, is the coming into a conscious, vital realization of our oneness with this Infinite Life, and the opening of ourselves fully to this divine inflow. This is the great central fact in human life, for in this all else is included, all else follows in its train. In just the degree that we come into a conscious realization of our oneness with the Infinite Life, and open ourselves to this divine inflow, do we actualize in ourselves the qualities and powers of the InfiniteLife.

And what does this mean? It means simply this: that we are recognizing our true identity, that we are bringing our lives into harmony with the same great laws and forces, and so opening ourselves to the same great inspirations, as have all the prophets, seers, sages, and saviors in the world's history, all men of truly great and mighty power. For in the degree that we come into this realization and connect ourselves with this Infinite Source, do we make it possible for the higher powers to play, to work, to manifest through us.

We can keep closed to this divine inflow, to these higher forces and powers, through ignorance, as most of us do, and thus hinder or even prevent their manifesting through us. Or we can intentionally close ourselves to their operations and thus deprive ourselves of the powers to which, by the very nature of our being, we are rightful heirs. On the other hand, we can come into so vital a realization of the oneness of our real selves with this Infinite Life, and can open ourselves so fully to the

incoming of this divine inflow, and so to the operation of these higher forces, inspirations, and powers, that we can indeed and in truth become what we may well term, God-men.

And what is a God-man? One in whom the powers of God are manifesting, though yet a man. No one can set limitations to a man or a woman of this type; for the only limitations he or she can have are those set by the self. Ignorance is the most potent factor in setting limitations to the majority of mankind; and so the great majority of people continue to live their little, dwarfed, and stunted lives simply by virtue of the fact that they do not realize the larger life to which they are heirs. They have never as yet come into a knowledge of the real identity of their true selves.

Mankind has not yet realized that the real self is one with the life of God. Through its ignorance it has never yet opened itself to the divine inflow, and so has never made itself a channel through which the infinite powers and forces can manifest. When we know ourselves merely as men, we live accordingly, and have merely the powers of men. When we come into the realization of the fact that we are God-men, then again we live accordingly, and have the powers of God-men. *In the degree that we open ourselves to this divine inflow are we changed from mere men into God-men.*

Before we proceed farther let us consider very briefly the nature of thought. Thought is not, as is many times supposed, a mere indefinite abstraction, or something of a like nature. It is, on the contrary, a vital, living force, the most vital, subtle, and irresistible force there is in the universe.

Everything in the material universe about us, everything the universe has ever known, had its origin first in thought. From this it took its form. Every castle, every statue, every painting, every piece of mechanism, everything had its birth, its origin, first in the mind of the one who formed it before it received its material expression or embodiment. The very universe in which we live is the result of the thought energies of God, the Infinite Spirit that is back of all. And if it is true, as we have found, that we in our true selves are in essence the same, and in this sense are one with the life of this Infinite Spirit, do we not then see that in the degree that we come into a vital realization of this stupendous fact, *we, through the operation of our interior, spiritual, thought forces, have in like sense creative power?*

Everything exists in the unseen before it is manifested or realized in the seen, and in this sense it is true that the unseen things are the real, while the things that are seen are the unreal. The unseen things are *cause*; the seen things are *effect*. The unseen things are the eternal; the seen things are the changing, the transient.

Much is said in regard to “building castles in the air,” and one who is given to this building is not always looked upon with favor. But castles in the air are always necessary before we can have castles on the ground, before we can have castles in which to live. The trouble with the one who gives himself to building castles in the air is not that he builds them in the air, but that he does not go farther and actualize in life, in character, in material form, the castles he thus builds. He does a part of the work, a very necessary part; but another equally necessary part remains still undone.

There is in connection with the thought forces what we may term, the drawing power of mind, and the great law operating here is one with that great law of the universe, that like attracts like. We are continually attracting to us from both the seen and the unseen side of life, forces and conditions most akin to those of our own thoughts.

This law is continually operating whether we are conscious of it or not. We are all living, so to speak, in a vast ocean of thought, and the very atmosphere around us is continually filled with the thought forces that are being continually sent or that are continually going out in the form of thought waves. We are all affected, more or less, by these thought forces, either consciously or unconsciously; and in the degree that we are more or less sensitively organized, or in the degree that we are negative and so are open to outside influences, rather than positive, thus determining what influences shall enter into our realm of thought, and hence into our lives.

There are those among us who are much more sensitively organized than others. As an organism their bodies are more finely, more sensitively constructed. These, generally speaking, are people who are always more or less affected by the mentalities of those with whom they come in contact, or in whose company they are.

Some think it unfortunate for one to be sensitively organized. By no means. It is a good thing, for one may thus be more open and receptive to the higher impulses of the soul within, and to all higher forces and influences from without. It may, however, be unfortunate and extremely

inconvenient to be so organized unless one recognize and gain the power of closing himself, of making himself positive to all detrimental or undesirable influences. This power everyone, however sensitively organized he may be, can acquire.

This he can acquire through the mind's action. And, moreover, there is no habit of more value to anyone, be he sensitively or less sensitively organized, than that of occasionally taking and holding himself continually in the attitude of mind—I close myself, I make myself positive to all things below, and open and receptive to all higher influences, to all things above. By taking this attitude of mind consciously now and then, it soon becomes a habit, and if one is deeply in earnest in regard to it, it puts into operation silent but subtle and powerful influences in effecting the desired results. In this way all lower and undesirable influences from both the seen and the unseen side of life are closed out, while all higher influences are invited, and in the degree that they are invited will they enter.

Says one who knows full well whereof he speaks: “The law of attraction works universally on every plane of *action*, and we attract whatever we desire or expect. If we desire one thing and expect another, we become like houses divided against themselves, which are quickly brought to desolation. Determine resolutely to expect only what you desire, then you will attract only what you wish for. ... Carry any kind of thought you please about with you, and so long as you retain it, no matter how you roam over land or sea, you will unceasingly attract to yourself, knowingly or inadvertently, exactly and only what corresponds to your own dominant quality of thought. Thoughts are our private property, and we can regulate them to suit our taste entirely by steadily recognizing our ability so to do.”

We have just spoken of the drawing power of mind. Faith is nothing more nor less than the operation of the *thought forces* in the form of an earnest desire, coupled with expectation as to its fulfillment. And in the degree that faith, the earnest desire thus sent out, is continually held to and watered by firm expectation, in just that degree does it either draw to itself, or does it change from the unseen into the visible, from the spiritual into the material, that for which it is sent.

Let the element of doubt or fear enter in, and what would otherwise be a tremendous force will be so neutralized that it will fail of its realization. Continually held to and continually watered by firm expectation, it becomes

a force, a drawing power, that is irresistible and absolute, and the results will be absolute in direct proportion as it is absolute.

Fullness of Life—Bodily Health and Vigor

God is the Spirit of Infinite Life. If we are partakers of this life, and have the power of opening ourselves fully to its divine inflow, it means more, so far as even the physical life is concerned, than we may at first think. For very clearly, the life of this Infinite Spirit, from its very nature, can admit of no disease; and if this is true, no disease can exist in the body where it freely enters, through which it freely flows.

Let us recognize at the outset that, so far as the physical life is concerned, *all life is from within out*. There is an immutable law which says: “As within, so without; cause, effect.” In other words, the thought forces, the various mental states and the emotions, all have in time their effects upon the physical body.

Someone says: “I hear a great deal said today in regard to the effects of the mind upon the body, but I don’t know as I place very much confidence in this.” Don’t you? Someone brings you sudden news. You grow pale, you tremble, or perhaps you fall into a faint. It is, however, through the channel of your mind that the news is imparted to you. A friend says something to you, perhaps at the table, something that seems very unkind. You are hurt by it, as we say. You have been enjoying your dinner, but from this moment your appetite is gone. But what was said entered into and affected you through the channel of your mind.

Again, a sudden emergency arises. You stand trembling and weak with fear. Why are you powerless to move? Why do you tremble? And yet you believe that the mind has but little influence upon the body. You are for a moment dominated by a fit of anger. For a few hours afterwards you complain of a violent headache. And still you do not seem to realize that the thoughts and emotions have an effect upon the body.

Fear and worry have the effect of closing up the channels of the body, so that the life forces flow in a slow and sluggish manner. Hope and tranquility open the channels of the body, so that the life forces go bounding through it in such a way that disease can rarely get a foothold.

I am aware of the fact that in connection with the matter we are now considering there has been a great deal of foolishness during the past few years. Many absurd and foolish things have been claimed and done; but this says nothing against, and it has absolutely nothing to do with, the great underlying laws themselves. The same has been true of the early days of practically every system of ethics or philosophy or religion the world has ever known. But as time has passed, these foolish, absurd things have fallen away, and the great eternal principles have stood out ever more and more clearly defined.

I know *personally* of many cases where an entire and permanent cure has been effected, in some within a remarkably short period of time, through the operation of these forces. Some of them are cases that had been entirely given up by the regular practice, *materia medica*. We have numerous accounts of such cases in all times and in connection with all religions. And why should not the power of effecting such cures exist among us today? The *power does exist*, and it will be actualized in just the degree that we recognize the same great laws that were recognized in times past.

The whole of human life is cause and effect; there is no such thing in it as chance, nor is there even in all the wide universe. Are we not satisfied with whatever comes into our lives? The thing to do, then, is not to spend time in railing against the imaginary something we create and call fate, but to look to the within, and change the causes at work there, in order that things of a different nature may come, for there will come exactly what we cause to come. This is true not only of the physical body, but of all phases and conditions of life.

The time will come when the work of the physician will not be to treat and attempt to heal the body, but to heal the mind, which in turn will heal the body. In other words, the true physician will be a teacher; his work will be to keep people well, instead of attempting to make them well after sickness and disease comes on; and still beyond this there will come a time when each will be his own physician. In the degree that we live in harmony with the higher laws of our being, and so, in the degree that we become

better acquainted with the powers of the mind and spirit, will we give less attention to the body,—no less *care*, but less *attention*.

The bodies of thousands today would be much better cared for if their owners gave them less thought and attention. As a rule, those who think least of their bodies enjoy the best health. Many are kept in continual ill health by the abnormal thought and attention they give them.

Give the body the nourishment, the exercise, the fresh air, the sunlight it requires, keep it clean, and then think of it as little as possible. In your thoughts and in your conversation never dwell upon the negative side. Don't talk of sickness and disease. By talking of these you do yourself harm and you do harm to those who listen to you. Talk of those things that will make people the better for listening to you. Thus you will infect them with health and strength and not with weakness and disease.

To dwell upon the negative side is always destructive. This is true of the body the same as it is true of all other things.

The whole matter may then be summed up in the one sentence, "God is well and so are you." You must awaken to the knowledge of your *real being*. When this awakening comes, you will have, and you will see that you have, the power to determine what conditions are externalized in your body. You must recognize, you must realize yourself as one with Infinite Spirit. God's will is then your will; your will is God's will, and "with God all things are possible."

Wisdom and Interior Illumination

If you would find the highest, the fullest, and the richest life that not only this world but that any world can know, then do away with the sense of the separateness of your life from the life of God. Hold to the thought of your oneness. In the degree that you do this you will find yourself realizing it more and more, and as this life of realization is lived, you will find that no good thing will be withheld, for all things are included in this. Then it will be yours, without fears or forebodings, simply to do today what your hands find to do, and so be ready for tomorrow, *when it comes*, knowing that tomorrow will bring tomorrow's supplies for the mental, the spiritual, and the physical life. Remember, however, that tomorrow's supplies are not needed until tomorrow comes.

If one is willing to trust himself *fully* to the Law, the Law will never fail him. It is the half-hearted trusting to it that brings uncertain, and so, unsatisfactory results. Nothing is firmer and surer than Deity. It will never fail the one who throws himself wholly upon it. The secret of life then, is to live continually in this realization, whatever one may be doing, wherever one may be, by day and by night, both waking and sleeping. It can be lived in while we are sleeping no less than when we are awake. And here shall we consider a few facts in connection with sleep, in connection with receiving instruction and illumination while asleep?

During the process of sleep it is merely the physical body that is at rest and in quiet; the soul life with all its activities goes right on. Sleep is nature's provision for the recuperation of the body, for the rebuilding and hence the replacing of the waste that is continually going on during the waking hours. It is nature's great restorer. If sufficient sleep is not allowed the body, so that the rebuilding may equalize the wasting process, the body is gradually depleted and weakened, and any ailment or malady, when it is

in this condition, is able to find a more ready entrance. It is for this reason that those who are subject to it will take a cold, as we term it, more readily when the body is tired or exhausted through loss of sleep than at most any other time. The body is in that condition where outside influences can have a more ready effect upon it, than when it is in its normal condition. And when they do have an effect they always go to the weaker portions first.

Our bodies are given us to serve far higher purposes than we ordinarily use them for. Especially is this true in the numerous cases where the body is master of its owner. In the degree that we come into the realization of the higher powers of the mind and spirit, in that degree does the body, through their influence upon it, become less gross and heavy, finer in its texture and form. And then, because the mind finds a kingdom of enjoyment in itself, and in all the higher things it becomes related to, *excesses* in eating and drinking, as well as all others, naturally and of their own accord fall away. There also falls away the desire for the heavier, grosser, less valuable kinds of food and drink, such as the flesh of animals, alcoholic drinks, and all things of the class that stimulate the body and the passions rather than build the body and the brain into a strong, clean, well-nourished, enduring, and fibrous condition. In the degree that the body thus becomes less gross and heavy, finer in its texture and form, is there less waste, and what there is is more easily replaced, so that it keeps in a more regular and even condition. When this is true, less sleep is actually required. And even the amount that is taken does more for a body of this finer type than it can do for one of the other nature.

As the body in this way grows finer, in other words, as the process of its evolution is thus accelerated, it in turn helps the mind and the soul in the realization of ever higher perceptions, and thus body helps mind the same as mind builds body. It was undoubtedly this fact that Browning had in mind when he said:

*Let us cry "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh, more now,
Than flesh helps soul."*

Sleep, then, is for the resting and the rebuilding of the body. The soul needs no rest, and while the body is at rest in sleep the soul life is active the same as when the body is in activity.

There are some, having a deep insight into the soul's activities, who say that we travel when we sleep. Some are able to recall and bring over into the conscious, waking life the scenes visited, the information gained, and the events that have transpired. Most people are not able to do this and so much that might otherwise be gained is lost. They say, however, that it is in our power, in proportion as we understand the laws, to go where we will, and to bring over into the conscious, waking life all the experiences thus gained. Be this, however, as it may, it certainly is true that while sleeping we have the power, in a perfectly normal and natural way, to get much of value by way of light, instruction, and growth that the majority of people now miss.

If the soul life, that which relates us to Infinite Spirit, is always active, even while the body is at rest, why may not the mind so direct conditions as one falls asleep, that while the body is at rest, it may continually receive illumination from the soul and bring what it thus receives over into the conscious, waking life? This, indeed, can be done, and is done by some to great advantage; and many times the highest inspirations from the soul come in this way, as would seem most natural, since at this time all communications from the outer, material world no longer enter. I know those who do much work during sleep, the same as they get much light along desired lines. By charging the mind on going to sleep as to a particular time for waking, it is possible, as many of us know, to wake on the very minute. Not infrequently we have examples of difficult problems, problems that defied solution during waking hours, being solved during sleep.

A friend, a well-known journalist, had an extended newspaper article clearly and completely worked out for her in this way. She frequently calls this agency to her aid. She was notified by the managing editor one evening to have the article ready in the morning—an article requiring more than ordinary care, and one in which quite a knowledge of facts was required. It was a matter in connection with which she knew scarcely anything, and all her efforts at finding information regarding it seemed to be of no avail.

She set to work, but it seemed as if even her own powers defied her. Failure seemed imminent. Almost in desperation she decided to retire, and putting the matter into her mind in such a way that she would be able to receive the greatest amount of aid while asleep, she fell asleep and slept

soundly until morning. When she awoke her work of the previous evening was the first thing that came into her mind. She lay quietly for a few minutes, and as she lay there, the article, completely written, seemed to stand before her mind. She ran through it, arose, and without dressing took her pen and transcribed it onto paper, literally acting simply as her own amanuensis.

The mind acting intently along a particular line will continue so to act until some other object of thought carries it along another line. And since in sleep only the body is in quiet while the mind and soul are active, then the mind on being given a certain direction when one drops off to sleep, will take up the line along which it is directed, and can be made, in time, to bring over into consciousness the results of its activities. Some will be able very soon to get results of this kind; for some it will take longer. Quiet and continued effort will increase the faculty.

Then by virtue of the law of the drawing power of mind, since the mind is always active, we are drawing to us even while sleeping, influences from the realms kindred to those in which we in our thoughts are living before we fall asleep. In this way we can put ourselves into relation with whatever kinds of influence we choose and accordingly gain much during the process of sleep. In many ways the interior faculties are more open and receptive while we are in sleep than while we are awake. Hence the necessity of exercising even greater care as to the nature of the thoughts that occupy the mind as we enter into sleep, for there can come to us only what we by our own order of thought attract. We have it entirely in our own hands.

And for the same reason—this greater degree of receptivity during this period—we are able by understanding and using the law, to gain much of value more readily in this way than when the physical senses are fully open to the material world about us. Many will find a practice somewhat after the following nature of value: When light or information is desired along any particular line, light or information you feel it is right and wise for you to have, as, for example, light in regard to an uncertain course of action, then as you retire, first bring your mind into the attitude of peace and goodwill for all. You in this way bring yourself into an harmonious condition, and in turn attract to yourself these same peaceful conditions from without.

Then resting in this sense of peace, quietly and calmly send out your earnest desire for the needed light or information; cast out of your mind all

fears or forebodings lest it come not, for “in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.” Take the expectant attitude of mind, firmly believing and expecting that when you awake the desired results will be with you. Then on awaking, before any thoughts or activities from the outside world come in to absorb the attention, remain for a little while receptive to the intuitions or the impressions that come. When they come, when they manifest themselves clearly, then act upon them without delay. In the degree that you do this, in that degree will the power of doing it ever more effectively grow.

Or, if for unselfish purposes you desire to grow and develop any of your faculties, or to increase the health and strength of your body, take a corresponding attitude of mind, the form of which will readily suggest itself in accordance with your particular needs or desires. In this way you will open yourself to, you will connect yourself with, and you will set into operation within yourself, the particular order of forces that will make for these results. Don't be afraid to voice your desires. In this way you set into operation vibratory forces which go out and which make their impress felt somewhere, and which, arousing into activity or uniting with other forces, set about to actualize your desires. No good thing shall be withheld from him who lives in harmony with the higher laws and forces. There are no desires that shall not be satisfied to the one who knows and who wisely uses the powers with which he or she is endowed.

Your sleep will be more quiet and peaceful and refreshing, and so your power increased mentally, physically, and spiritually, simply by sending out as you fall asleep, thoughts of love and goodwill, thoughts of peace and harmony for all. In this way you are connecting yourself with all the forces in the universe that make for peace and harmony.

Visions and inspirations of the highest order will come in the degree that we make for them the right conditions.

When one awakes from sleep and so returns to conscious life, he is in a peculiarly receptive and impressionable state. All relations with the material world have for a time been shut off, the mind is in a freer and more natural state, resembling somewhat a sensitive plate, where impressions can readily leave their traces. This is why many times the highest and truest impressions come to one in the early morning hours, before the activities of the day and their attendant distractions have exerted an influence. This is

one reason why many people can do their best work in the early hours of the day.

But this fact is also a most valuable one in connection with the molding of everyday life. The mind is at this time as a clean sheet of paper. We can most valuably use this quiet, receptive, impressionable period by wisely directing the activities of the mind along the highest and most desirable paths, and thus, so to speak, set the pace for the day.

Each morning is a fresh beginning. We are, as it were, just beginning life. We have it *entirely* in our own hands. And when the morning with its fresh beginning comes, all yesterdays should be yesterdays, with which we have nothing to do. Sufficient is it to know that the way we lived our yesterday has determined for us our today. And, again, when the morning with its fresh beginning comes, all tomorrows should be tomorrows, with which we have nothing to do. Sufficient to know that the way we live our today determines our tomorrow.

The Realization of Perfect Peace

To recognize the fact that we are spirit, and to live in this thought, is to be spiritually minded, and so to be in harmony and peace. Oh, the thousands of men and women all about us weary with care, troubled and ill at ease, running hither and thither to find peace, weary in body, soul, and mind; going to other countries, traveling the world over, coming back, and still not finding it. Of course they have not found it and they never will find it in this way, because they are looking for it where it is not. They are looking for it without when they should look within. Peace is to be found only within, and unless one find it there he will never find it at all.

The moment we fear anything we open the door for the entrance of the actualization of the very thing we fear. An animal will never harm a person who is absolutely fearless in regard to it. The instant he fears he opens himself to danger; and some animals, the dog for example, can instantly detect the element of fear, and this gives them the courage to do harm. In the degree that we come into a full realization of our oneness with this Infinite Power do we become calm and quiet, undisturbed by the little occurrences that before so vex and annoy us. We are no longer disappointed in people, for we always read them aright. We have the power of penetrating into their very souls and seeing the underlying motives that are at work there.

A gentleman approached a friend the other day, and with great show of cordiality grasped him by the hand and said, "Why, Mr. _____, I am so glad to see you." Quick as a flash my friend read him, and looking him steadily in the eye, replied, "No, you are mistaken, you are not glad to see me; but you are very much disconcerted, so much so that you are now blushing in evidence of it." The gentleman replied, "Well, you know in this day and age of conventionality and form we have to put on the show and

sometimes make believe what we do not really feel.” My friend once more looked him in the face and said, “Again you are mistaken. Let me give you one little word of advice: You will always fare better and will think far more of yourself, always to recognize and to tell the truth rather than to give yourself to any semblance of it.”

As soon as we are able to read people aright we will then cease to be disappointed in them, we will cease to place them on pedestals, for this can never be done without some attendant disappointment. The fall will necessarily come, sooner or later, and moreover, we are thus many times unfair to our friends. When we come into harmony with this Spirit of Peace, evil reports and apparent bad treatment, either at the hands of friends or of enemies, will no longer disturb us. When we are conscious of the fact that in our life and our work we are true to that eternal principle of right, of truth, of justice that runs through all the universe, that unites and governs all, that always eventually prevails, then nothing of this kind can come nigh us, and come what may we will always be tranquil and undisturbed.

The things that we open ourselves to always come to us. People in the olden times expected to see angels and they saw them; but there is no more reason why they should have seen them than that we should see them now; no more reason why they should come and dwell with them than that they should come and dwell with us, for the great laws governing all things are the same today as they were then. If angels come not to minister unto us it is because we do not invite them, it is because we keep the door closed through which they otherwise might enter.

In the degree that we are filled with this Spirit of Peace by thus opening ourselves to its inflow does it pour through us, so that we carry it with us wherever we go. In the degree that we thus open ourselves do we become magnets to attract peace from all sources; and in the degree that we attract and embody it in ourselves are we able to give it forth to others. We can in this way become such perfect embodiments of peace that wherever we go we are continually shedding benedictions.

Within each one lies the cause of whatever comes to him. Each has it in his own hands to determine what comes. Everything in the visible, material world has its origin in the unseen, the spiritual, the thought world. This is the world of cause, the former is the world of effect. The nature of the effect is always in accordance with the nature of the cause. What one lives in his

invisible, thought world, he is continually actualizing in his visible, material world. If he would have any conditions different in the latter he must make the necessary change in the former. A clear realization of this great fact would bring success to thousands of men and women who all about us are now in the depths of despair. It would bring health, abounding health and strength to thousands now diseased and suffering. It would bring peace and joy to thousands now unhappy and ill at ease.

And oh, the thousands all about us who are continually living in the slavery of fear. The spirits within that should be strong and powerful are rendered weak and impotent. Their energies are crippled, their efforts are paralyzed. "Fear is everywhere—fear of want, fear of starvation, fear of public opinion, fear of private opinion, fear that what we own today may not be ours tomorrow, fear of sickness, fear of death. Fear has become with millions a fixed habit. The thought is everywhere. The thought is thrown upon us from every direction. ... To live in continual dread, continual cringing, continual fear of anything, be it loss of love, loss of money, loss of position or situation, is to take the readiest means to lose what we fear we shall."

By fear nothing is to be gained, but on the contrary, everything is to be lost. "I know this is true," says one, "but I am given to fear; it's natural to me and I can't help it." Can't help it! In saying this you indicate one great reason of your fear by showing that you do not even know yourself as yet. You must know yourself in order to know your powers, and not until you know them can you use them wisely and fully. Don't say you can't help it. If you think you can't, the chances are that you can't. If you think you can, and act in accordance with this thought, then not only are the chances that you can, but if you act fully in accordance with it, that you can and that you will is an absolute certainty. It was Virgil who in describing the crew which in his mind would win the race, said of them—They can because they think they can. In other words, this very attitude of mind on their part will infuse a spiritual power into their bodies that will give them the strength and endurance which will enable them to win.

Then take the thought that you *can*; take it merely as a seed-thought, if need be, plant it in your consciousness, tend it, cultivate it, and it will gradually reach out and gather strength from all quarters. It will focus and make positive and active the spiritual force within you that is now scattered

and of little avail. It will draw to itself force from without. It will draw to your aid the influence of other minds of its own nature, minds that are fearless, strong, courageous. You will thus draw to yourself and connect yourself with this order of thought. If earnest and faithful, the time will soon come when all fear will loose its hold; and instead of being an embodiment of weakness and a creature of circumstances, you will find yourself a tower of strength and a master of circumstances.

Materialism leads naturally to pessimism. And how could it do otherwise? A knowledge of the Spiritual Power working in and through us as well as in and through all things, a power that works for righteousness, leads to optimism. Pessimism leads to weakness.

Optimism leads to power. The one who is centered in Deity is the one who not only outrides every storm, but who through the faith, and so, the conscious power that is in him, faces storm with the same calmness and serenity that he faces fair weather; for he knows well beforehand what the outcome will be.

Coming Into Fullness of Power

This is the Spirit of Infinite Power, and in the degree that we open ourselves to it does power become manifest in us. With God all things are possible—that is, in conjunction with God all things are possible. The true secret of power lies in keeping one's connection with the God who worketh all things; and in the degree that we keep this connection are we able literally to rise above every conceivable limitation.

Why, then, waste time in running hither and thither to acquire power? Why waste time with this practice or that practice? Why not go directly to the mountain top itself, instead of wandering through the byways, in the valleys, and on the mountain sides? That man has absolute dominion, as taught in all the scriptures of the world, is true not of physical man, but of *spiritual man*. There are many animals, for example, larger and stronger, over which from a physical standpoint he would not have dominion, but he can gain supremacy over even these by calling into activity the higher mental, psychic, and spiritual forces with which he is endowed.

Whatever can't be done in the physical can be done in the spiritual. And in direct proportion as a man recognizes himself as spirit, and lives accordingly, is he able to transcend in power the man who recognizes himself merely as material. All the sacred literature of the world is teeming with examples of what we call miracles. They are not confined to any particular times or places. There is no age of miracles in distinction from any other period that may be an age of miracles. Whatever has been done in the world's history can be done again through the operation of the same laws and forces. These miracles were performed not by those who were more than men, but by those who through the recognition of their oneness with God became Godmen, so that the higher forces and powers worked through them.

For what, let us ask, is a miracle? Is it something supernatural? Supernatural only in the sense of being above the natural, or rather above that which is natural to man in his ordinary state. A miracle is nothing more nor less than this. One who has come into a knowledge of his true identity, of his oneness with the all-pervading Wisdom and Power, thus makes it possible for laws higher than the ordinary mind knows of to be revealed to him. These laws he makes use of; the people see the results, and by virtue of their own limitations, call them miracles and speak of the person who performs these apparently supernatural works as a supernatural being. But they as supernatural beings could themselves perform these supernatural works if they would open themselves to the recognition of the same laws, and consequently to the realization of the same possibilities and powers.

And let us also remember that the supernatural of yesterday becomes, as in the process of evolution we advance from the lower to the higher, from the more material to the more spiritual, the common and the natural of today, and what seems to be the supernatural of today becomes in the same way the natural of tomorrow, and so on through the ages. Yes, it is the God-man who does the things that appear supernatural, the man who by virtue of his realization of the higher powers transcends the majority and so stands out among them. But any power that is possible to one human soul is possible to another. The same laws operate in every life. We can be men and women of power or we can be men and women of impotence. The moment one vitally grasps the fact that he can rise he will rise, and he can have absolutely no limitations other than the limitations he sets to himself. Cream always rises to the top. It rises simply because *it is the nature of cream to rise*.

We hear much said of “environment.” We need to realize that environment should never be allowed to make the man, but that man should always, *and always can*, condition the environment. When we realize this we will find that many times it is not necessary to take ourselves out of any particular environment, because we may yet have a work to do there; but by the very force we carry with us we can so affect and change matters that we will have an entirely new set of conditions in an old environment.

The same is true in regard to “hereditary” traits and influences. We sometimes hear the question asked, “Can they be overcome?” Only the one who doesn’t yet know himself can ask a question such as this. If we

entertain and live in the belief that they cannot be overcome, then the chances are that they will always remain. The moment, however, that we come into a realization of our true selves, and so of the tremendous powers and forces within—the powers and forces of the mind and spirit—hereditary traits and influences that are harmful in nature will begin to lessen, and will disappear with a rapidity directly in proportion to the completeness of this realization.

Again there are many who are living far below their possibilities because they are continually handing over their individualities to others. Do you want to be a power in the world? Then be yourself. Don't class yourself, don't allow yourself to be classed among the second-hand, among the *they-say* people. Be true to the highest within your own soul, and then allow yourself to be governed by no customs or conventionalities or arbitrary man-made rules that are not founded upon *principle*. Those things that are founded upon principle will be observed by the right-minded, the right-hearted man or woman, in any case.

Don't surrender your individuality, which is your greatest agent of power, to the customs and conventionalities that have gotten their life from the great mass of those who haven't enough force to preserve their individualities—those who in other words have given them over as ingredients to the “mush of concession” which one of our greatest writers has said characterizes our modern society. If you do surrender your individuality in this way, you simply aid in increasing the undesirable conditions; in payment for this you become a slave, and the chances are that in time you will be unable to hold even the respect of those whom you in this way try to please.

If you preserve your individuality then you become a master, and if wise and discreet, your influence and power will be an aid in bringing about a higher, a better, and a more healthy set of conditions in the world. All people, moreover, will think more of you, will honor you more highly for doing this than if you show your weakness by contributing yourself to the same “mush of concession” that so many of them are contributing themselves to. With all classes of people you will then have an influence. “A great style of hero draws equally all classes, all extremes of society to him, till we say the very dogs believe in him.”

To be one's self is the only worthy, and by all means the only satisfactory, thing to be. "May it not be good policy," says one, "to be governed sometimes by one's surroundings?" What is good policy? To be yourself, first, last, and always.

The men and the women who are truly awake to the real powers within are the men and women who seem to be doing so little, yet who in reality are doing so much. They seem to be doing so little because they are working with higher agencies, and yet are doing so much because of this very fact. They do their work on the higher plane. They keep so completely their connection with the Infinite Power that *It* does the work for them and they are relieved of the responsibility. They are the care-less people. They are care-less because it is the Infinite Power that is working through them, and with this Infinite Power they are simply cooperating.

The secret of the highest power is simply the uniting of the outer agencies of expression with the Power that works from within.

I had rather be an amanuensis of the Infinite God, as it is my privilege literally to be, than a slave to the formulated rules of any rhetorician, or to the opinions of any critic. Oh, the people, the people over and over! Let me give something to them that will lighten the everyday struggles of our common life, something that will add a little sweetness here, a little hope there, something that will make more thoughtful, kind, and gentle this thoughtless, animal-natured man, something that will awaken into activity the dormant powers of this timid, shrinking little woman, powers that when awakened will be irresistible in their influence and that will surprise even herself. Let me give something that will lead each one to the knowledge of the divinity of every human soul, something that will lead each one to the conscious realization of *his own divinity*, with all its attendant riches, and glories, and powers—let me succeed in doing this, and I can then well afford to be careless as to whether the critics praise or whether they blame. If it is blame, then under these circumstances it is as the cracking of a few dead sticks on the ground below, compared to the matchless music that the soft spring gale is breathing through the great pine forest.

If when born into the world you came into a family of the English-speaking race, then in all probability you are a Christian. To be a Christian is to be a follower of the *teachings* of Jesus, the Christ; to live in harmony with the same laws he lived in harmony with: in brief, *to live his life*. The

great central fact of his teaching was this conscious union of man with the Father. It was the complete realization of this oneness with the Father on his part that made Jesus the Christ. It was through this that he attained to the power he attained to, that he spake as never man spake.

He never claimed for himself anything that he did not claim equally for all mankind. “The mighty works performed by Jesus were not exceptional, they were the natural and necessary concomitants of his state; he declared them to be in accordance with unvarying order; he spoke of them as no unique performances, but as the outcome of a state to which all might attain if they chose. As a teacher and demonstrator of truth, according to his own confession, he did nothing for the purpose of proving his solitary divinity. . . . The life and triumph of Jesus formed an epoch in the history of the race. His coming and victory marked a new era in human affairs; he introduced a new because a more complete ideal to the earth, and when his three most intimate companions saw in some measure what the new life really signified, they fell to the earth, speechless with awe and admiration.”

By coming into this complete realization of his oneness with the Father, by mastering, absolutely mastering every circumstance that crossed his path through life, even to the death of the body, and by pointing out to us the great laws which are the same for us as they were for him, he has given us an ideal of life, an ideal for us to attain to *here and now*, that we could not have without him. *One has conquered first; all may conquer afterward.* By completely realizing it first for himself, and then by pointing out to others this great law of the at-one-ment with the Father, he has become probably the world’s greatest savior.

Don’t mistake his mere person for his life and his teachings, an error that has been made in connection with most all great teachers by their disciples over and over again. And if you have been among the number who have been preaching a dead Christ, then for humanity’s sake, for Christ’s sake, for God’s sake, and I speak most reverently, don’t steal the people’s time any longer, don’t waste your own time more, in giving them stones in place of bread, dead form for the spirit of living truth. In his own words, “let the dead bury their dead.” Come out from among them. Teach as did Jesus, *the living Christ*. Teach as did Jesus, *the Christ within*. Find this in all its transcendent beauty and power—find it as Jesus found it, then you also will

be one who will speak with authority. Then you will be able to lead large numbers of others to its finding. This is the pearl of great price.

Plenty of All Things—The Law of Prosperity

This is the Spirit of Infinite Plenty, the Power that has brought, that is continually bringing, all things into expression in material form. He who lives in the realization of his oneness with this Infinite Power becomes a magnet to attract to himself a continual supply of whatsoever things he desires.

If one hold himself in the thought of poverty, he will be poor, and the chances are that he will remain in poverty. If he hold himself, whatever present conditions may be, continually in the thought of prosperity, he sets into operation forces that will sooner or later bring him into prosperous conditions. The law of attraction works unceasingly throughout the universe, and the one great and never-changing fact in connection with it is, as we have found, that like attracts like. If we are one with this Infinite Power, this source of all things, then in the degree that we live in the realization of this oneness, in that degree do we actualize in ourselves a power that will bring to us an abundance of all things that it is desirable for us to have. In this way we come into possession of a power whereby we can actualize at all times those conditions that we desire.

As all truth exists *now*, and awaits simply our perception of it, so all things necessary for present needs exist *now*, and await simply the power in us to appropriate them. God holds all things in His hands. His constant word is, My child, acknowledge me in all your ways, and in the degree that you do this, in the degree that you live this, then what is mine is yours. Jehovah-jireh—the Lord will provide. “He giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.” He giveth liberally to all men who put themselves in the right attitude to receive from Him. He forces no good things upon any one.

The old and somewhat prevalent idea of godliness and poverty has absolutely no basis for its existence, and the sooner we get away from it the

better. It had its birth in the same way that the idea of asceticism came into existence, when the idea prevailed that there was necessarily a warfare between the flesh and the spirit. It had its origin therefore in the minds of those who had a distorted, a one-sided view of life. True godliness is in a sense the same as true wisdom. The one who is truly wise, and who uses the forces and powers with which he is endowed, to him the great universe always opens her treasure house. The supply is always equal to the demand—equal to the demand when the demand is rightly, wisely made. When one comes into the realization of these higher laws, then the fear of want ceases to tyrannize over him.

Are you out of a job? Let the fear that you will not get another take hold of and *dominate* you, and the chances are that it may be a long time before you will get another, or the one that you do get may be a very poor one indeed. Whatever the circumstances, you must realize that you have within you forces and powers that you can set into operation that will triumph over any and all apparent or temporary losses. Set these forces into operation and you will then be placing a magnet that will draw to you a situation that may be far better than the one you have lost, and the time may soon come when you will be even thankful that you lost the old one.

Recognize, working in and through you, the same Infinite Power that creates and governs all things in the universe, the same Infinite Power that governs the endless systems of worlds in space. Send out your thought—thought is a force, and it has occult power of unknown proportions when rightly used and wisely directed—send out your thought that the right situation or the right work will come to you at the right time, in the right way, and that you will recognize it when it comes. Hold to this thought, never allow it to weaken, hold to it, and continually water it with firm expectation. You in this way put your advertisement into a psychical, a spiritual newspaper, a paper that has not a limited circulation, but one that will make its way not only to the utmost bounds of the earth, but of the very universe itself. It is an advertisement, moreover, which if rightly placed on your part, will be far more effective than any advertisement you could possibly put into any printed sheet, no matter what claims are made in regard to its being “the great advertising medium.” In the degree that you come into this realization and live in harmony with the higher laws and forces, in that degree will you be able to do this effectively.

If you wish to look through the “want” columns of the newspapers, then do it not in the ordinary way. Put the higher forces into operation and thus place it on a higher basis. As you take up the paper, take this attitude of mind: If there is here an advertisement that it will be well for me to reply to, the moment I come to it I will recognize it. Affirm this, believe it, expect it. If you do this in full faith you will somehow feel the intuition the moment you come to the right one, and this intuition will be nothing more nor less than your own soul speaking to you. When it speaks then act at once.

If you get the job and it does not prove to be exactly what you want, if you feel that you are capable of filling a better one, then the moment you enter upon it take the attitude of mind that this situation is the steppingstone that will lead you to one that will be still better. Hold this thought steadily, affirm it, believe it, expect it, and all the time be faithful, *absolutely faithful* to the situation in which you are at present placed. If you are *not* faithful to it then the chances are that it will not be the steppingstone to something better, but to something poorer. If you are faithful to it, the time may soon come when you will be glad and thankful, when you will rejoice, that you lost your old position.

This is the law of prosperity: When apparent adversity comes, be not cast down by it, but make the best of it, and always look forward for better things, for conditions more prosperous. To hold yourself in this attitude of mind is to set into operation subtle, silent, and irresistible forces that sooner or later will actualize in material form that which is today merely an idea. But ideas have occult power, and ideas, when rightly planted and rightly tended, are the seeds that actualize material conditions.

Never give a moment to complaint, but utilize the time that would otherwise be spent in this way in looking forward and actualizing the conditions you desire. Suggest prosperity to yourself. See yourself in a prosperous condition. Affirm that you will before long be in a prosperous condition. Affirm it calmly and quietly, but strongly and confidently. Believe it, believe it absolutely. Expect it—keep it continually watered with expectation. You thus make yourself a magnet to attract the things that you desire. Don’t be afraid to suggest, to affirm these things, for by so doing you put forth an ideal which will begin to clothe itself in material form. In this way you are utilizing agents among the most subtle and powerful in the universe. If you are particularly desirous for anything that you feel it is

good and right for you to have, something that will broaden your life or that will increase your usefulness to others, simply hold the thought that at the right time, in the right way, and through the right instrumentality, there will come to you or there will open up for you the way whereby you can attain what you desire.

I know of a young lady who a short time ago wanted some money very badly. She wanted it for a good purpose; she saw no reason why she shouldn't have it. She is one who has come into an understanding of the power of the interior forces. She took and held herself in the attitude of mind we have just pointed out. In the morning she entered into the silence for a few moments. In this way she brought herself into a more complete harmony with the higher powers. Before the day closed a gentleman called, a member of a family with which she was acquainted. He asked her if she would do for the family some work that they wanted done. She was a little surprised that they should ask her to do this particular kind of work, but she said to herself, "Here is a call. I will respond and see what it will lead to." She undertook the work. *She did it well.* When she had completed it there was put into her hands an amount of money far beyond what she had expected. She felt that it was an amount too large for the work she had done. She protested. They replied, "No; you have done us a service that transcends in value the amount we offer to pay you." The sum thus received was more than sufficient for the work she wished to accomplish.

This is but one of many instances in connection with the wise and effective use of the higher powers. It also carries a lesson,—Don't fold your hands and expect to see things drop into your lap, but set into operation the higher forces and then take hold of the first thing that offers itself. Do what your hands find to do, *and do it well.* If this work is not thoroughly satisfactory to you, then affirm, believe, and expect that it is the agency that will lead you to something better. "The basis for attracting the best of all the world can give to you is to first surround, own, and live in these things in mind, or what is falsely called imagination. All so-called imaginings are realities and forces of unseen element. Live in mind in a palace and gradually palatial surroundings will gravitate to you. But so living is *not* pining, or longing, or complainingly wishing. It is when you are 'down in the world,' calmly and persistently seeing yourself as up. It is when you are now compelled to eat from a tin plate, regarding that tin plate as only the

certain step to one of silver. It is not envying and growling at other people who have silver plate. That growling is just so much capital stock taken from the bank account of mental force.”

A friend who knows the power of the interior forces, and whose life is guided in every detail by them, has given a suggestion in this form: When you are in the arms of the bear, even though he is hugging you, look him in the face and laugh, but all the time keep your eye on the bull. If you allow all of your attention to be given to the work of the bear, the bull may get entirely out of your sight. In other words, if you yield to adversity the chances are that it will master you, but if you recognize in yourself the power of mastery over conditions then adversity will yield to you, and will be changed into prosperity. If when it comes you calmly and quietly recognize it, and use the time that might otherwise be spent in regrets, and fears, and forebodings, in setting into operation the powerful forces within you, it will soon take its leave.

Faith, absolute dogmatic faith, is the only law of true success. When we recognize the fact that a man carries his success or his failure with him, and that it does not depend upon outside conditions, we will come into the possession of powers that will quickly change outside conditions into agencies that make for success. When we come into this higher realization and bring our lives into complete harmony with the higher laws, we will then be able so to focus and direct the awakened interior forces, that they will go out and return laden with that for which they are sent. We will then be great enough to attract success, and it will not always be apparently just a little ways ahead. We can then establish in ourselves a center so strong that instead of running hither and thither for this or that, we can stay at home and draw to us the conditions we desire. If we firmly establish and hold to this center, things will seem continually to come our way.

The one who has come into the realization of the higher life no longer has a desire for the accumulation of enormous wealth, any more than he has a desire for any other *excess*. In the degree that he comes into the recognition of the fact that he is wealthy within, external wealth becomes less important in his estimation. When he comes into the realization of the fact that there is a source within from which he can put forth a power to call to him and actualize in his hands at any time a sufficient supply for all his needs, he no longer burdens himself with vast material accumulations that

require his constant care and attention, and thus take his time and his thought from the real things of life. In other words, he first finds the *kingdom*, and he realizes that when he has found this, all other things follow in full measure.

It is as hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven, said the Master—he who having nothing had everything—as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. In other words, if a man give all his time to the accumulation, the hoarding of outward material possessions far beyond what he can possibly ever use, what time has he for the finding of that wonderful kingdom, which when found, brings all else with it. Which is better, to have millions of dollars, and to have the burden of taking care of it all—for the one always involves the other—or to come into the knowledge of such laws and forces that every need will be supplied in good time, to know that no good thing shall be withheld, to know that we have it in our power to make the supply always equal to the demand?

Wealth beyond a certain amount cannot be used, and when it cannot be used it then becomes a hindrance rather than an aid, a curse rather than a blessing. There is no wiser use that those who have great accumulations can make of them than wisely to put them into life, into character, *day by day while they live*. In this way their lives will be continually enriched and increased. The time will come when it will be regarded as a disgrace for a man to die and leave vast accumulations behind him.

How Men Have Become Prophets, Seers, Sages, and Saviors

All the prophets, seers, sages, and saviors in the world's history became what they became, and consequently had the powers they had, through an entirely natural process. They all recognized and came into the conscious realization of their oneness with the Infinite Life. God is no respecter of persons. He doesn't create prophets, seers, sages, and saviors as such. He creates men. But here and there one recognizes his true identity, recognizes the oneness of his life with the Source whence it came. He lives in the realization of this oneness, and in turn becomes a prophet, seer, sage, or savior. Neither is God a respecter of races or of nations. He has no chosen people; but here and there a race or nation becomes a respecter of God and hence lives the life of a chosen people.

There has been no age or place of miracles in distinction from any other age or place. What we term miracles have abounded in all places and at all times where conditions have been made for them. They are being performed today just as much as they ever have been when the laws governing them are respected. Mighty men, we are told they were, mighty men who walked with God; and in the words "who walked with God" lies the secret of the words "mighty men." Cause, effect.

The Lord never prospers any man, but the man prospers because he acknowledges the Lord, and lives in accordance with the higher laws. Solomon was given the opportunity of choosing whatever he desired; his better judgment prevailed and he chose wisdom. But when he chose wisdom he found that it included all else beside. We are told that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. I don't believe it. God never hardens any one's heart. Pharaoh hardened his own heart and God was blamed for it. But

when Pharaoh hardened his heart and disobeyed the voice of God, the plagues came. Again, cause, effect. Had he, on the contrary, listened—in other words, had he opened himself to and obeyed the voice of God, the plagues would not have come.

We can be our own best friends or we can be our own worst enemies. In the degree that we become friends to the highest and best within us, we become friends to all; and in the degree that we become enemies to the highest and best within us, do we become enemies to all. In the degree that we open ourselves to the higher powers and let them manifest through us, then by the very inspirations we carry with us do we become in a sense the saviors of our fellow-men, and in this way we all are, or may become, the saviors one of another. In this way you may become, indeed, one of the world's redeemers.

The Basic Principle of all Religions—The Universal Religion

The great truth we are considering is the fundamental principle running through all religions. We find it in everyone. In regard to it all agree. It is, moreover, a great truth in regard to which all people can agree, whether they belong to the same or to different religions. People always quarrel about the trifles, about their personal views of minor insignificant points. They always come together in the presence of great fundamental truths, the threads of which run through all. The quarrels are in connection with the lower self, the agreements are in connection with the higher self.

A place may have its factions that quarrel and fight among themselves, but let a great calamity come upon the land, flood, famine, pestilence, and these little personal differences are entirely forgotten and all work shoulder to shoulder in the one great cause. The changing, the evolving self gives rise to quarrels; the permanent, the soul-self unites all in the highest efforts of love and service.

Patriotism is a beautiful thing; it is well for me to love my country, but why should I love my own country more than I love all others? If I love my own and hate others, I then show my limitations, and my patriotism will stand the test not even for my own. If I love my own country and in the same way love all other countries, then I show the largeness of my nature, and a patriotism of this kind is noble and always to be relied upon.

The view of God in regard to which we are agreed, that He is the Infinite Spirit of Life and Power that is back of all, that is working in and through all, that is the life of all, is a matter in regard to which all men, all religions can agree. With this view there can be no infidels or atheists. There are atheists and infidels in connection with many views that are held

concerning God, and thank God there are. Even devout and earnest people among us attribute things to God that no respectable men or women would permit to be attributed to themselves. This view is satisfying to those who cannot see how God can be angry with his children, jealous, vindictive. A display of these qualities always lessens our respect for men and women, and still we attribute them to God.

The earnest, sincere heretic is one of the greatest friends true religion can have. Heretics are among God's greatest servants. They are among the true servants of mankind. Christ was one of the greatest heretics the world has ever known. He allowed himself to be bound by no established or orthodox teachings or beliefs. Christ is preëminently a type of the universal. John the Baptist is a type of the personal. John dressed in a particular way, ate a particular kind of food, belonged to a particular order, lived and taught in a particular locality, and he himself recognized the fact that he must decrease while Christ must increase. Christ, on the other hand, gave himself absolutely no limitations. He allowed himself to be bound by nothing. He was absolutely universal and as a consequence taught not for his own particular day, but for all time.

This mighty truth which we have agreed upon as the great central fact of human life is the golden thread that runs through all religions. When we make it the paramount fact in our lives we will find that minor differences, narrow prejudices, and all these laughable absurdities will so fall away by virtue of their very insignificance, that a Jew can worship equally as well in a Catholic cathedral, a Catholic in a Jewish synagogue, a Buddhist in a Christian church, a Christian in a Buddhist temple. Or all can worship equally well about their own hearthstones, or out on the hillside, or while pursuing the avocations of everyday life. For true worship, only God and the human soul are necessary. It does not depend upon times, or seasons, or occasions.

Anywhere and at any time God and man in the bush may meet.

This is the great fundamental principle of the universal religion upon which all can agree. This is the great fact that is permanent. There are many things in regard to which all cannot agree. These are the things that are personal, nonessential, and so as time passes they gradually fall away. One who doesn't grasp this great truth, a Christian, for example, asks "But was not Christ inspired?" Yes, but he was not the only one inspired. Another

who is a Buddhist asks, “Was not Buddha inspired?” Yes, but he was not the only one inspired. A Christian asks, “But is not our Christian Bible inspired?” Yes, but there are other inspired scriptures. A Brahmin or a Buddhist asks, “Are not the Vedas inspired?” Yes, but there are other inspired sacred books. Your error is not in believing that your particular scriptures are inspired, but your error is—and you show your absurdly laughable limitations by it—your inability to see that other scriptures are also inspired.

The sacred books, the inspired writings, all come from the same source—God, God speaking through the souls of those who open themselves that He may thus speak. Some may be more inspired than others. It depends entirely on the relative degree that this one or that one opens himself to the Divine voice. Says one of the inspired writers in the Hebrew scriptures, Wisdom is the breath of the power of God, and *in all ages* entering into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets.

The great fundamental principles of all religions are the same. They differ only in their minor details according to the various degrees of unfoldment of different people. I am sometimes asked, “To what religion do you belong?” What religion? Why, bless you, there is only one religion—the religion of the living God. There are, of course, the various creeds of the same religion arising from the various interpretations of different people, but they are all of minor importance. The more unfolded the soul the less important do these minor differences become. There are also, of course, the various so-called religions. There is in reality, however, but one religion.

Entering Now Into the Realization of the Highest Riches

I hear the question, What can be said in a concrete way in regard to the method of coming into this realization? The facts underlying it are, indeed, most beautiful and true, but how can we actualize in ourselves the realization that carries with it such wonderful results?

The method is not difficult if we do not of ourselves make it difficult. The principal word to be used is the word—Open. Simply to open your mind and heart to this divine inflow which is waiting only for the opening of the gate, that it may enter. It is like opening the gate of the trough which conducts the water from the reservoir above into the field below. The water, by virtue of its very nature, will rush in and irrigate the field if the gate is but opened. As to the realization of our oneness with this Infinite Life and Power, after seeing, as I think we have clearly seen by this time, the relations it bears to us and we to it, the chief thing to be said is simply—Realize your oneness with it. The open mind and heart whereby one is brought into the receptive attitude is the first thing necessary. Then the earnest, sincere desire.

It may be an aid at first to take yourself for a few moments each day into the quiet, into the silence, where you will not be agitated by the disturbances that enter in through the avenues of the physical senses. There in the quiet alone with God, put yourself into the receptive attitude. Calmly, quietly, and expectantly desire that this realization break in upon and take possession of your soul. As it breaks in upon and takes possession of the soul, it will manifest itself to your mind, and from this you will feel its manifestations in every part of your body. Then in the degree that you open yourself to it you will feel a quiet, peaceful, illuminating power that will

harmonize body, soul, and mind, and that will then harmonize these with all the world. You are now on the mountain top, and the voice of God is speaking to you. *Then, as you descend, carry this realization with you.* Live in it, waking, working, thinking, walking, sleeping. In this way, although you may not be continually on the mountain top, you will nevertheless be continually living in the realization of all the beauty, and inspiration, and power you have felt there.

Moreover, the time will come when in the busy office or on the noisy street you can enter into the silence by simply drawing the mantle of your own thoughts about you and realizing that there and everywhere the Spirit of Infinite Life, Love, Wisdom, Peace, Power, and Plenty is guiding, keeping, protecting, leading you. This is the spirit of continual prayer. This it is to pray without ceasing. This it is to know and to walk with God. *This it is to find the Christ within.* This is the new birth, the second birth. First that which is natural, then that which is spiritual. It is thus that the old man Adam is put off and the new man Christ is put on. This it is to be saved unto life eternal, whatever one's form of belief or faith may be; for it is life eternal to know God. "The Sweet By and By" will be a song of the past. We will create a new song—"The Beautiful Eternal Now."

This is the realization that you and I can come into this very day, this very hour, this very minute, if we desire and if we will it. And if now we merely set our faces in the right direction, it is then but a matter of time until we come into the full splendors of this complete realization. To set one's face in the direction of the mountain and then simply to journey on, whether rapidly or more slowly, will bring him to it. But unless one set his face in the right direction and make the start, he will not reach it. It was Goethe who said:

*Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute:
What you can do, or dream you can, begin it;
Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.
Only engage and then the mind grows heated;
Begin and then the work will be completed.¹*

Said the young man, Gautama Siddhârtha, I have awakened to the truth and I am resolved to accomplish my purpose—Verily I shall become a

Buddha. It was this that brought him into the life of the Enlightened One, and so into the realization of Nirvana right here in this life. That this same realization and life is within the possibilities of all here and now was his teaching. It was this that has made him the Light Bearer to millions of people.

Said the young man, Jesus, Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Making this the one great purpose of his life he came into the full and complete realization—I and the Father are one. He thus came into the full realization of the Kingdom of Heaven right here in this life. That all could come into this same realization and life here and now was his teaching. It was this that has made him the Light Bearer to millions of people.

And so far as practical things are concerned, we may hunt the wide universe through and we shall find that there is no injunction more practical than, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you. And in the light of what has gone before, I think there is no one who is open to truth and honest with himself who will fail to grasp the underlying reason and see the great laws upon which it is based.

As one comes into and lives continually in the full, conscious realization of his oneness with the Infinite Life and Power, then all else follows. This it is that brings the realization of such splendors, and beauties, and joys as a life that is thus related with the Infinite Power alone can know. This it is to come into the realization of heaven's richest treasures while walking the earth. This it is to bring heaven down to earth, or rather to bring earth up to heaven. This it is to exchange weakness and impotence for strength; sorrows and sighings for joy; fears and forebodings for faith; longings for realizations. This it is to come into fullness of peace, power, and plenty. This it is to be in tune with the Infinite.

¹ Trine is quoting a very loose 1835 translation of Goethe's *Faust* by Irish poet John Anster.—MH

CHAPTER TWELVE

“The Way”

Life is not so complex if we do not so persistently make it so. We accept the results or the effects; but we concern ourselves all too little with the realm of cause. The springs of life are all from within. Invariably it is true—as is the inner so always and inevitably will be the outer.

There is a Divine current that will bear us with peace and safety on its bosom if we are sufficiently alert and determined to find it and go with it. The natural, normal life is by a law divine under the guidance of the Spirit.

There is a mystic force that transcends the powers of the intellect and likewise of the body. There are certain faculties that we have that are not a part of the active, thinking mind; they transcend any possible activities of the active, thinking mind.

Through them we have intuitions, impulses, leadings, that instead of being merely the occasional, *should be the normal and habitual*.

They would be if we understood better the laws that pertain to them and observed them; for here, as in connection with everything in the universe and everything in human life, all is governed by law—the Elemental law of cause and effect. Supreme Intelligence, Creative Power, works only through law. There is an inner spirit or guide that rules and regulates the life when the life is brought into that state or condition whereby it can make itself known, and in turn dominate the life.

Jesus, Master of the laws of life, and supreme revealer of them to men, had a full and practical knowledge of it. He not only abundantly demonstrated it in His own life; but He made clear the way whereby it may become the common possession of other lives. Do not worry about your life, was the Master's clear-cut and repeated command. He not only gave the injunction or command, but He demonstrated the method whereby the

fears and forebodings and uncertainties of life can be displaced by a force or a power that will bring them to an end.

It was embodied in His other injunction or command that He gave utterance to so repeatedly: “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.” And by all these things, He meant, all of the common needs and necessities of the daily life.

The finding of the Kingdom of God is the recognition of the indwelling Divine Life as the source, and therefore as the Essence, of our own lives. It is the bringing of men’s minds and therefore acts into harmony with the Divine will and purpose. It is the saving of men from their lower conceptions and selves, and a lifting them up to a realization of their higher selves, which, as He taught, is eternally one with God, the Father; and which, when realized, lifts a man’s thoughts, acts, purposes, and conduct—his entire life—up to that pattern or standard.

It was not merely a poetic fancy, but the recognition of a fundamental law, as well-known laws of modern psychology, mental and spiritual science, are now clearly demonstrating, that induced the Master to say: “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the righthand and when ye turn to the left.” And again: “The Lord in the midst of thee is mighty.” And still again: “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”

How often do the meager accounts of the Master’s life tell us of His going up to the mountain to pray—*for communion with the Father*. And then we find Him invariably down among men, always where the need for help and for human service was the greatest.

This habit of taking a little time daily alone, in the quiet, in communion with one’s Source that the illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit may become alive and active in the life, and going then about one’s daily work ever open to and conscious of this Divine guidance, trusting and resting in it, strengthened and sustained always by this Divine power, will bring definiteness and direction, will bring hope and courage, will bring peace and power to everyone who will heed the Master’s injunction and will follow His example. These it has brought to great numbers to whom before, life was an enigma, and this because the life had been lived entirely from the outside.

The higher forces and powers of the inner life, those of the mind and spirit, always potential within, become of actual value only as they are recognized, realized, and used.

The Master's *Way of the Spirit*, the finding of the Kingdom within, leads into no blind alley. It leads out and triumphantly out onto the great plain of clear vision, of un-self-centered activity, of heroic endeavor and accomplishment.

If we would spend a fraction of the time that we spend in needless anxiety in definite constructive thought, in "silent demand," visualizing the conditions that we would have, with faith in their fulfillment, we would soon know that the Master's illustration of the carefree bird is fact and not fancy. It is, He said, what life should be.

The little time spent in the quiet each day, alone with one's God, that we may make and keep our connection with the Infinite Source, "our source and our life," will be a boon to any life. It will prove, if we are faithful, to be the most priceless possession that we have.

While it is impossible for one to make a formula which another should follow, the following may perchance contain some little suggestions—each must follow his or her own leading and, therefore, method.

My Father in Heaven, Infinite Spirit of life and love and wisdom and power, in whom I live and move and have my being, whence cometh my help, manifest Thyself in me.

Help me to open myself to the highest wisdom and insight and love and power, that I may serve Thee and my fellow-man, and all my fellow-creatures faithfully, and that I may have the Divine guidance and care, and that all my needs be supplied.

Oh *Christ within*, enfold and lead me and reign supreme, that the One Life that is my life I may realize and manifest ever more fully.

I am strong in the Infinite Spirit of life and love and wisdom and power. I have and shall have the Divine guidance and care; for it is the Father that worketh in me—My Father works and I work.

The following little motto—a resolve for today—may contain a little aid for the following of the *Way*.

I AM RESOLVED

I believe that my Master intended that I take His teachings in the simple, frank, and open manner in which He gave them, out on the hillside, by the calm blue waters of the Galilean sea, and out under the stars of heaven.

I believe that He knew what He meant, and that He meant what He said, when He gave the substance of all religion and the duty of man as love to God, and love and service for His fellow-men.

I am therefore resolved at this, the beginning of another day, this fresh beginning of life, to go forth eager and happy and unafraid, in that I can come into the same filial relations of love and guidance and care with my Father in Heaven that my Master realized and lived, and going before revealed to me.

I shall listen intently to know, and shall run with eager feet to do my Father's will, calm and quiet within, knowing that I shall have the Divine guidance and care, and that no harm therefore shall befall me; for I am now living in God's life and there I shall live forever.

I am resolved in all human contact to meet petulance with patience, questionings with kindness, hatred with love, eager always to do the kindly deed that brings the joy of service—and that alone makes human life truly human.

I shall seek no advantage for myself to the detriment or the harm of my neighbor, knowing that it is only through the law of mutuality that I can fully enjoy what I gain—or can even be a man.

I am resolved therefore so to live this day that, when the twilight comes and the night falls, I shall be not only another day's journey nearer home; but I shall have lived a man's part and done a man's work in the world and shall indeed deserve my Father's love and care.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A pioneering figure in the New Thought movement and one of the most popular voices in American metaphysics, RALPH WALDO TRINE was born in 1866 in Mount Morris, Illinois. The author of more than a dozen books, Trine began working as a journalist before writing his classic *In Tune With the Infinite* in 1897, which went on to sell more than two million copies and inspired a generation of spiritual and motivational writers. He died in Claremont, California, in 1958.

MAGIC OF FAITH

*The Groundbreaking Classic on the Creative Power
of Thought*

by Joseph Murphy

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Bible as Blueprint

By Mitch Horowitz

For Joseph Murphy the Bible was a metaphysical blueprint to the individual's self-development. In this regard, Murphy was similar to his contemporary and friend, the great mystic Neville Goddard. Late in life, Murphy told an interviewer that the two men, coming of age as writers and seekers in New York City in the 1930s—Murphy a recent transplant from Ireland and Neville from the West Indies—had the same teacher, a black-Jewish spiritual master named Abdullah.

In this vein, I am particularly struck by chapter three of this book, “Realizing Your Desire,” in which Murphy sounds very much in harmony with Neville. Like his fellow seeker, Murphy taught that desire is God's voice speaking to you. “Desire pushes man,” Murphy wrote, “it is the goad of action. It is behind all progress. Desire is really the cosmic urge in all of us, impelling us to go forward, onward, upward, and Godward.”

Passages like this one helped me clarify my personal search. Mine is a path of aspiration. This divided me for many years. I wasn't sure how to truly practice the teaching, “Thy will be done.” Murphy makes it clear that there is no “I” and “Thy”—all is One. The voice of higher forces reaches you through your wishes and desires, which are the impetus toward progress, achievement, and self-actualization. Murphy teaches you to trust your desires.

In a striking and daring passage, Murphy writes: “*Jesus* means your desire which, if realized, would be your savior. Jesus comes into your mind as an idea, desire, plan, purpose, vision, or some new undertaking.”

In *Magic of Faith*, which Murphy wrote in 1954, nine years before his classic *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind*, Murphy, like Neville, highlighted the uses of Scripture as a symbolical and practical guidebook to understanding the creative potentials of your mind. Murphy also used case

studies to drive home his points of application. The sum total of what he wrote can give you a larger, more epic sense of yourself and your possibilities.

Neville taught that the imagination is God. Murphy saw God functioning in us through the imagination. But the difference is minor. Both men believed that you, the individual, have far too small a sense of who you really are: a branch of the Divine clothed in flesh. Murphy wrote this book, distilled here to its essentials, to introduce you to that greater life. It is not outside of you. It is your very birthright.

The Song Of Triumph

You sing the Song of God, or the mood of triumph, when you subjectively feel that you are that which your five senses tell you you are not; you are then God-intoxicated and seized with a Divine frenzy—a sort of mad joy.

Haven't you at times seen a person bubbling over with enthusiasm and intoxicated with joy? That person is singing the Song of God at that moment. "In thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore."

The real You is a spiritual, eternal, perfect being. You are a living expression of God now. "I have said, Ye *are* Gods; and all of you are children of the most High."

When you pray, it is a romance with God or your Good. Your desire, when realized, brings you joy and peace. In order to realize the desire of your heart, which is depicted in *The Song of Solomon* as your beloved, you must woo it; let that desire of yours captivate, hold, and thrill you. Let it fire your imagination. You will always move in the direction of the desire that dominates your mind.

If you are saying to yourself, "I can't. It is too late now. I am too old, and I don't know the right people"—in other words if you are mentally feeding on all the reasons why you cannot do something, or be what you want to be, you are not making "thy flock to rest at noon."

At noon the sun casts no shadow; likewise, when you pray, you are not to permit any shadow of fear or doubt to cross your path, or deflect you from your goal or aim in life. The world of confusion shall be rejected, and you shall mentally eat of or meditate on the reality of your desire.

Once I talked to an alcoholic who said, "Don't say anything about this Godstuff to me. I don't want God. I want a healing." This man was deeply resentful toward a former wife who had remarried; moreover, he was full of

grudges against several people. He needed the *doves' eyes*, which means he needed to see the truth that would give him peace of mind.

I asked him, "Will you pray with me now? All I ask is that you be sincere; if you are, you will experience an inner peace which passeth all human understanding."

He relaxed his body, and I said to him, "Imagine you are talking to the Invisible Presence within you—the Almighty Power which created the Cosmos. It can do all things. Say, 'Thank you, thank you, for this inner peace.' Say it over and over again."

After ten minutes in silent meditation, he was blinded by an interior, Inner Light. It seemed to come from the floor where he was. The whole room was flooded with Light!

He exclaimed, "All I see is Light! What's wrong?" Then he relaxed into sleep in my office, and his face did truly shine as the sun. He awakened in about fifteen minutes, and was completely at peace saying, "God truly is! God is!" This man had found his Beloved; It had *doves' eyes*.

As you fall asleep at night, tell your desire how fair it is, and how wonderful you would feel in realizing it. Begin to fall in love with your ideal. Praise it; exalt it. "Arise my Love!" Feel that you are what you want to be. Go to sleep in the consciousness of being or doing what you long to do.

I told a man in one of the islands one time "to sleep" on the idea of success. He was selling magazine subscriptions. He became a great success by following this procedure: I suggested that he think of success prior to sleep; i.e., what success meant to him; what he would do if he were successful. I told him to use his imagination; then as he was about to go to sleep, fall in love with the idea of success this way: Repeat the one word, "Success," over and over again. He should get into the mood of success; then fall off to sleep in the arms of his Everlasting Lover. Your Lover—your Divine Presence—will bring to pass whatever you accept as true. The conditions, experiences, and events of your life are called children of your mind.

You know when there is no longer any argument or doubt in your conscious or subconscious mind, your prayer is answered, because the two have agreed as touching upon it, and it is so.

I had a long talk with a man in England who had trouble with his leg. He had been confined to his home for nine months, and was unable to lean on his leg or walk. The first thing I did was to ask him what he would do if he were healed? He said, "I would again play polo, swim, golf, and climb the Alps which I used to do every year." That was the answer I was seeking.

I told him in the simplest way how to achieve the perfect use of his legs again. The first thing was to imagine he was doing the things he would do. I painted an imaginary picture for him. For fifteen or twenty minutes three times a day he sat in his study and imagined he was playing polo; he assumed the mental mood of actually performing the role of a polo player. He became the actor; an actor participates in the role.

Note carefully that he did not see himself playing polo; that would be an illusion. He *felt* himself playing polo. He actualized it by living the drama in his mind or *banquet house*.

At noon he would quiet the mind; still the body, and feel his Alpine clothes on him. He would feel and imagine he was climbing the Alps; he would feel the cold air on his face, and hear the voice of his old associates. He lived the drama and felt the naturalness and the tangibility of the rocks.

At night prior to sleep, before going into the Arms of his Beloved—His Deeper Self—he would play a game of golf. He would hold the club; touch the ball with his hand; put it in place, and tee off. He would swing his clubs, and delight in watching where the ball went.

Within two months this man's leg was healed. He did all the things he imagined he would do. The *idea* of climbing the Alps, plus the *desire* to play polo again, said to this man, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," from your belief in a physical handicap; that is what he did.

The law of the subconscious is one of compulsion. When you subjectively feel you are swimming—for example, when you feel the chill of the water, and the naturalness of your various swimming strokes—you will sooner or later be compelled to swim. Whatever the handicap, whether fear or a physical condition, you will do what you subjectively felt you were doing.

Your desire, dream, ambition, goal, or aim is your savior! It is walking down the corridor of your mind, saying to you, "Arise, my love, and come away," and enjoy the good and glorious things of life.

No matter what the problem is, or its magnitude, you have really nothing to do but convince yourself of the truth that you are affirming. As quickly as you succeed in convincing yourself of the reality of your desire, results will automatically follow. Your subconscious mind will faithfully reproduce what you impregnated within it.

The Bible says, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” You have the freedom to choose the tone, feeling, or mood you enter into. The manifestation of your feeling or conviction is the secret of your lover or subconscious mind. Your external actions are, therefore, determined by your subconscious beliefs and impressions.

Your thought and feeling determine your destiny. The knowledge of the truth is saying to you now, “The winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone.” *The winter* represents that cold state when the seeds are frozen in the bosom of the earth and nothing is growing. The winter and all the seasons are in your mind.

Do everything from the standpoint of the One God and His Love. For instance, when you shop, pray before purchasing. Say, “God guides me in all my purchases.” Say quietly to the saleslady or salesman, “God is prospering him.”

Whatever you do, do it with love and good will. Pour out love, peace, and good will to all. Claim frequently that God’s Love and Transcendent Beauty flow through all my thoughts, words, and actions. Make a habit of this. Fill your mind with the eternal verities; then you will see that “The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of *birds* is come!” You will begin to *flower*; yes, you will begin to blossom forth.

When you go into a home, and you see confusion, quarrelling, and strife, you will realize within yourself, that the peace of God reigns supreme in the minds and hearts of all those in this house; you will see the flower of peace made manifest and expressed.

Where you see financial lack and limitation, you will realize the infinite abundance and wealth of God forever flowing, filling up all the empty vessels, and leaving a Divine surplus. As you do this, you will live in the garden of God where only orchids and all beautiful flowers grow; for only God’s ideas circulate in you.

Tennyson said, “Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”

One time as a boy I was lost in the woods. I sat down under a tree, and remembered a prayer that starts with, “Our Father, He will show us the way; let us be quiet, and He will lead us.” I quietly repeated, “Father, lead us.”

A wave of peace came over me, which I can still recall. *The voice of the turtle dove* became real. *The turtle dove* is intuition which means being taught from within. An overpowering feeling came over me to go in a certain direction as if I were being pushed ahead. Two of the boys came with me; the others did not. We were led out of that thick jungle, as if by an Unseen Hand.

Great musicians have listened and heard the music within; they wrote down what they heard inwardly. In meditation Lincoln listened to the principle of liberty; Beethoven heard the principle of harmony.

If you are intensely interested in the principle of mathematics, you are loving it; as you love it, it will reveal all its secrets to you.

Jesus heard *the voice of the turtle dove* when he said, “Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid.” How wonderful you will feel as you drink in these words and fill your mind with their therapeutic potency.

Job heard *the voice of the turtle* when he said, “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.” “Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind is stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.” “For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace.”

If you want guidance, claim Infinite Intelligence is guiding you now; It will differentiate Itself as right action for you. You will know you have received the answer, for *the dove of peace* will whisper in your ear, “Peace be still.” You will know the Divine answer, for you will be at peace, and your decision will be right.

A girl recently was wondering whether to accept a position in New York for considerably more money or remain in Los Angeles in her present position. At night as she went to sleep, she asked herself this question, “What would be my reaction if I had made the right decision now?” The answer came to her, “I would feel wonderful. I would feel happy having made the right decision.” Then she said, “I will act as though I had made the right decision,” and she began to say, “Isn’t it wonderful! Isn’t it

wonderful!” over and over again, as a lullaby, and lulled herself to sleep in the feeling, “It is wonderful.”

She had a dream that night, and the voice in the dream said, “Stand still! Stand still!” She awakened immediately, and knew of course that was *the voice of the turtle dove*—the voice of intuition.

The fourth dimensional-self within her can see ahead; it knows all and sees all; it can read the minds of the owners of the business in the east. She remained in her present position. Subsequent events proved the truth of her Inner Voice; the Eastern concern went into bankruptcy. “I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, *and* will speak unto him in a dream.”

By realizing and knowing these qualities and attributes of God are being expressed through you, and that you are a channel for the Divine, every atom of your being begins to dance to the rhythm of the Eternal God. Beauty, order, harmony, and peace appear in your mind, body, and business world as you feed among the lilies; you feel your oneness with God, Life, and God’s Infinite Riches. You are married to your Beloved, for you are now married to God; you are a bride of the Lord (I AM). From this moment forward you will bring forth children of your Beloved; they will bear the image and likeness of their Father and Mother.

The *father* is God’s idea; the *mother* is the emotionalizing of the idea, and its subjective embodiment. From that union of idea and feeling come forth your health, abundance, happiness, and inner peace.

When you go to sleep tonight, forgive everyone, and imagine and feel your desire is fulfilled. Become absolutely and completely indifferent to all thought of failure, because you now know the law. As you accept the end, you have, as Thomas Troward so beautifully stated, willed the means to the realization of the end. As you are about to enter sleep, galvanize yourself into the feeling of being or having your desire. Your mental acceptance or your feeling as you go to sleep is the request you make of your Beloved; then She looks at your request (conviction in the subconscious mind), and being the Absolute Lover, she must give you what you asked.

When you pray, accept as true what your reason and five senses deny and reject. Remain faithful to your idea by being full of faith every step of the way. When your consciousness is fully qualified with the acceptance of your desire, all the fear will go away. Trust in the reality of your ideal or

desire until you are filled full of the feeling of being it; then *the day will break and all shadows will flee away*. Yes, the answer to your prayer will come, and light up the heavens of your mind bringing you peace.

No matter what the problem is, how acute, dark, or hopeless things seem to be, turn now to God, and say, “How is it in God and Heaven?” The answer will softly steal over your mind like the dew from heaven: “All is peace, joy, bliss, perfection, wholeness, harmony, and beauty”; then reject the evidence of your senses, and *feed among the lilies of God and Heaven*, such as peace, harmony, joy, and perfection. Realize what is true of God must be true of you and your surroundings. Continue in this abiding trust and faith in God “until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.”

The Practice of the Presence of God

“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou ART THERE, If I take the wings of the morning, AND dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

This one hundred and thirty ninth Psalm is one of the most beautiful Psalms in the Bible. It is a matchless, priceless gem of truth. The language of this Psalm is unsurpassed for beauty and elegance. David’s marvelous conception of the Omnipresence of God was found in this passage.

The religion outlined in the Bible is the practice of the Presence of God. To understand and to intelligently practice this truth, you will find is the way to health, harmony, peace, and spiritual progress. The practice of the Presence is powerful beyond imagination. Let us not overlook it, because of its utter simplicity.

The first step is to realize that God is the Only Power. The next thing to become aware of is that all things—no matter what they are—represent God in manifestation. The whole world is God in infinite differentiation, as God never repeats Himself; this is the whole story, and the greatest of all truths. It is really the all-inclusive, all-encompassing truth.

I know many students who sit down for five or ten minutes every day, and meditate on the fact that God is the Only Presence and the Only Power. They let their thoughts dwell on this profound truth; they look at it from all angles; then they begin to think that every person they meet is an expression of God; that in fact everything they see is God made manifest; it is God dramatizing Himself for the joy of expressing Himself. As they do this, they find their whole world changing; they experience better health; outer conditions improve, and they are possessed of a new vitality and energy.

Your whole world will change as you really begin to see God in everything and in everyone. "For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle *shall* be in peace." This means that the man who begins to see God everywhere, and who follows and practices the good, will not be afraid of anything. As a matter of fact the whole world will be his friend, and everything will extend the offer of help whether animate, or what the world calls inanimate.

The only way to magnify the Presence of God in the eyes of others is to radiate at all times the sunlight of God's Love. Love God or Truth, and you will be under a Divine compulsion for good. You cannot go wrong. You will find that you will never make any real mistake or a wrong choice. Love of all things good, or of the truth, is really the touch of Midas.

In a building the superstructure depends upon the foundation. Let *your* foundation be God and Him alone. You are always practicing the Presence of God when you activate your mind with true ideas, which heal and strengthen you. Your mind needs constant cleansing, disciplining, and direction. By practicing the Presence of God, you are constantly cleansing your mind; this is prayer.

Think all day long from the standpoint of the One God about every person and every situation you meet. Pray at work by realizing God is your partner, and God is in action through all your associates.

Pray driving your car, by realizing the vehicle is God's idea moving from point to point freely, joyously, and lovingly.

Pray when you go into a store by realizing God directs your purchases, that God is prospering the clerk who waits on you, and that the store is being governed and directed by God's Wisdom.

Let prayer be the orderly, right way of doing everything. Practice the Golden Rule in all your transactions; then you are writing God's Law in your heart.

It is essential for you to get the right concept and understanding of God. Have you meditated? or have you asked yourself what God is? Your concept of God molds, fashions, and shapes your whole future. Your real belief about God is of supreme importance. It is done unto you as you believe. If you say and believe God is the only Presence, the only Power,

Infinitely Good, Perfect, Boundless Love, and Limitless Life, your whole life will be transformed.

If you say, “Oh, I do not know what I think of God; my thoughts are confused and muddled,” confusion will reign in your life. It does not really matter whether you call God: Reality, Infinite Intelligence, Being, Life, Allah, or Brahma; the real Name of God, in so far as you are concerned, is your concept or your belief about God.

A man said to me one time, “I believe in God, and that is all that matters.” I asked him, “But tell me, what sort of God do you really believe in?” He said, “I believe in the laws of nature.” That was his idea of God, and he cannot transcend this belief. He is subject to that belief, thereby limiting his Inner Powers. He had no idea that God was his own Life, that he could contact this Presence with his thought, that he could be guided, and that he could heal his body by prayer. He was bound by his limited belief about God. Many have said to me that God is some kind of a man in the skies—a sort of a glorified man. Others say and believe there are three persons in God. You will always manifest the result of your belief. If you believe that God is some sort of a tyrannical, inscrutable being living in the skies, ready to judge and punish you for your mistakes and violations of man-made laws and religious taboos, you are bound by that belief, and you cause pain, misery, guilt complexes, and so forth. This is why Phineas Quimby said, “Man is belief expressed.”

Your concept of God enters into all departments of your life; it is bound to have its effect upon you. God is Life, and Life seeks to express Itself as Love, Light, Truth, and Beauty. Life cannot wish death, sickness, or disease. To say that Life wishes death would be a violation of its own nature. Life cannot have a tendency toward limitation of any kind. Life is a Oneness, a Wholeness, a Unity, and It seeks to express that Unity in the formed universe.

In order to practice the Presence, you must do the will of God. What does this mean? *The will of God* must always be the nature of God. You can rest assured the will of God must always be something wonderful and glorious. “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

If your desire, idea, or intention is constructive, if it will bless others, and if it is in keeping with the universal principle of harmony, your will or

desire is God's will. Your desire for wealth, true place, abundance, security, and better living conditions conforms to the will or tendency of Life or God.

Life is forever seeking to express Itself through you along higher levels. Enthroned in your mind the concept that God is the Only Presence, the Only Power, and that God is Infinitely Good and Perfect. Think of some of God's qualities and attributes, such as Boundless Love, Infinite Intelligence, Indescribable Beauty, Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence. Believe these truths about God, and your whole life will change. You will begin to express more and more God-like qualities every day. Believe that God is All Life, All Love, All Truth, and All Beauty; accept It in the same way as you accept the sun in the heavens each morning; then you will find a great sense of peace and goodwill stealing over your mind and heart.

Do you believe in a vengeful, capricious, anthropomorphic Deity who sends sickness, trials, and tribulation to you? Watch the effect of such a belief. If you do, you will be like the man who said to me one time, "God sent this arthritis to me for a good purpose, and I suppose I must just bear it." This is superstition; such an attitude of mind has no foundation. He had arthritis for fifteen years, and he could not overcome it.

When this man with arthritis got a new concept of God, and he learned to forgive those whom he deeply resented, by realizing the Love of God was dissolving in his mind and body everything unlike Itself, he was healed, even though it took some months. This man's concept of God worked out, and made Itself manifest in his body according to his belief.

It is not your theoretical belief about God that manifests itself, but it is your real, deep, subconscious belief.

There are people who forget to practice the Presence when a lawsuit or verdict goes against them. Even though the judge rendered a verdict which seems unjust to you, continue to believe that it is God in action, and that there is a Divine, harmonious solution for all concerned; the matter will come right in due season. You cannot lose; you can only win by practicing the Presence.

God is Pure Spirit, Infinite Mind, and Infinite Intelligence. The Bible calls the Name of God, "I AM," meaning Pure, Unconditioned Being. No one can, of course, define God, for God is Infinite, but there are certain Truths which the illumined of all ages have perceived as true of God, and

that is why the Bible says, “I AM THAT I AM.” What is “I AM?” It is your True Being—your Real Self; nobody can say, “I AM,” for you. That is the Presence of God in you, and your Real Identity. Whatever you affix to “I AM,” and believe, you become. Always claim, “I am strong, powerful, radiant, happy, joyous, illumined, and inspired;” then you are truly practicing the Presence, for all these qualities are true of God.

When you say, “I am weak,” “I am inferior,” “I am no good,” you are denying God in the midst of you, and lying about Him.

Brother Lawrence of the 17th century was a monk. He was a saintly man, and wholly devoted to God. The book entitled *The Practice of the Presence of God* reveals a great humility, simplicity, and a mystic touch with God. “To do the will of God was,” as he said, “his whole business.” Brother Lawrence practiced the Presence when washing the dishes or scrubbing the floor. His attitude was that it was all God’s work. His consciousness and awareness of the Divine Presence was no less when employed in the kitchen, than when he was before the altar. The way to God was to Brother Lawrence through the heart and through Love. His superiors marveled at the man who, though only educated to the point of reading and writing, could express himself with such beauty and profound wisdom. It was the Voice of God within him that prompted all his sayings.

This is how he daily practiced God’s Holy Presence: He said in effect, “I have put myself in Your Keeping; it is Your Business I am about, and so everything will be all right.” How beautiful! How simple, yet how soul-stirring is this prayer! He said the only sorrow he could experience would be the loss of the sense of God’s Presence, but he never feared that, being wholly aware of God’s Love and Absolute Goodness.

In his early life he feared he would be damned; this torture of his mind persisted for four years; then he saw the whole cause of this negativity was lack of faith in God; seeing that, he was freed and entered into a life of continual joy.

Begin now to practice the Presence by keeping your eyes on God, or all things Good, by seeing God in everyone you meet, and by constantly affirming, “It is God in action in all departments of my life.” Calmly trust God’s Holy Presence to lead you to green pastures and still waters. Love the Truth with a love that leaves no room for care or doubt. No matter what your work may be, as you go to your business say, “God walks and talks in

me. I rely on God's guidance and wisdom completely." Give thanks for the perfect day. Do as Brother Lawrence suggests, whenever your attention wanders away on fear or doubt, bring it back to the contemplation of His Holy Presence.

To secure and know the life of peace and joy, school yourself daily to have an intimate, loving, familiar, humble conversation with God all day long. In this way you will draw upon God's grace abundantly. You shall become illumined by an Inner Light, and you will behold the inner vision of God, your Beloved.

CASE HISTORIES

Case History Number One

This interesting case from my files may bless many of you. This man invested a large sum of money in a certain organization. He had a very high regard for the two men who were active partners in this business. They appropriated the money that he gave them for themselves, and a little later they went into bankruptcy. He was very bitter and resentful, because he had practically put his life's savings into this venture. He was also ill, due to the hatred in his heart.

I explained to this man that resentment is never justified, and that many people make investments in land, stocks, bonds, etc., and have lost their money, but that it is absurd to blame the broker or the real estate man, because we erred in judgment. In a great measure this man's resentment was caused by a feeling of guilt for his own mistake, which he refused to admit. He was blaming the other men by an active resentment for his own shortcoming and failure. He prayed his way through it by the practice of His Presence in this way: "I now radiate love and goodwill to these two men. I humbly, sincerely, and honestly wish for them God's guidance, inner peace, and Divine Love. I wish for each one of them: prosperity, success, and a richness of life. It is God in action in all departments of their life. I mean this; I am sincere. My mind is now clear, clean, poised, serene, and expectant of happiness. God is guiding me in all ways. Nobody can take happiness, peace, or wealth away from me. I am one with God, and my business is God's Business. I am now minding my own business. The money I gave these men comes back to me in peace and harmony." He

prayed like this night and morning, and during the day when hateful thoughts would come, he would say, "God is with me now."

In two weeks he was at peace with the world. All the resentful thoughts were burned up in his deeper mind; they were withered away by realizing God in action in his own life, and the life of those whom he said wronged him. A relative died in the interim, and a most interesting thing happened: He was bequeathed the exact amount he lost in that business venture. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways."

Realizing Your Desire

Desire is the power behind all action. We could not lift our hand or walk unless we had the desire or urge to move. Desire is the gift of God. As Browning said, “Tis thou, God, who giveth, ‘tis I who receive.”

It is man who receives—not a few of the gifts of life, but all of them! “Son thou art ever with me, and all that I hath is thine.” All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine. *Our Father* holds within Himself all things we require, such as peace, harmony, abundance, guidance, joy, and infinite expression. We must grow unceasingly. We can never exhaust the Infinite Storehouse.

Let us realize a few simple truths: It is due to desire that we jump out of the way of an oncoming bus. The reason we do this is because we have a basic desire to preserve our life. Self-preservation is the first law of nature.

By example, the farmer plants seed due to his desire to attain food for himself and his family. Man builds airplanes due to his desire to collapse time and space. Similar illustrations are found throughout our whole course of life.

Desire pushes man; it is the goad of action. It is behind all progress. Desire is really the cosmic urge in all of us, impelling us to go forward, onward, upward, and Godward.

Desire is the angel of God—the messenger of the Divine—saying to each one of us, “Come on up higher.”

Desire is behind all progress. It is the push of life. We find that we follow the desire that captivates and holds our attention. All of us find ourselves moving in the direction of the idea that dominates our mind for the time being.

Desire is an angel of God, telling us of something which, if accepted by us, will make our life fuller and happier. *The greater the expected benefit*

from the desire, the stronger is our desire. Where there is no expected benefit, gain, or advancement accruing, there is no desire; consequently no action is found.

“I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord.” Our ideal murmuring in our hearts is the alpha; in order that it become the omega, we must enter into the feeling that it is ours *now*, and walk the earth knowing that it is so.

Failure to realize our desire over a long period of time results in frustration and unhappiness. I have talked to many men in different parts of the country; their frequent complaint is that for years they have tried in vain to attain a certain ideal or position in life, and that they have failed miserably. They did not know that the desire to be, to do, and to have was the Still Small Voice speaking to them, and all that was necessary was for them to say, “Yes, Father, I accept and believe it”; then walk the earth knowing that, “It is done.”

It is foolish to blame or accuse others, as we must realize that others are witnesses telling us who we are—”As within, so without.” If there is discord within, there will be discord without. If we dwell in a mood of lack and limitation, others must come and testify to our lack.

I knew a woman in London one time, and on three occasions her purse was snatched from her by a thief in the tube of London; she was a wealthy woman. The explanation for this is that she was living in the fear of having her purse stolen; this was really an expectancy. “What I fear most has come upon me.”

The mood, feeling, or conviction in which we walk determines the movements and actions of others towards us. In the eleventh chapter of Mark it says, “All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall receive them.”

The word *whatsoever* in the above quotation means anything you wish; it is all inclusive. There are no specific conditions set forth; you do not have to be a churchgoer, or belong to a certain creed, or make any sacrifices. “I rejoice not in the sacrifices of man, not by power, not by might, but by the spirit saith the Lord.” “For what purposes is the multitude of thy sacrifices. I am full of the blood of rams and the fat of beast, I rejoice not in the blood of rams or he goats.” The only requisite is to believe that you have it now, or that you are the being you long to be.

Believe means to live in the state of being it; this means a complete mental acceptance where there is no longer any doubt or question in your mind. This is the state of consciousness called “a conviction.” All other procedures as cited by Isaiah are foolishness and superstition. The only prerequisite is to believe that you have received; then comes the manifestation of your ideal.

We grow through desire. It is desire that pushes us forward, for it is the cosmic urge.

Let us realize that we are all channels of the Divine—individualizations of Godconsciousness. The desire that lingers in your heart, that murmurs quietly—perhaps it has been there for months making itself known to you—is the Voice of God speaking to you, telling you to come on up higher—to arise and shine. Maybe you have looked around you and said to yourself, “What chance have I?” “Mary can, but I can’t.” “Perhaps, someday!” “It is just wishful thinking, etc.” Have many such expressions come to your mind? Remember it is your five senses and worldly reason arguing with your Higher Self. We must remember that in prayer we always shut out the evidence of our senses and reason, plus everything that contradicts or denies what we truly want; then, as Jesus commands, we go within; shut the door, and pray to our Father in secret; the Father who seeth in secret will reward thee openly. Let us now proceed to enter into this Secret Place, and perform the spiritual, creative act in our own mind.

Sit down in an armchair, relax, and let go. Practice the Nancy School technique by getting into a drowsy, meditative state, a state of effortless effort, wherein effort is reduced to a minimum.

By example if you want to be a singer on the radio, imagine you are before a microphone; the microphone is now in front of you, and you see the imaginary audience; you are the actor. (“Act as though I am, and I will be.”) You *feel* yourself into the situation; you are singing now (in your imagination); enter into the joy of it; feel the thrill of accomplishment! Continue to do this in your imagination until it begins to feel natural for you; then go off to sleep. If you have succeeded in planting your desire in your subconscious mind, you will feel a great sense of peace and satisfaction when you awaken. An interesting thing will have happened: You will have no further desire to pray about it, because it is fixed in

consciousness. The reason for this is that the creative act has been finished, and you are at rest.

After true prayer when you have reached an inner conviction, there steals over you a sense of inner peace, calm, and certitude which tells you, "All is well." This is called *the sabbath* in the Bible, or period of stillness, or rest; it is the interval that elapses between the subjective realization of your desire and its manifestation. The manner of manifestation is not known to you; that is the secret of the subjective. "My ways are past finding out."

The answer or manifestation comes as a thief in the night. You know a thief comes when you least expect him; there is always an element of surprise; perhaps when you are sound asleep, the thief will come. If you sit up watching and waiting for the intruder, he will not come. Likewise we must go about our daily business, and the moment we think not, the answer will come. You are now at peace, made whole so to speak. You do not have to assist this Infinite Intelligence; It is All Powerful. It would be foolish to try to add power to Power.

The trouble with many people is this: When they pray, they are tense, anxious, and impatient. They say, "I wonder when it will come?" Others say, "Why has it not happened yet?"

If I say, "Why?" it means I am anxious and lack faith. If I *know* a thing is true, I do not question my prayer. Let us remember, therefore, anytime we ask, "Why?" to ourself or another, it means we have not reached a conviction within ourselves.

When we possess something in consciousness, we do not seek it; we have it! Another point I want to stress here is: When the student questions, "How will it come?" he shows lack of faith and conviction.

CASE HISTORIES

Case History Number Two

Several years ago the author was lecturing in the Park Central Hotel in New York City. A man spoke to me at the end of the meeting saying, "I desire desperately to go to Pittsburgh, and I have no money."

I said to him, "Did you hear the lecture?" He said, "Yes, but—." I told him to ignore the doubts in his mind. We made a simple statement of truth together in that lovely lecture room. The statement was, "I am now at home in Pittsburgh with my people. All is peace and harmony." He was at home

with them during those few minutes of silence in his imagination and feeling.

He phoned me later saying, “I went to the restaurant, and a man who sat next to me said, “You know I am driving to Pittsburgh. I would love to have someone share in the driving; I would pay him also. Do you know anyone? You look like a mechanic.” This was the way Infinite Intelligence answered this man’s prayer.

The Magic of Faith

The purpose of this chapter is to teach you the spiritual truth of your dominion and freedom. “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (Prov. 3:6). “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.” (Psm. 121:1).

In the above verse from Proverbs you are told to acknowledge the Infinite Intelligence within you, and that It shall direct you in all ways. The answer to your problem will come when you turn in faith and recognition to the Divine Principle within.

It was Shakespeare who said, “Our doubts are traitors, making us lose the good we oft might win, by fearing to attempt.” Fear holds us back. *Fear* is a lack of faith in God or the Good.

A man told me one time that he was a member of a sales force for a large chemical organization which had two hundred men in the field. The sales manager died, and the vice president offered him the position; however he turned it down. He realized later that the only reason he rejected the offer was due to fear. He was afraid to attempt the responsibility. This man lacked faith in himself and his Inner Power. He hesitated, and the wonderful opportunity passed him by.

This salesman came to me for consultation, and I learned he was condemning himself, which was like a destructive, mental poison. In place of condemnation, he began to realize that there were other opportunities. I explained to him that faith is a way of thinking, a positive mental attitude, or a feeling of confidence that what you are praying for will come to pass.

For example, you have faith that the sun will rise tomorrow. You have faith that the seed you deposited in the ground will grow. The electrician has faith that electricity will respond to his proper use of it. A scientist has

an idea for an ediphone; he proceeds to bring it to pass by having faith in the execution of the invisible idea.

Opportunity is always knocking at your door. The desire for health, harmony, peace, and prosperity is knocking at your door now. Perhaps you are offered a promotion; are you going to act like Peter of old who walked on the waters? (“And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, Lord, save me.”)

Besides being historical, this drama of Peter and Jesus takes place in your own mind. *Peter* means faith, perseverance, and determination. *Jesus* means your desire, which, if realized, would be your savior. Jesus comes into your mind as an idea, desire, plan, purpose, vision, or some new undertaking. The realization of your dreams, plans, or purpose would bring you and others great satisfaction and inner joy; this would be your Jesus. You must now call Peter, which is faith in the GodPower to bring all things to pass. Look at Peter and Jesus as dramatizations of the power of truth within you.

Oftentimes as you attempt something new—for example, a new position—doubt comes into your mind; this is *Peter* in you looking at the *boisterous wind and sinking*. This represents the impingement in your mind of the belief in failure, lack, and limitation.

You must cremate, burn up, and destroy that negative thought immediately. Doubt and fear hold men in bondage of sickness and failure. These false concepts cause you to vacillate, waver, equivocate, and hesitate to go ahead. The way to overcome is to increase your faith and awareness of your deep, spiritual potencies. Be like Peter; he succeeded, because he went forward; he had faith and confidence, knowing he would succeed.

A general in the field cannot afford to vacillate and waver on the battlefield. He has to come to a decision. Failure to come to a decision, plus a constant wavering in the mind, leads to a nervous breakdown and mental confusion. When you find yourself being pulled two ways that is a sign of doubt and fear.

Your good comes to you in the form of your desire. If you are sick, you wish health. If you are poor, you desire wealth. If you are full of fear, you desire faith and confidence. Jesus comes as your desire walking down the streets of your mind.

Ideas are our lords and masters. Ideas govern and rule us. The dominant idea that you now entertain is your lord; it generates its own emotion. Emotions compel you to express them. The dominant idea of success enthroned in the mind generates its own mood or feeling. This feeling compels you to right action, so that whatever you do under the mood of faith and confidence will be successful. The desire or idea of yours now is your lord. Mentally appropriate your desire, kiss it, love it, let it captivate your mind; feel the reality of it.

Is your desire lofty, inspiring, and wonderful enough to lead you forward? This ideal of yours is real, just the same as the idea of a radio was real in the mind of the inventor; or the idea of an automobile was real in the mind of Ford; or the idea of a house is real in the mind of an architect. It is not idle fancy or a daydream.

Peter is within you; i.e., *Peter* is faith, perseverance, stick-to-it-iveness, and an abiding trust in an Almighty Power that responds to man's thought and belief. This Formless Awareness within you takes the form of your belief and conviction. It is really all things to all men. It is strength to you, if you need strength. It is guidance, if you need guidance. It is food and health also.

All great scientists, mystics, artists, poets, and inventors are gifted or possessed by an abiding faith and trust in the Invisible Powers within.

As you read this, turn your desire or request over to the subjective mind within you, acknowledging in your heart it has the answer and the "know how" of accomplishment, and that its ways are past finding out. When you are relaxed and peaceful, you will know you have succeeded in impregnating your deeper mind. Signs follow; the wave of peace is the sign; this is inner conviction. You now walk above all the waters of confusion, chaos, and false beliefs, because in a little while what you felt as true will be experienced.

CASE HISTORIES

Case History Number Three

I visited a man in prison a few months ago. The first thought in his mind was freedom; this is symbolized in the Bible as Jesus walking on the waters of your mind. This prisoner was very bitter and cynical. I explained to him that he had placed himself in prison by his actions, which were contrary to

the golden rule. He was living in a psychological prison of hatred and envy. He changed his mental attitude by calling forth Peter, which was his faith in an Almighty Power to bring to pass the cherished desire of his heart.

I gave detailed instruction to this prisoner. He began to pray for those he hated by saying frequently, "God's love flows through them, and I release them." He began to do this many times a day. At night prior to sleep, he imagined himself home with his family. He would feel his little daughter in his arms and hear her voice saying, "Welcome, daddy." All this was done in his imagination. After awhile he made this so real, natural, and vivid, that it became a part of him. He had impregnated the subconscious with the belief in freedom.

Another interesting thing happened; he had no further desire to pray for his freedom; this was a sure psychological sign to him that he had embodied the desire for freedom subjectively. He was at peace, and though he was behind bars, he knew subjectively that he was free. It was an inner knowing. You no longer seek that which you have. Having realized his desire subjectively, he had no further desire to pray about it.

A few weeks passed and this young man was liberated from prison. Friends came to his rescue, and through the proper channels, the door was opened to him for a new life.

Steps to Happiness

Happiness is a state of consciousness. Faith and fear are moods of the soul. Your faith is a joyous expectancy of the best. Fear comes to challenge your faith in God or the Good. You must look upon fear as man's ignorance or his false beliefs which try to overcome his conviction in the good.

Never entertain or accept the suggestions of sickness, weakness, or failure. If you listen to negative suggestions and become fearful, begin to affirm the Truths of God, such as Love, Peace, Joy, etc. Know that thought and feeling are the causes of conditions and experiences.

Fear is based on the false beliefs that there are other powers, and that external things and conditions can hurt you. Fear must leave you, because it has nothing to sustain it; there is no reality behind it; its claims are false. Come back to the simple truth: "Only your thought has power over you, and the One Almighty Power now moves on your behalf, because your thoughts are in tune with the Infinite One."

I met a farmer one time on the west coast of Ireland. I lived in his house for a few days. He seemed to be always happy and joyful. I asked him to tell me his secret of happiness. His answer was, "It is a habit of mine to be happy." This is the whole story! Prayer is a habit; happiness is likewise a habit.

There is a phase in the Bible: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." You have the freedom *to choose* happiness; this may seem extraordinarily simple—and it is. Perhaps this is why people stumble over the way to happiness; they do not see the simplicity of the key to happiness.

Perhaps you say to yourself, "Business is bad. It is going to get worse." Furthermore, you may say to yourself, "The worst is yet to come!" If you have this attitude of mind the first thing in the morning, you will attract all these experiences to you, and you will be very unhappy.

On the other hand you can choose happiness. This is how you do it: When you open your eyes in the morning, say to yourself, “All things work together for good to them that love God.” Remember that in all languages God and Good are synonymous.

Love is an emotional attachment. Continue to become attached to the good in the morning in this way: Look out the window, and say, “This is God’s day for me. I am Divinely guided all day long. Whatever I do will prosper. I cast the spell of God around me. I walk in His Light. Whenever my attention wanders away from God or the Good, I will immediately bring it back to the contemplation of God and His Holy Presence. I am a spiritual magnet attracting to myself all things that bless and prosper me. I am going to be a wonderful success in all my undertakings today. I am definitely going to be happy all day long.”

Start each day in this manner; then you are choosing happiness, and you will be a radiant, joyous person.

You can experience nothing outside your own mentality. Your dominant, mental mood is the way you think and feel inside about yourself, others, and the world in general. What is your present mental attitude? How do you feel inside? Are you worried, confused, angry, or concerned about other people’s actions? If you are, you are not happy, because you are dwelling mentally on limitation.

Begin to anchor your mind on thoughts of peace, success, and happiness; this is really prayer. Do this frequently; then you will be like the Irish farmer who said, “It is a habit of mine to be happy.” Your dominant mental attitude rules and governs all your experiences; therefore nothing can come into your world but the out-picturing of your mental attitude. Love all things good, and even your so-called “enemies” will be constrained to do you good.

Oftentimes you read in psychological and metaphysical literature that the world you behold is the world you are; this means you can control your relationship with the world. The world you really live in is a mental world of thoughts, feelings, sensations, and beliefs. As a matter of fact every person, circumstance, and experience you meet becomes a thought in your mind. How you mentally feel and react to life and conditions depend on what you believe about life and things in general. If your knowledge about life and the world is false, you can be very unhappy. If you have true

knowledge and the right ideas, you can control your emotional reactions to life and have inner peace.

I knew a woman in England who had rheumatism for twenty years. She would pat herself on the knee, and say, "My rheumatism is bad today. I can't go out; my rheumatism keeps me miserable." This dear, elderly lady got a lot of attention from her son, daughter, and the neighbors. She really wanted her rheumatism; she enjoyed her "misery," as she called it. This person did not really want to be happy.

I suggested a curative procedure given in the Bible. I wrote down some biblical verses, and said if she gave her attention to these truths, she would be healed, but she was not interested. There seems to be a peculiar, mental streak in many people, whereby they seem to enjoy being miserable and sad.

Jesus said, "If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." "We should become as little children." The reason for this is that a child is happy, because it is close to God. The child knows intuitively where to find happiness. You do not have to become old, dull, crotchety, petulant, and cantankerous; neither do you have to become jaded and depressed in spirit. The simple truths of life, and not the opinions of man, produce and generate happiness within us. There are a great number of people trying to buy happiness through the purchase of radios, television sets, auto mobiles, and a home in the country, but happiness cannot be purchased or procured that way.

The Kingdom of God is within you, and the kingdom of happiness is in your thought and feeling. Too many people have the idea that it takes something artificial to produce happiness. Some people say, "If I had a million dollars, I would be happy." Others say, "If I was elected mayor, or the president of the organization, I would be happy." The answer is, "We must *choose* happiness." We must make it a habit to be happy. It is a mental and spiritual state. Happiness comes through your daily visits with God and in silent communion with His Holy Presence.

Begin now to eat the bread of the silence; you do this by meditating on the fact that, "In Him there is fullness of joy." As you dwell on these words, imagine the joy and the love of God are flowing through your mind and heart as a living current or stream; then you are stirring up the gift of God within you.

Within you is the Power to overcome any situation. You were born to win, to succeed, and to conquer. There is a great thrill in mastering a difficult assignment; the joy is in overcoming. Stand up against the problem now. Take up that shining sword of truth, and say, "I go forth conquering and to conquer!" The Power of the Almighty is within you; It will reveal to you the perfect solution. It will show you the way you should go. Conquer and overcome every negative emotion within you. Love casts out fear. The peace of God casts out pain. Good will casts out envy. In the midst of all kinds of adversity, look for that which is good, and that which is right; in other words look for the Divine answer.

CASE HISTORIES

Case History Number Four

I knew an alcoholic in London who had sunk to the depths of degradation. When I met him, he was begging pennies on the street for drink. At one time he was a highly respected lawyer. I spent some time with him in Hyde Park, London, telling him a few simple truths. I wrote these words for him to repeat: "I surrender myself completely to God and His Boundless Love and Goodness. My mind and heart are now open to the Spirit of Almighty God, which flows through me now. God fills my mind and heart with His Joy and His Love. I do not see the wind, but I feel the breeze upon my face; likewise I feel God's Presence stirring in my heart. God's river of Love flows through me, and I am clean and made whole."

I told him to relax, and slowly articulate the above meditation fifteen minutes, three times a day. All that was necessary was sincerity and humility on his part; then he was assured he would be free from the habit and blessed beyond his wildest dreams. This man became childlike in his simplicity. He fulfilled his promise. In less than a week he was engaged in a romance with God. Truly he touched the hem of His garment. As he meditated aloud, he imagined that the words were seeds sinking down into his soul. On the sixth day his whole being, and his room were flooded with an Interior Light which seemed to blind him temporarily. He was completely healed.

Harmonious Human Relations

“All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.”

The first thing you learn is that there is no one to change but yourself. The above truth has outer and inner meanings: As you would that men should *think* about you, think you about them in like manner. As you would that men should *feel* about you, feel you also about them in like manner. As you would want men to *act* toward you, act you toward them in like manner. This Biblical passage is the key to happy, human relationships in all walks of life.

Do you observe your “inner talking”? For example, you may be polite and courteous to someone in your office, but when his back is turned, you are very critical and resentful toward him in your mind. Such negative thoughts are highly destructive to you; it is like taking poison; you are actually taking a mental poison that robs you of vitality, enthusiasm, strength, guidance, and good will.

The suggestion you give to the other, you give to yourself. Ask yourself now, “How am I behaving internally toward this other fellow?” This interior attitude is what counts. Begin now to observe yourself; observe your reactions to people, conditions, and circumstances. How do you respond to the events and news of the day? It makes no difference if all the other people were wrong, and you alone were right, if the news disturbs you, it is your evil, because your bad mood affected and robbed you of peace and harmony. You do not have to react negatively to the news or the comments of the broadcaster. You can remain unmoved, undisturbed, and poised, realizing he has a right to his expression and beliefs. It is never what

a person says or does that affects us; it is our reaction to what is said or done that matters.

Mentally divide yourself into two people: Your present mental state and that which you desire to be. Look at the thoughts of envy, jealousy, and hatred, which may have enslaved and imprisoned you. You have divided yourself into two people for the purpose of disciplining yourself: One is the race mind working in you, the other is the Infinite or the God-Self seeking expression through you. Be honest with yourself and determine which mood shall prevail.

For example, if someone gossips about you or criticizes you, what is your reaction? Are you going to engage in the typical way by getting excited, resentful, and angry? If you do you are letting the world-mind work in you. You must positively refuse to react in this mechanical, stereotyped, machine-like way. Say positively and definitely to yourself: “The Infinite One thinks, speaks, and acts through me now; this is my Real Self. I now radiate love, peace, and good will to this person who criticized me. I salute the Divinity in him. God speaks through me as peace, harmony, and love. It is wonderful.” You are now a real student of truth. Instead of reacting like the herd that returns hate for hate, you have returned love for hatred, peace for hurt, good will for ill will. You have come into truth to think and react in a new way. When you come into truth, you make a new set of reactions to supplant the old. If you find yourself always reacting in the same way to people and conditions, you are not growing. Instead you are standing still, deeply immersed in the conditioned mind.

You know that you do not have to accept negative thoughts. You can become what you want to be by refusing to be a slave to old thought patterns.

Become the real observer, and practice observing your reactions to the events of the day. Whenever you discover that you are about to react negatively, say firmly, “This is not the Infinite One speaking or acting”; this will cause you to stop your negative thinking; then the Divine Love, Light, and Truth will flow through you at that moment. Instead of identifying yourself with anger, resentment, bitterness, and hatefulness, identify immediately with peace, harmony, poise, and balance; with this attitude you are really practicing the art of separation. You are separating yourself from

the old (your present, mental state), and you are identifying yourself with the new (that which you desire to be).

Remember this great truth: You do not have to go along with, believe in, nor consent to negative thoughts or reactions. Begin to positively refuse to react mechanically as you formerly did. React and think in a new way. You want to be peaceful, happy, radiant, healthy, prosperous, and inspired; therefore, from this moment forward you must refuse to identify with negative thoughts, which tend to drag you down.

You are the cause of your own anger. If someone called you a fool, why should you get angry? You know you are not a fool. The other person is undoubtedly very disturbed mentally; maybe his child died during the night, or perhaps he is very ill psychologically. You should have compassion on him, but not condemn him. Realize God's peace fills his mind, and that His Love flows through him; then you would be practicing the Golden Rule. You would be identifying not with anger or hatred but with the law of goodness, truth, and beauty.

Would you condemn a person who had tuberculosis? No, you would not. In all probability if he told you, you would realize the Presence of God, harmony, and perfection where the trouble was; that would be compassion. *Compassion* is the Wisdom of God functioning through the mind of man, shown when you forgive all men, and see the God in them.

A person who is hateful, spiteful, envious, and jealous, and who says nasty, mean, scandalous things is very ill psychologically; he is just as sick as the man who has tuberculosis. How are you going to react to such a man? Where is your truth? Where is your wisdom and understanding? Are you going to say, "I am one of the herd; I react in kind; I return spite for spite, hate for hate, and anger for anger?" No, you would stop, and say, "This is not the Infinite One acting through me. God sees only perfection, beauty, and harmony. I see, therefore, as God sees." "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." I am going to see all men and women as God sees them. When your eyes are identified with beauty, you will not behold the distorted picture.

You are not living with people, you are living with your concept about them. How are you now responding to John Jones who is next to you on the bench? The fellow who works next to him likes him; his wife loves him; his children think he is wonderful. Perhaps members of his club believe he is

generous, kind, and cooperative. Are you thinking of him as mean and petty? Are you resenting him? Who is this fellow? Is he *your* concept, or are all the others wrong? Would it not be wise to look within yourself and determine what it is in you that is causing him to be ugly or a stumbling block to you? I am sure you will find it within yourself.

Maybe you are saying to your son or father when you go home, "That fellow Jones annoys the life out of me. He irritates me beyond words." You are so upset, you cannot digest your dinner properly. According to your description he is impossible.

Where was Jones during the time you were saying all these things? Perhaps he was at the opera with his family; perchance he was out fishing in the stream having a wonderful, glorious time. As a matter of fact if someone said to you, "Where is Jones now?" You would answer, "I do not know." Be honest with yourself now, and admit he is in your own mind as a thought, a concept, or a mental image. You are revealing yourself and your own perturbed state of mind.

Quimby used to say that the suggestion we give to the other, we give to ourselves. You can now see how true that is. As a matter of fact, that is the basis of the Golden Rule. Never suggest to another, or think anything about another, that you would not wish the other to think, suggest, or feel about you.

Watch your hidden conversation to yourself. How do you meet people in your mind when they are thousands of miles away? You may be nice to their face, but the way you think about them is what counts. If you are negative, you are poisoning yourself. There are mental, corrosive poisons, just the same as there are physical, corrosive poisons; they are just as destructive also. If you are now disturbed, agitated, and angry over the way someone has acted toward you, it means you have a very negative thought-pattern in your consciousness, which you should heal instantly.

Be sure that you are not one of those people who will give all the reasons why they should be angry. Stop giving alibis; cease all self-justification. How could you be justified in hating or resenting someone? Do you have a special license? If you do, who gave you this authority? If you are agitated toward another, you are responsible for your unhappiness.

Now you can decree how your thoughts and emotions shall be directed. You are now a king over your own household (mind). Your thoughts, ideas,

and feelings are your servants. You issue the command; their mission is to obey. You are here to control, and not to be controlled by angry, wild emotions.

Now when you say to yourself, “Who is the thinker in me?” you must answer, “I am!”

How to Control Your Emotions

The ancient Greeks said, “Man, know thyself.” As you study yourself, you seem to be made up of four parts: Your physical body, emotional nature, intellect, and the Spiritual Essence, which is called the Presence of God. The I AM within you, the Divine Presence, is your Real Identity, which is Eternal.

You are here to discipline yourself, so that your intellectual, emotional, and physical nature are completely spiritualized. These four phases of your nature are called the four beasts of *The Book of Revelation*. (*The Revelation of St. John* means God revealing himself as man.)

The real way for you to discipline and bridle your intellectual and emotional nature is by the Practice of the Presence of God all day long.

You have a body; it is a shadow or reflection of the mind. It has no power of itself, no initiative, or volition. It has no intelligence of itself; it is completely subject to your commands or decrees. Look upon your body as a great disc upon which you play your emotions and beliefs. Being a disc, it will faithfully record all your emotionalized concepts and never deviate from them; therefore, you can register a melody of love and beauty, or one of grief and sorrow upon it. Resentment, jealousy, hatred, anger, and melancholia are all expressed in the body as various diseases. As you learn to control your mental and emotional nature, you will become a channel for the Divine, and release the imprisoned splendor that is within you.

Think over this for a moment: You cannot buy a healthy body with all the money in the world, but you can have health through riches of the mind, such as thoughts of peace, harmony, and perfect health.

Let us dwell now on the emotional nature of man. It is absolutely essential for you to control your emotions if you want to grow spiritually. You are considered grown up or emotionally mature when you control your

feelings. If you cannot discipline or bridle your emotions, you are a child even though you are fifty years old.

You must remember that the greatest tyrant is a false idea, which controls a man's mind holding him in bondage. The idea you hold about yourself or others induces definite emotions in you. Psychologically speaking, emotions compel you for good or evil. If you are full of resentment toward someone or possessed by a grudge, this emotion will have an evil influence over you, and govern your actions in a manner which has nothing to do with what you say is the original cause. When you want to be friendly and cordial, you will be ugly, cynical, and sour. When you want to be healthy, successful, and prosperous in life, you will find everything going wrong. Those of you reading this book are aware of your capacity to choose a concept of peace and good will. Accept the idea of peace in your mind, and let it govern, control, and guide you.

Quimby pointed out that ideas are our masters, and that we are slaves to the ideas we entertain. The concept of peace with which you now live will induce the feeling of peace and harmony. Your feeling is the Spirit of God operating at the human level; this feeling of peace and goodwill compel you to right action. You are now governed by Divine Ideas, which are mothered by the Holy Spirit.

Uncontrolled or undisciplined emotion is destructive. For example, if you have a powerful automobile, it will take you through the roughest country, or to the top of a high hill; however, you must control the automobile. If you do not know how to drive, you may hit a telegraph pole or another car. Should you step on the gas instead of the brake, the car may be destroyed.

It is wonderful to possess a strong, emotional nature provided you are the master. Your emotions are controlling you if you permit yourself to get angry over trifles or agitated over practically nothing. If you get upset over what you read in the newspapers, you are not controlling your emotions. You must learn to blend your intellect and emotions together harmoniously. The intellect of man is all right in its place, but it should be anointed or illumined with the Wisdom of God.

There are many people who are always trying to intellectualize God. You cannot define the Infinite. Spinoza said that to define God is to deny him. You have met the highly intellectual man who says that man cannot survive

death, because he does not take his brain with him. Somehow he is so clever he really believes the brain thinks by itself. Such a man is looking at everything from a three-dimensional standpoint; that is where the intellect ceases.

The intellect, as I said previously, is all right in its place—for example, in our everyday work, and in all kinds of science, art, and industry. However as we approach the Living Spirit Almighty within, we are compelled to leave the world of the intellect, and go beyond into the realm of spiritual values, which are perfection, and where dimension is infinity.

When man's intellect is blended with the emotions of love, peace, and goodwill, he will not use explosives and knowledge of chemistry for the destruction of mankind. The reason man uses the atomic bomb, submarine, and other implements of warfare to destroy his fellow creature is because his spiritual awareness and knowledge lag so far behind his intellectual achievements.

Let us see how emotions are generated. Suppose you observe a cripple; perhaps you are moved to pity. On the other hand you may look at your young, beautiful child, and you feel an emotion of love welling up within you. You know that you cannot imagine an emotion, but if you imagine an unpleasant episode or event of the past, you induce the corresponding emotion. Remember it is essential to entertain the thought first before you induce an emotion.

An emotion is always the working out of an idea in the mind. Have you noticed the effect of fear upon the face, eyes, heart, and other organs? You know the effect of bad news or grief on the digestive tract. Observe the change that takes place when it is found the fear is groundless.

All negative emotions are destructive and depress the vital forces of the body. A chronic worrier usually has trouble with digestion. If something very pleasant occurs in his experience, the digestion becomes normal, because normal circulation is restored, and the necessary gastric secretions are no longer interfered with.

The way to overcome and discipline the emotions is not through repression or suppression. When you repress an emotion, the energy accumulates in the subconscious and remains snarled there. In the same manner as the pressure increases in the boiler, if all the valves are closed, and you increase the heat of the fire, finally there will be an explosion.

Today in the field of psychosomatics we are discovering that many cases of ill health, as arthritis, asthma, cardiac troubles, and failure in life, etc., may be due to suppressed or repressed emotions, perhaps occurring during early life or childhood.

These repressed or suppressed emotions rise like ghosts to haunt you later on. There is a spiritual and psychological way to banish these ghosts, which walk in the gloomy gallery of your mind. The ideal way is the law of substitution. Through the law of mental substitution, you substitute a positive, constructive thought for the negative. When negative thoughts enter your mind, do not fight them; just think of God and His Love; you will find the negative thoughts disappear. "I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." (Math. 5:39) If a person is fearful, the positive emotion of faith and confidence will completely destroy it.

If you sincerely wish to govern your emotions, you must maintain control over your thoughts. By taking charge of your thoughts, you can substitute love for fear. The instant you receive the stimulus of a negative emotion supplant it with the mood of love and good will. Instead of giving way to fear, say, "One with God is a majority." Fill your mind with concepts of peace, love, and faith in God; then the negative thoughts cannot enter.

It is far easier to cremate, burn up, and destroy negative thoughts at the moment they enter the mind, rather than try and dislodge them when they have taken possession of your mind. Refuse to be a victim of negative emotions through controlling your thought and thinking of God and His Attributes. You can be master of all your emotions and conditions. "He that *is* slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

The Book of Revelation deals with the control of the intellectual and emotional life of man. It says in [Chapter 4](#), verses 6, 7, and 8: "And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

"And the first beasts *was* like a lion, and the second beasts like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy,

holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

The sea of glass before the throne means the inner peace of God, for God is peace. Deep in the centre of your being, the Infinite One lies stretched in smiling repose. It is the Living Presence of God within you. You stand before this throne. *The throne* is a symbol of authority. Your emotional conviction of a deep, abiding faith in the GodPower is your authority in consciousness. To say it simply: Your inner conviction is your throne in heaven, because therein lies your power. “According to your faith it is done unto you.” *Faith* is a positive, emotional attitude knowing that the good I seek is mine now.

The four beasts forever before the throne are the four phases of your being: spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical. In order to get your emotional nature on a spiritual basis, it is necessary to understand these four beasts; in doing so you learn the gentle art of scientific prayer which in the final analysis is the answer to all problems. Study these four potencies of consciousness.

The lion is the king of the jungle; it means God, your I AMNESS.

Taurus means the bull or beast of burden. *Your burden* is your desire. You labor in your imagination to make your desire a part of your consciousness.

Aquarius means the water bearer; it means meditation. The word *meditation* means to eat of God or your good, to feast upon your ideal. You pour water on your ideal, meaning you dwell upon and pour love on it, which is the water of life. Something happens as you mentally feast upon your ideal; you generate an emotion; the latter is the spirit of God moving on your behalf. Your emotion is the Holy Spirit moving at human levels. God is a reactive, reciprocal Power within you. Your emotion responds according to the nature of the idea. As you emotionalize your idea, it sinks into the subconscious mind as an impression; this is called the *Eagle* or *Scorpio*, meaning the Divine impregnation. These are the four stages of the unfoldment or manifestation of an ideal or desire. Whatever is impressed is expressed.

The four beasts had each of them six wings. *The six wings* refer to the mental, creative act. When idea and feeling blend together in harmony and faith, there has taken place a wedding ceremony in the mind. Knowledge of this mental, creative act gives you wings; enables you to soar aloft above

the storms and struggles of the world, and find peace and strength in your own mind.

CASE HISTORIES

Case History Number Five

A soldier who has returned from Korea told me that when he was seized with fear, he would say to himself over and over again, “God’s Love surrounds me, and goes before me.” This affirmation impressed his mind with the feeling of love and faith. This mood of love supplanted his fear. “Perfect Love casteth out fear.” This procedure is the answer to the process of freedom from fear.

Case History Number Six

A mother, whose only child died, was grief stricken. The grief was affecting her vision, and she suffered from migraine headaches. She was in a deep state of depression. I suggested to her that she go to a hospital, and offer her services in the children’s ward. She was a former nurse. In offering her time at a local hospital, she began to pour out love on the children; she coddled them; cared for them, and fed them. The love was no longer bottled up within her; she became a channel for the Divine, and began to release the sunshine of God’s Love. She practiced sublimation, which was a redirection of the energy lodged within her subconscious mind. In this manner she drained off the poison pockets of her subconscious mind.

Case History Number Seven

A woman who comes to our meeting told me that she was accustomed to fits of temper and anger periodically by the action of neighbors. Instead of letting the anger and hatred affect her mentally and physically by pushing it back into the subconscious, she transmuted it into muscular energy by getting a gallon of water and washing the windows or the floor. Sometimes she would begin to dig in the garden, saying to herself aloud, “I am digging in the garden of God, and planting God’s ideas.” She would do this for fifteen minutes at a time. When washing the windows, she would say aloud, “I am cleansing my mind with the waters of love and life.” The above illustrations are simple methods of working off negative emotions in a physical way.

Changing the Feeling of “I”

If you say, “I,” to everything you think, feel, say, or imagine, you cannot transform your emotional life. Remember all kinds of thoughts can enter your mind; all kinds of emotions may enter your heart. If you say, “I,” to all negative thoughts, you are identifying yourself with them, and you cannot separate internally from them. You can refuse to attach “I” to negative emotions and thoughts. You make it a practice to avoid muddy places as you walk along the road; likewise you must avoid walking down the muddy roads of your mind where fear, resentment, hostility, and ill-will lurk and move. Refuse to listen to negative remarks. Do not touch the negative moods, or let them touch you. Practice inner separation by getting a new feeling about yourself, and about what you really are. Begin to realize that the real “I” in you is the Infinite Spirit, the Infinite One.

Begin to identify yourself with the Qualities and Attributes of this Infinite One; then your whole life will be transformed. The whole secret in transforming your negative, emotional nature is to practice self-observation. To observe and *to observe* oneself are two different things. When you say, “You observe ...” you mean you give your attention to external things. In self-observation the attention is directed inwards. A man may spend his whole lifetime studying the atom, stars, body, and the phenomenalistic world—namely, knowledge of the external world; this knowledge cannot bring about an interior change. Self-observation is the means of interior change—the change of the heart. You must learn to differentiate, to discern, to separate the chaff from the wheat.

You practice the art of self-observation when you begin to ask yourself, “Is this idea true? Will it bless, heal, and inspire me? Will it give me peace of mind, and contribute to the well-being of humanity?” You are living in two worlds: the external and the internal; yet they are both one. One is

visible and the other invisible(subjective and objective). Your external world enters through your five senses, and is shared by everyone. Your internal world of thought, feelings, sensations, beliefs, and reaction is invisible and belongs to you. Ask yourself, "In which world do I live? Do I live in the world revealed by my five senses, or in this inner world?" It is in this inner world you live all the time; this is where you feel and suffer. Suppose you are invited to a banquet. All you see, hear, taste, smell, and touch belong to the external world. All that you think, feel, like, and dislike belong to the inner world. You attend two banquets recorded differently: namely, one the outer, and one the inner. It is in your inner world of thought, feeling, and emotion in which you rise and fall and sway to and fro.

In order to transform yourself, you must begin to change the inner world through the purification of the emotions, and the correct ordering of the mind through right thinking. If you want to grow spiritually, you must transform yourself. *Transformation* means the changing of one thing into another.

In order truly to observe yourself, you must see that regardless of what happens, your thought and feeling are fixed on this great truth: "How is it in God and Heaven?" This will lift you up, and transform all your negative thoughts and emotions. You may be inclined to say that other people are to blame, because of the way they talk or act, but if what they say or do makes you negative, you are inwardly disturbed; this negative state is where you now live, move, and have your being.

P.D. Ouspensky used to point out that people became upset easily, because their feeling of "I" was derived from negative states of consciousness. The feeling of "I" was one of his favorite expressions, and some of his ideas are incorporated in this chapter.

When you say, "I think this ..." "I think that ..." "I resent this ..." or "I dislike this ..." which "I" is speaking? Is it not a different "I" speaking every moment? Each "I" is completely different. One "I" in you criticizes one moment; a few minutes later another "I" speaks tenderly. Look at and learn about your different "I's," and know deep within yourself that certain "I's" will never dominate, control, or direct your thinking.

Take a good look at the "I's" you are consorting with. With what kind of people do you associate? I am referring to the people that inhabit your

mind. Remember your mind is a city; thoughts, ideas, opinions, feelings, sensations, and beliefs dwell there. Some of the places in your mind are slums and dangerous streets; however Jesus (your savior) is always walking down the streets of your mind in the form of your ideal, desire, and aim in life.

One of the meanings of Jesus is your desire; for your desire, when realized, is your savior. Your aims and objectives in life are now beckoning to you; move toward them. Give your desire your attention; in other words take a lively interest in it. Go down the streets of love, peace, joy, and good will in your mind; you will meet wonderful people on the way. You will find beautifully lighted streets and wonderful citizens on the better streets of your mind.

Never permit your house, which is your mind, to be full of servants that you do not have under control. When you were young, you were taught not to go with what your mother called, "bad company." Now when you begin to awaken to your inner powers, you must make it a special point that you do not go with wrong "I's" (thoughts) within you.

I had an interesting chat with a young man who studied mental discipline in France. His procedure was to take, as he said, "mental photographs of himself from time to time." He would sit down, and think about his emotions, moods, thoughts, sensations, reactions, and his tones of voice; then he would say, "These are not of God; they are false. I will go back to God and think from that Standard or Rock of Truth." He practiced the art of inner separation. He would stop when he got angry, and say, "This is not the Infinite One, the real 'I' speaking, thinking, or acting; it is the false 'I' in me."

Return to God like this young man. Every time you are prone to get angry, critical, depressed, or irritable, think of God and Heaven, and ask yourself, "How is it in God and Heaven?" *There* is the answer to becoming the new man; this is how you become spiritually reborn or experience what is called the second birth. (*The second birth* is internal discipline and spiritual understanding.)

The saint and the sinner are in all of us; so are the murderer and the holy man; likewise are God and the world mind. Every man basically and fundamentally wants to be good, to express good, and to do good. This is "the positive" in you. If you have committed destructive acts, as for

example, if you have robbed, cheated, and defrauded others, and they condemn you, and they hold you in a bad light, you can rise out of the slum of your mind to that place in your own consciousness where you cease to condemn yourself; then all your accusers must still their tongues. When you cease to accuse yourself, the world will no longer accuse you; this is the power of your own consciousness; It is the God in you.

The other self represents the many “I’s” in you, for instance the many negative ideas and beliefs that there are powers outside your own consciousness; the belief that others can hurt you; the elements are unfriendly, plus the fears, superstitions, and ignorance of all kinds. Finally prejudices, fears, and hates drive and goad you to do that which you would not otherwise do. The ideal way to change the feeling of “I” is to affix to the real “I” within you everything that is noble, wonderful, and God-like.

Begin to affirm, “I am strong. I am radiant. I am happy. I am inspired. I am illumined. I am loving. I am kind. I am harmonious.” Feel these states of mind; affirm them, and believe them; then you will begin to truly live in the Garden of God. Whatever you affix to the “I AM” and believe, you become. The “I AM” in you is God, and there is none other. “I AM” or Life, Awareness, Pure Being, Existence, or the Real Self of you is God. It is the Only Cause. It is the Only Power making anything in the world. Honor It.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JOSEPH MURPHY was born in 1898 on the southern coast of Ireland. Raised in a devout Catholic family, Murphy had planned on joining the priesthood. As a young man he instead relocated to America to make his career as a chemist and druggist. After running a pharmacy counter at New York's Algonquin Hotel, Murphy began studying mystical and metaphysical ideas. In the 1940s he became a popular New Thought minister and writer. Murphy wrote prolifically on the autosuggestive and mystical faculties of the human mind. He became widely known for his metaphysical classic, *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind*, which has sold millions of copies since it first appeared in 1963. Considered one of the pioneering voices of New Thought and affirmative-thinking philosophy, Murphy died in Laguna Hills, California, in 1981.

THE MASTER MIND

The Unparalleled Classic on Wielding Your Mental Powers From the Author of The Kybalion

by Theron Q. Dumont

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Enduring Genius of *The Master Mind*

This is a distinctly different kind of book to come from the author who used the pseudonymous byline “Theron Q. Dumont.” The man behind this penetrating, practical work of psychology was William Walker Atkinson, a prolific writer and publisher of New Thought and metaphysical literature in the early-twentieth century. Atkinson’s most successful and influential work was the 1908 occult classic, *The Kybalion*, which he also wrote pseudonymously under the mysterious byline “Three Initiates.”

Yet this work, *The Master Mind*, published ten years later, is notable for its absence of any mystical content. For a man who intensively studied the spiritual ideas of New Thought—or what William James called “the religion of healthy-mindedness”—this book represented a sharp departure. *The Master Mind* is probably Atkinson’s most straightforward work of psychology. In fact, the book’s great value is that it may be the best popularization ever of the psychological and self-development ideas of William James. James, like Atkinson, believed in the ability of the individual to harness and direct the practical faculties of his mind. A person’s failure to use his mental forces, James reasoned, regulated him to a random and automatized existence, in which covert motives and desires shoved and shuffled him around.

The chief aim of this book is to teach you to become aware of and command your mental and emotional faculties. The book’s techniques are drawn from the work of James and other practical psychologists of the era, whose ideas have proven remarkably resilient and, in many ways, remain as radical today as they were in the early part of the last century. The continued urgency of these methods is due not only to their truthfulness, but also to their persistent neglect. People typically acknowledge but fail to

attempt most techniques of inner development. Hence, much of the material in *The Master Mind* awaits rediscovery and full use by the intrepid reader.

Another philosophical correspondence, if not influence, found in this book is between Atkinson's ideas and those of early-twentieth century spiritual teacher G.I. Gurdjieff. The Russian mystic and philosopher, more than any other figure of the last century, described man's state of automatism and his alienation from the forces, interior and exterior, that rule his life. Atkinson's analysis of the individual as an ineptly steered chariot in chapter four corresponds remarkably well with Gurdjieff's metaphor of an unruly horse-and-carriage representing man's disordered state. Atkinson also shares, to some degree, Gurdjieff's identification of a lost but central "I" within the individual.

Although Atkinson's death in 1932 made him contemporaneous to Gurdjieff, it is not clear to me that he ever actually encountered the teacher's ideas—I have come across no such reference in his work. But some of Atkinson's coinciding insights demonstrate just how insightful the writer-publisher was to evince points of commonality with the vitally important esoteric philosopher Gurdjieff.

Some observers have made the mistake—and I was once among them—of underestimating Atkinson as a thinker due to his frequent use of dramatic-sounding bylines and covert identities. Today, however, Atkinson is rightly becoming recognized not only for the breadth of his output, but also for the sturdiness of his ideas. I believe that within a generation Atkinson will be recognized as one of the two or three brightest and most literate voices to emerge from the New Thought tradition. Another is the mystic Neville Goddard, whose work emerged in the generation following Atkinson's.

In this condensed book, I have endeavored to preserve Atkinson's shrewdest insights into human nature, and his most practical and doable exercises for mental and emotional self-development. All of these exercises are canny and realistic. There is no excuse for not doing them. The long-term payoff, Atkinson promised, is honing your command over the instrumentalities of your thought, emotions, and willpower—which will result in the development of a Master Mind, and a true sense of selfhood. It is an epic promise, and one worthy of striving toward.

Finally, in this abridgment, I have identified the philosophers and psychologists that Atkinson quotes, who he sometimes referenced only generally and not by name in his original edition. I have also omitted quotation marks and attributions from passages where Atkinson quotes his own writing as published under a different byline.

This new edition of *The Master Mind* gives you a sense of the hope and excitement that early-twentieth century readers found in the theories of “healthy-mindedness.” I think you will come to share my conviction that the book’s immensely practical ideas await new discovery and use today.

—Mitch Horowitz

The Master Mind

In this book there will be nothing said concerning metaphysical theories or philosophical hypotheses; instead, there will be a very strict adherence to the principles of psychology. There will be nothing said of “spirit” or “soul;” but very much said of “mind.” There will be no speculation concerning the question of “what is the soul?” or “what becomes of the soul after death?” These subjects, while highly important and interesting, belong to a different class of investigation, and are outside of the present inquiry. We shall not even enter into a discussion of the subject of “what is the mind?” Instead, we shall confine our thought to the subject of “how does the mind work?”

Many philosophers and metaphysicians have sought to tell us “just what” the mind is; but they usually leave us as much in doubt as before. As the old Persian poet has said, we “come out the door in which we went.” We know much about **how the mind works**, but little or nothing about **what the mind really is**. So far as practical purposes are concerned, it makes very little difference to us just what the mind **is**, providing we know just how it **works**, and how it may be controlled and managed.

We shall operate according to the principle of pragmatism, as described by William James: “Pragmatism is the attitude of looking away from first things, principles, categories, supposed necessities; and of looking forward toward last things, fruits, consequences, facts.”

What is the difference between a Master Mind and any other form of Mind? Simply that the Master Mind is consciously, deliberately, and voluntarily built up, cultivated, developed, and used; whereas the ordinary mind is usually unconsciously built up, cultivated, and developed, without voluntary effort on its own part, but solely by the force and power of

impressions from the outside world, and is usually employed and used with little or no conscious direction by its own will.

In short, the ordinary mind is a mere creature of circumstances, driven by the winds of outside forces, and lacking the guidance of the hand on the wheel, and without the compass of knowledge; while the Master Mind proceeds in the true course mapped out by Intelligence, and determined by will—with sails set so as to catch the best breeze from the outside world, and steered by the master-hand at the wheel, under the direction of the compass of intelligence. The ordinary mind is like a dumb, driven animal; while the Master Mind is like the strong-willed, intelligent, masterful Man.

We can deliberately and voluntarily select and choose the particular wind which is to force our mental boat forward or, changing the figure, to choose and select the particular stream of thought and feeling which is to be allowed to flow through our mind.

There are three general conditions of human mentality: (1) Mental Slavery, in which the mind is the slave and servant of outside forces and influences; (2) Partial Freedom, in which the mind is largely controlled by outside influences, while at the same time a limited amount of voluntary control and direction has been acquired; and (3) Mental Mastery, in which the mental faculties, and emotional organism, have been brought under the control of the will and judgment, and the individual is a master of, and not a slave to, environment and circumstances. The great masses of people are in the first class; a comparatively small number have passed into the second; while a still smaller number have passed into the third class, and have become the Master Minds of their time and place.

We moderns are unaccustomed to the mastery over our inner thoughts and feelings. That a man should fall prey to any thought that happens to take possession of his mind is commonly assumed as unavoidable. It may be a matter of regret that he should be kept awake all night from anxiety, and that he should have the power of determining whether he be kept awake seems an extravagant demand. The image of an impending calamity is no doubt odious, but its very odiousness (we say) makes it haunt the mind all the more pertinaciously, and it is useless to expel it. Yet this is an absurd position for man, the heir of all the ages, to be lag-ridden by the flimsy creatures of his own brain. If a pebble in our boot torments us, we expel it. We take off the boot and shake it out. And once the matter is fairly

understood, it is just as easy to expel an intruding and obnoxious thought. It *should* be as easy to expel an obnoxious thought from the mind as to shake a stone out of your shoe; and until a man can do that, it is nonsense to talk about his ascendancy over nature. He is a mere slave, and a prey to the bat-winged phantoms that flit through the corridors of his own brain.

It is one of the prominent doctrines of some of the Eastern schools of practical psychology that the power of expelling thoughts, or if need be, killing them dead on the spot, **must** be attained. Naturally the art requires practice; but, like other arts, when once acquired there is no mystery or difficulty about it. It is *worth practice*. It may be fairly said that life only begins when this art has been acquired. For obviously when, instead of being ruled by individual thoughts, the whole flock of them in their immense multitude, variety, and capacity is ours to direct, dispatch, and employ where we will, life becomes so vast and grand, compared to what it was before, that its former condition may well appear almost ante-natal. If you can kill a thought dead, for the time being, you can do anything else with it that you please. And therefore is this power so valuable. It not only frees a man from mental torment (which is at least nine-tenths the torment of life), but it also gives him a concentrated power of handling mental work absolutely unknown to him before.

Another facet of the Master Mind is that while at work your thought is absolutely concentrated upon and in it, undistracted by anything whatever irrelevant to the matter in hand. Then when the work is finished, if there is no more occasion for the use of the machine, it stops equally, absolutely, and entirely—with no **worrying**—and the man retires into that region of his consciousness where his true self dwells. The power of the thought-machine is enormously increased by this faculty of letting it alone on the one hand, and of using it singly and with concentration on the other.

The subjection of thought is closely related to the subjection of desire, and consequently has especially moral as well as especially intellectual relation to the question in hand. Nine-tenths of the scattered or sporadic thought with which the mind occupies itself, when not concentrated on any definite work, is what may be called *selfthought*—thought which dwells on and exaggerates the sense of self. This is hardly realized in its full degree until the effort is made to suppress it; and one of the most excellent results of such an effort is that with the stilling of all the phantoms which hover

around the lower self, one's relations to others, to one's friends, to the world at large, and one's perceptions of all that is concerned in these relations, come out into a purity and distinctness unknown before. Obviously, when the mind is full of little desires and fears, which concern the local self, and is clouded over by the thought images, which such desires and fears evoke, it is impossible that it should see and understand the greater facts beyond, and its own relation to them. But with the subsiding of the former, the great vision begins to dawn; and a man never feels less alone than when he has ceased to think whether he is alone.

The Master Mind creates a world for itself, in which it dwells supreme, and to which it attracts and draws what is conducive to its welfare and happiness, its success and achievement.

You are invited to become a Master Mind. Will you accept the invitation? If so, you will carefully study the principles herein explained, and apply the methods described.

The Mind Master

The idea of “mastery” carries with it the notion of dominion, power, or supremacy exercised by some person or thing, which is regarded as the “master.” The spirit and essence of the term “master” is that of governor, ruler, director, leader, manager, or controller.

Some psychologists would have us believe that the intellectual faculties are the governing powers of the mind. But it will take but little thought to inform us that in many cases the intellectual powers are not the masterful forces in the mental activities of the individual; in many cases the feelings, desires, and emotional factors of the person run away with his reason, and not only cause him to do things that his reason tells him he should not, but also so influence his reason that his “reasons” are usually merely excuses for his actions performed in response to feelings and emotions.

Other psychologists would have us believe that the desires, feelings, and emotions of the individual are his mental masters; and in many cases it would appear that this is true, for many persons allow their feelings, emotions, and passions to govern them almost entirely, all else being subordinated to these. But when we begin to examine closely into the matter we find that in the case of certain individuals there is a greater or lesser subordination of the feelings and emotions to the dictates of reason; and in the case of persons of excellent self-control, the reason would appear to be higher in authority than the feelings. In the case of recognized Mental Masters, it is even found that the very feelings, passions, and emotions are so obedient to higher mental authority that in many cases they may actually be transformed and transmuted into other forms of feeling and emotion in response to the orders or commands of the central authority.

The thoughtful investigator usually discovers that the Mind Master is not found in the respective realms of the first two of the three great divisions of

the mental kingdom, i.e., in the division of Thought, or that of Feeling, respectively. The investigator then turns to the third great division of the mental kingdom, i.e., that of Will, in his search for the sovereign power. And at first, it would appear that here, in the region of the Will, he had found the object of his search; and that the Will must be acclaimed the master. But when the matter is gone into a little deeper, the investigator discovers that not in Will itself, but in a *Something* lying at the very center of Will, is found the Mind Master.

While it is seen that the Will is higher in power and authority than either Thought or Feeling, it is also seen by the careful investigator that, in most cases, the Will is controlled and brought into activity by the Feelings; and that in other cases, it is started into action by the result of Thought, or intellectual effort. This being so, the Will cannot be considered as being always the Mind Master. And, discovering this, the investigator at first begins to feel discouraged, and to imagine that he is but traveling around a circle; in fact, many thinkers would have us believe that the mental processes work around in a circle, and that like a ring the process has no point of beginning or ending. But those who have persisted in the search have been rewarded by a higher discovery. They have found that while many persons are impelled to will by reason of their feelings and emotions, and others by reason of their thoughts, there is a third class of individuals—a smaller class to be sure—who seem to be masters of the will-activity, and who, standing in the position of a judge and sovereign power, first carefully weigh the merits of both feelings and thoughts, and then decide to exercise the willpower in a certain determined direction. This last class of individuals may be said to really *will to will* by the exercise of some higher authority within them. These are the real Master Minds. Let us seek to discover the secret of their power.

THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY

There is in the mental realm of every individual a certain *Something* that occupies the position of Central Authority, Power, and Control over the entire mental kingdom of that person. In many case—in **most** cases, we regret to say—this *Something* seems to be asleep, and the kingdom is allowed to run itself, “higgledy-piggledy,” automatically and like a piece of senseless machinery, or else under the control of outside mentalities and

personalities. In other cases—in **many** cases, in fact—this Central Authority has partially awakened, and consequently exerts at least a measure of its authority over its kingdom, but at the same time fails to realize its full powers, or to exert its full authority; it acts like a man only half-awakened from his sleep, and still in a state of partial doze.

Rising in the scale, we find cases of still greater degree of “awakening,” until finally we discover the third great class of individuals—a very small class!—in whom the Central Authority has become almost or quite fully awake; and in whom this Mind Master has taken active control of his kingdom, and has begun to assert his authority and power over it.

You, the person now reading these words—YOU, yourself—are now asked to make this search of your mental kingdom, this search that has for its aim the discovery of the *Something Within* yourself that is the Mind Master, and which, when fully aroused into conscious power and activity, makes you a Master Mind.

All “voluntary attention” is performed by the exercise of this power of the will, exerted by this *Something Within* that we call “I,” and which proves itself to be the Master of Thoughts.

The individual who has trained his mind to obey his will, is able to direct his thought processes just as he directs his feet, hands, or body, or just as he guides and manages his team of horses or his car. This being so, we cannot consider our Thought processes or faculties as the Mind Master; but must look for the Master in something still higher in authority.

There seems to be but one other region of the mind in which to search for our Mind Master, or Central Authority. You naturally say here, “He means The Will.” But is it merely the Will? Stop a moment and consider. If the Will, in itself, is the Mind Master, why is it that the Will, in the case of so many persons, allows itself to be controlled and called into action by ordinary feelings, desires, emotions, or passions, or on the other hand is called into action by the most trifling, passing thought or idea? In such cases it appears that the Will is really the obedient, “easy” servant, rather than the Master.

That the machinery of the Will is the mechanism of control and action, is undoubted; but what is it that controls and directs the Will in the cases of individuals of strong Willpower? In such cases it would seem that not only must the Will be strong, but there must be some stronger *Something* that is

able to control, direct, and apply the power of the Will. In moments in which you have exerted your Willpower, did you identify yourself with your Will, or did you feel that your Will was an instrument of power “belonging to” you, and being operated by you? Were you not at such moments aware of feeling an overwhelming consciousness of the existence of your **self**, or “I,” at the center of your mental being? And of feeling that, at least for the time, this “I” was the Master of all the rest of your mental equipment? We think that you will agree to this statement, if you will carefully live over again the experiences of such moments, and in imagination and memory reenact the experience.

All mental analysis brings the individual to the realization that at the very center of his mental being there dwells a *Something*—and he always calls this “I”—which is the **permanent** element of his being. While his sensations, feelings, emotions, tastes, thoughts, beliefs, ideas, and even ideals have changed from time to time, he knows to a certainty that this “I” has been permanent, and that it is the same old “I” that has always been present throughout his life, from his earliest days. He knows that although his emotional nature, and general mental-physical character may have undergone an almost total transformation, this “I” has never really changed at all, but has ever remained “the same I.”

Moreover, while the individual may change his sensations, feelings, tastes, passions, emotions, and whole general character in some cases, he is never able to change in the slightest degree this *Something Within* that he calls “I.” He can never run away from this “I,” nor can he ever move it from its position. He can never lift his “I” by means of his mental bootstraps; nor can his personal shadow run away from this “I” of his individuality. He may set apart for consideration each and every one of his mental experiences, sensations, thoughts, feelings, ideas, and all the rest; but he can never set off from himself this “I” for such inspection. He can know this “I” only as his self, that *Something Within* at the very center of his consciousness.

We are conscious of something closer to the center than anything else. Sensations originate outside and inside of the body. Emotions originate inside of the body. But this *Something* is deeper than either, and both are objective to it. We cannot classify it with anything else. We cannot describe it in terms of any other form of consciousness. Other forms of consciousness are objective in their relation to it, but it is never objective to

them. There is nothing in our consciousness deeper. It underlies and overlies and permeates all other forms, and, moreover,—what is of immeasurably greater importance—it can, if need be, create them.

Just what this “I” is, we cannot tell. This riddle has never been solved by the reason of man. So subtle is its essence that it is almost impossible to think of it as a something apart from its mental states. All that can be said of it is that *it is*. Its only report of itself is “I Am.”

This *Something Within*—this “I”—is that entity in philosophy and metaphysics that has been called “The Ego;” but such name does nothing in the way of defining it. You need not speculate over just what the Ego is, for you will never learn this. All that you can know is that it IS.

Your task is not to try to learn what the Ego is, for as has been said, you will never know this. Your task is to strive to awaken it into active consciousness, so that it may realize its power, and begin to employ it. You can awaken it by the proper mental attitude—by the conscious realization of its presence and power. And you can gradually cause it to realize its power, and to use it, by means of exercises calling into play that power. This is what Willpower really means. Your Will is strong already—it does not need strengthening; what is needed is that you urge your Ego into realizing that it can use your Willpower. You must learn to gradually awaken the half-asleep Giant, and set it to work in its own natural field of endeavor.

He who will carefully consider the above statements, and will make them a part of his mental armament, will have grasped the secret of the Master Mind.

The Slave Will and The Master Will

The masses of people are really little more than automatons. Their wills are called into activity by every passing desire, their passions and desires are uncontrolled, and their thought-processes are the result of suggestions made by others, which they accept and then fondly imagine they have thought for themselves.

The wills of such persons are Slave Wills, subject to the influence, control, and direction of others. The will-processes of such persons are almost entirely what are known as “reflex” activities, requiring the employment of but little powers of judgment, and little or no exercise of voluntary control.

Some may object that we are making too strong a statement when we say that the mental activity of the great masses of people are practically akin to reflex actions. People “think” about what they do before doing it, these objectors say. Of course “people think;” or, rather, they “think that they think;” but in reality the process of their “thinking” is almost reflex, that is to say it is automatic and mechanical, rather than deliberate. Their thought is usually based upon some suggested premise—some so-called fact accepted through suggestion and without verification or real consideration. Their accepted “facts” are usually found to agree with their likes, feelings, or prejudices, rather than based upon careful investigation. Their so-called “reasons” are but excuses or explanations evolved to justify their decision or action, both of these really based upon desires, wishes, likes, or prejudices.

Practically all our voluntary acts of will result from the power of **desire**. But this does not imply, by any means, that **all** desires result in action. The rule is this: **The greater the degree of the willpower of the individual, the greater is his degree of control over his desires.** And, as we have seen

that the degree of willpower is the degree of the “wakefulness” of the Ego, it follows that **the greater the wakefulness of the Ego, the greater the degree of its control over the desires found within its mental realm.**

Every human being is, from the cradle to the grave, subject to external restraint. If a man declares that he is free to go without food, air, and sleep, and tries to act accordingly, consequences will soon deprive him of that liberty. The circle of freedom is much smaller than is sometimes thought; the fish is never free to become an eagle. Human freedom may be likened to a vessel sailing—freedom consists in being able to choose between two or more alternative courses of action.

The average man will indignantly deny that his freedom of will-action is in any way affected or restricted by outside or inside influences. He says triumphantly: “**I can act as I wish,**” thinking that he has answered the argument against free will. But here is the point: he can act **only** as he **wishes**; and if his **wishes** are controlled or determined in any way, then so are his actions controlled and determined. And as his “wishes” are but forms of his **desires**, then unless he controls his desires he does not control his wishes, but is controlled by them. And as the average man has not acquired a strong control of his desires, he is lacking to that extent in his freedom of will-action. And right here is the main distinction between the Slave Will and the Master Will.

The Slave Will obeys the orders of its desires, feelings, and other “wishes,” the latter coming from Lord-knows-where into his mental field. Such a man is not free, in the true sense of the word. He is a slave to his wishes, feelings, desires, passions—and he has no control over the thoughts and ideas that feed these desires, and that often actually **create** them. The Master Will not only refuses to be controlled by the intruding desires, if these are deemed against his best interests, but he actually controls them—by controlling the ideas and thoughts that serve to feed and nourish these desires, and in many cases, have also created them.

Our world is very much what we choose to pay attention to.

Ideas detained in consciousness tend to fan the flame of feeling; these ideas may be dismissed and others summoned to repress the flame of feeling. **In the higher type of action, the will can go out only in the direction of an idea. Every idea that becomes an object of desire is a motive.** It is true that the will tends to go out in the direction of the greatest

motive, that is, toward the object that seems the most desirable; but the will, through voluntary attention, puts energy into a motive idea and thus makes it strong. It is impossible to center the attention long on an idea without developing positive or negative interest, attraction or repulsion. **Thus does the will develop motives.** We may state it as a law that **the will determines which motives shall become the strongest, by determining which ideas shall occupy the field of consciousness.**

If one idea is kept before the mind, a desire and a strong motive may gather around that idea. If another idea is called in, the power of the first idea will decline. Voluntary attention makes the motive. The motive does not make the attention. Hence, the motive is a product of the will. If I withdraw my attention from a motive idea, it loses vigor. The only way to develop and maintain a free will is to direct the attention and thought by means of the awakened Ego—the Master Mind and Mind Master.

Positive and Negative Mentality

There is always a “two-sidedness” in individuals. Every individual finds within a constant struggle between these two opposing elements—the positive and the negative. Upon the outcome of this battle depends largely the advancement, success, welfare, and progress of the individual. Goethe has said: “In my breast, alas, two souls dwell, all there is unrest. Each with the other strives for mastery, each from the other struggles to be free.” The ordinary individual seems content to remain a passive spectator of this struggle; but the individual of the awakened Ego takes part in the struggle, and by throwing the weight of his freewill into the balance, he brings down the scales on the positive side.

When the individual is forced to consider any feeling, emotion, idea, action, advice, suggestion, or teaching, he should always submit it to the Touchstone of Positivity, by asking himself: **“Will this make me stronger, more powerful, more capable, more efficient, better?”** It becomes the duty of every individual wishing to progress on the Path of Life, and desiring to become proficient and capable in his expression and manifestation of mentality and character, to cultivate the positive qualities of the mind, and to restrain and inhibit the negative ones. In the consideration of this matter you should always remember that every positive quality has its negative opposite. This is an invariable rule, and one that you may test for yourself. And arising from it is this important rule of the new psychology: “To develop a positive quality, you should restrain or inhibit its opposing negative: To restrain or inhibit a negative quality, you should develop and encourage its opposing positive.”

Man should be more than a mere creature of chance, environment, and outside influences. He should be ruled from within—be self-ruled—instead of being merely a weak instrument of desire, emotion, and feeling,

influenced by suggestions and impressions from every passing person or thing. Man should be directed and guided by the strong instrument of his will, held firmly to its task by the Ego.

The fundamental idea of the new psychology is embodied in the symbol of the charioteer driving his fiery steeds under full control and with taut rein. The chariot represents the being of the man; the charioteer, the Ego; the reins, the will; the steeds, the mental states of feeling, emotion, desire, imagination, and the rest. Unless the reins be strong, they will not be sufficient to control the horses. Unless the charioteer be trained and vigilant, the horses will run away with the chariot and dash to pieces the driver in the general wreck. But controlled and mastered, the fiery steeds will lead forward to attainment and accomplishment, and at the same time will travel the road in safety.

There comes a time in the life of each one of us when the following question must be answered, and your course chosen. It may be that this time has come to you in the reading of these lines. Are you ready to answer it, and to make the decision? Remember the question. It is this: “Mastery or Servitude—Which?”

A man grows to resemble his ideals. And a man’s ideals are the outgrowth of his feelings and emotions. The ideal held by the man arouses interest in all things connected with it. Interest is the strong motive of attention; and attention is the beginning of all the activities of the will. So the man’s ideals serve to set into activity the chain of mental cause and effect that results in storing away in his mind the strong impressions that have so much to do with the building up of character. A man tends to grow to resemble the things he likes, and in which he is interested.

So true is this that a writer has suggested that we say, “As a man loveth, so is he.” But here again the Master Mind asserts its power, and says: “I love that which I want to love—I am free here as in all else in my realm.”

Modern psychology teaches us that the two following principles are operative in the character of each individual: (1) That feelings manifest themselves in will-action, unless inhibited or controlled; and (2) that the will-action follows the lines of the strongest interest.

We constantly act, often unconsciously, in accordance with our strongest desires, feelings, likes or dislikes, prejudices, etc. The Master Mind recognizes this and places in that storehouse only what he chooses to go

into it, and what he chooses to come out of it as the incentive to action—being always governed in his choice by the Rule of Positivity heretofore announced: **“Will this make me stronger, more powerful, more capable, more efficient, better?”**

To many people the suggestion that they have the **power** to select the objects of their interest may seem absurd. They are accustomed to regard interest, feelings, desires, emotions, and even passions, as things beyond their control, so that they make no attempt to exercise a voluntary control over them. It is true that these mental states do not spring from pure intellectual effort—they spring from the depths of the subconscious mentality, unbidden, in most cases. But the facts of the new psychology show us plainly that the Ego may assume control of these involuntary mental states, and either encourage and develop them, or else restrain or inhibit them entirely. Just as the will may assume control of certain muscles of the body, so may the Ego assume control of the entire mental kingdom, and mold, build, change, and improve each and every department of its mental workshop. Interest results from attention, and may be controlled by the will. **And the will is the chief instrument of the Ego.**

Attention

Considering how frequently we employ the term “Attention,” and its importance in our mental processes and their resulting action, it is strange how little thought we have given to the question: “What is Attention?”

Philosopher William Hamilton has said: “Attention is consciousness, and something more. It is consciousness voluntarily applied to some determinate object. **It is consciousness concentrated.**”

Attention is not an enlargement or increase in consciousness, but rather a narrowing, condensing, or limiting of consciousness. The act of Attention may be said to consist of three phases: (1) The earnest **fixing** of the mind upon some particular object; (2) the persistent **holding** of the mind upon that object; and (3) the determined **shutting-out** of the mind (for the time being) the perception of any other objects struggling for conscious recognition and attention.

To paraphrase one authority: The most important intellectual habit that I know of is attending exclusively to the matter in hand. It is commonly said that genius cannot be infused by education, yet this is the power of **concentrated Attention**.

And another: The force wherewith anything strikes the mind is generally in proportion to the degree of Attention bestowed upon it. The more completely the mental energy can be brought into one focus, and all distracting objects excluded, by the act of Attention, the more powerful will be the volitional effort.

There are two phases of Attention: (1) **reflex**, and (2) **voluntary** attention. **Reflex Attention** is drawn from us by a nervous response to some stimulus. **Voluntary Attention** is given by us to some object of our own selection, and is accompanied by a peculiar sense of effort. Many persons

scarcely get beyond the reflex stage. Any chance stimulus will take their attention away.

In voluntary Attention, we make a deliberate selection of the object to which we wish our mind to attend. Again, in involuntary Attention there is no sense of effort; while in voluntary Attention there is always a peculiar sense of effort, sometimes to a very marked degree.

The first step toward the development of the will lies in the exercise of Attention. There is a sense of conscious effort in voluntary Attention. This suffices to mark it off from the involuntary type. If we take two ideas of the same intensity, and center the attention upon one, we shall notice how much it grows in power. If we, at the start, want several things in about an equal degree, whether a bicycle, a typewriter, or an encyclopedia, we shall end by wanting the one most on which our attention has been most strongly centered. Attention is the most important element in will. In order to act in the direction of one idea in preference to another, we must dismiss the one and voluntarily attend to the other. The motor force thus developed in connection with the dominant idea lies at the foundation of every higher act of will.

Psychologist Rueben Post Halleck has written: "When it is said that Attention will not take hold on an uninteresting object, we must not forget that anyone not shallow and fickle can soon discover something interesting in most objects. Here cultivated minds show their especial superiority, for the Attention that they are able to give generally finds a pearl in the most uninteresting looking oyster. When an object necessarily loses interest from one point of view, such minds discover in it new attributes. The essence of genius is to present an old thing in new ways, whether it be some force in nature or some aspect in humanity."

The Mastery of Perception

Psychologist William Walter Smith has given us perhaps the most comprehensive, and at the same time the most condensed, statement of the Laws of Attention, which I paraphrase:

(1) Attention will not attach itself to uninteresting things. (2) It will soon decline in vigor (a) if the stimulus is unvarying, or (b) if some new attribute is not discovered in the object. (3) Attention cannot remain constant in the same direction for a long period, because (a) the nervous apparatus of the senses soon tire under the strain of continuous attention toward any one object, and consequently respond with less vigor, (b) the same is true of brain cells. To prove the truth of this one has only to focus the eye continuously on one object, or to keep the attention fixed on the same phase of a subject. (4) When one kind of attention is exhausted, we may rest ourselves in two ways: (a) by giving ourselves up to the play of reflex (involuntary) attention, or (b) by directing our voluntary attention into a new channel. The amount of fatigue must determine which is better. (5) Attention too continuously centered upon the same unvarying sensation, or upon any unchanging object, has been proved by experiment to tend to induce either the hypnotic state or a comatose condition.

The first of the above laws states the difficulty of attaching the Attention to uninteresting things. But there is a remedy for this as follows: (a) in the application of the equally true principle that interest may be developed in a previously uninteresting thing by studying and analyzing it. Everything has its interesting side, and examination will bring this into view. (b) By viewing a thing from varying viewpoints, and from different angles of physical and mental vision, new facts are discovered regarding it, and these discoveries awaken interest and renewed Attention.

The same remedy applies in the case of the second law. For by changing the point of view, and by discovering new qualities, properties, and attributes in a thing, the stimulus is varied, and renewed interest is obtained.

The third law explains why the Attention cannot long remain focused in the same direction. A remedy for this will be found in the well-known psychological rule to study a thing by piecemeal. That is to say, instead of considering attentively the entire subject, or object, one should break it (mentally) into as many small sections as possible, and then proceed to study it by sections. This will vary the stimulus.

The fourth law informs us that we may obtain rest for the tired Attention by (a) relaxing the voluntary Attention, and opening our consciousness to the impressions of involuntary, or reflex Attention—paying attention to the sights and sounds reaching us from outside, as for instance by closing our book and looking out of the window at the passing persons and things; or (b) by directing our voluntary Attention into a new channel, as by closing our book and picking up and reading another book along entirely different lines; or changing from an abstract subject to a concrete proposition, or vice versa. This expresses an important psychological principle, i.e., that the best way to rest and relax the Attention is to change the direction of its effort and activity. Change of occupation gives the best kind of rest to physical or mental muscles.

The fifth law merely serves to emphasize the effect of the unnatural concentration of Attention; and the fact that a varying stimulus is necessary for continued consciousness. It serves to point us to the middle of the road, avoiding the extreme of undue concentration on a single object on the one hand, and the other extreme of bestowing no voluntary Attention at all.

The average person is able to arouse and maintain Attention only when interest already attaches to the object to be considered. But the Master Mind rides over this obstacle by first awakening interest in the thing by means of a careful examination under concentrated voluntary Attention, and thereafter allowing the Attention to flow freely along the channels of interest thus made. Here we have an instance of the will first creating a channel, and then traveling over its course.

The Mastery of Emotion

Feeling and Emotion are the great incentives to action, and the great motive-power of mental and physical manifestations. Even Intellect, that supposed monarch of the mental world, really is “under the thumb” of that “power behind the throne,” which we know as Feeling and Emotion. Not only do we act according to our feelings, but in most cases we also think according to them. Instead of reasoning coldly and without prejudice, we really generally reason along the lines of our strong feelings. Instead of finding real “reasons” for our actions, we usually seek merely for “excuses” to justify our actions in accordance with our feelings.

There are few people able to detach themselves, even in a small degree, from their feelings, so as to decide questions by pure reason or intellectual effort. Moreover, there are few whose wills are guided by pure reason; their feelings supply the motive for the majority of the acts of will. The intellect, even when used, is generally employed to carry out the dictates of Feeling and Desire. Much of our reasoning is performed in order to justify our feelings, or to find proofs for the position dictated by our desires, feelings, sympathies, prejudices, or sentiments. It has been said that “men seek not reasons, but excuses, for their actions.”

Our judgments are affected by our feelings. It is much easier to approve of the actions of some person whom we like, or whose views accord with our own, than of an individual whose personality and views are distasteful to us. It is very difficult to prevent prejudice, for or against anything, from influencing our judgments. It is also true that “we find that for which we look” in things and people, and that which we expect and look for is often dependent upon our feelings. If we dislike a person or thing, we usually perceive no end of undesirable qualities in him or it; while if we are favorably inclined we easily find many admirable qualities in the same

person or thing. A little change in our feeling often results in the formation of an entirely new set of judgments regarding a person or thing.

The true Master Mind impresses its dominion upon the Feelings and Emotions, and then **sets them to work** in the right direction. In fact, it is by means of the powers of Feeling and Emotion that the Master Mind accomplishes much of its work. This should be borne in mind by the reader who wishes to develop the Master Mind.

Particularly in its phase of Desire does the Master Mind make use of Feeling and Emotion. Desire may be said to be *concentrated Feeling*. Before we can have ambition or aspiration, there must be desire. Before we can manifest courage or energy, there must be desire. Desire for something must underlie all life-action—desire conscious or subconscious. Abstract thought is a cold, bare thing, lacking vitality and warmth—desire is filled with life, throbbing, longing, wanting, craving, insisting, and ever pressing forward into action. Desire, indeed, is the motive power of all action. We may call desire by the favorite terms of ambition, aspiration, longing for attainment, etc., but **desire** is ever the basic principle of all longing, all wishing, all wanting.

There have been many attempts to define Desire. Perhaps the best and clearest in its analysis of the essential qualities of Desire is that of Reuben Post Halleck, who has furnished the following definition: “**Desire has for its object something that will bring pleasure or get rid of pain, immediate or remote, for the individual or for someone else in whom he is interested. Aversion, or a striving away from something, is merely the negative aspect of desire.**”

Most men act from motives of securing what will bring them the greatest amount of pleasure, or the least amount of pain, immediate or remote, for themselves or for others. In short, men ever strive for Pleasure and away from Pain.

The Mastery of Desire

The Mastery of Desire does not mean (as some suppose) the “killing out” of all Desire. In fact, as careful students of the subject well know, it would be impossible to kill out all Desire, for the very act of “killing out” would be actually, itself, a response to a desire—a desire not to desire, as it were. Mastery of Desire really means the control, management, and direction of Desire by the Ego.

In beginning the study of the Mastery of Desire, however, we must, of course, begin with the subject of the handling, direction, culture, and control of the Feelings and Emotions, for these are the stuff of which Desire is made. The Ego must learn how to manufacture certain grades and kinds of Feeling and Emotion into Desire, and at the same time to discard and throw into the scrap pile other kinds of Feelings and Emotions, which would make only the wrong kind of Desire.

HOW TO RESTRAIN FEELINGS, EMOTIONS, OR DESIRES

The general rules for the restraint of any class of feelings, emotions, and the desires arising therefrom, are:

- I. Refrain as far as possible from the physical expression of the feeling, or emotion, or the desire arising therefrom, which are deemed objectionable.
- II. Refuse to permit the formation of the habit of expressing in action the feeling, or emotion, or the desire arising therefrom, which are deemed objectionable.
- III. Refuse to dwell upon the idea or mental picture of the object or subject exciting the feeling, or emotion, or the desire arising therefrom, which are deemed objectionable.

IV. Cultivate the class of feelings or emotions, or the desires arising therefrom, which are opposed to those deemed objectionable.

Let us now consider each one of these rules in further detail:

I. Refrain from the Physical Expression.

A strong feeling or emotion, and the desire arising therefrom, tends toward expression in physical action of some kind. In fact, the feeling is said not to have been fully manifested unless this outward expression is had in at least some degree. This being so, it is seen that if one refrains from the physical expression, he has done something to prevent the full manifestation of the feeling.

So closely are the two—feelings and their physical expression—connected, that some psychologists have actually held that the physical expression precedes and practically causes the mental state of feeling. Some men in important positions make it a rule to maintain an even, low tone of voice when they are threatened with a rush of angry feeling—they have found that such a plan enables them to keep their temper, even under the most trying circumstances. And, in passing, it may be said that such a course will often result in the other person in the quarrel also lowering his voice, and abating his angry feeling.

There is a mutual action and reaction between emotional mental states and the physical expression thereof; each in a measure being the cause of the other, and each at the same time being the effect of the other.

Halleck has noted: “Actors have frequently testified to the fact that emotion will arise if they go through the appropriate muscular movements. In talking to actors on the stage, if they clench the fists and frown, they often find themselves becoming really angry; if they start with counterfeit laughter, they find themselves growing cheerful ... If we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the outward movements of those contrary dispositions which we wish to cultivate. Soothe the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it does not gradually thaw.”

The essence, then, of the above is: **Refrain so far as is possible from indulging in the physical expression of a feeling, emotion, or desire that you wish to conquer, control, and repress.**

II. Refuse to Form the Habit of Expression in Action.

Habits build a mental path over which the Will thereafter travels. Or, to use another figure of speech, Habit cuts a channel, through which the Will afterward flows. When you express a feeling, emotion, or desire in action you begin to form a habit; when you express it the second time the habit takes on force; and so on, each repetition widening the mental path, or deepening the mental channel over which it is easy for subsequent action to travel. The oftener the feeling, emotion, or desire travels this path of action, the stronger it becomes.

The essence of the above is: **Don't get into the habit of expressing in action a feeling, emotion, or desire which you wish to conquer, control, and repress.**

III. Refuse to Dwell upon the Idea or Mental Picture.

This rule is based upon the accepted fact of psychology that Feeling, Emotion, and Desire are fed, nourished, and strengthened by the representative idea, or mental image of the object or subject which has originally inspired them, or which is associated with that object or subject. Feelings are often caused by an idea, resulting from the process of thought or recalled in memory. Likewise they are deepened and strengthened by the recalling into consciousness of such ideas. In the same way, they are fed and nourished by ideas connected with the original object or subject by the ties of association.

The remembrance of an insult, an act of unkindness, a wrong done, may cause acute feeling. There may be no immediately preceding change in the sense organ when an idea flashes into the mind, but the feeling may be just as pronounced as if it were. A **representative idea** is a revived sensation, or a complex of revived sensations. Some ideas cause a joyful, others a sorrowful mental state; accordingly, feelings differ qualitatively according to the idea. Our feelings also differ quantitatively as the idea has a more or less pleasurable or painful element.

To sum up: Inasmuch as it is a psychological fact that ideas not only cause feelings, emotions, and desires, but also tend to revive, deepen, strengthen, and nourish them, it follows that if one wishes to inhibit, repress, or weaken any disadvantageous feeling, emotion, or desire, he should studiously and insistently refrain from allowing his attention to dwell upon the ideas tending to arouse or stimulate such feelings, emotions, or desires. He should refuse to feed the feeling, emotion, or desire with the nourishing food of associated ideas. Instead, he should set to starve out the objectionable feeling, emotion, or desire by refusing it the mental food needed for its growth.

IV. Cultivate the Opposite.

It is a law of psychology that one set of feelings, emotions, or desires may be weakened, repressed, and controlled by a careful and determined cultivation of the opposite set of feelings, emotions, or desires. Every mental state in the emotional field has its opposite. The two states are antagonistic, and each tends to annihilate the other. The two cannot coexist. One cannot feel happy and miserable at the same time and place. Consequently, there is always a struggle between opposing mental states.

By the *Cultivation of the Opposites*, the person takes advantage of the fight already under way between the two opposing emotional armies, and instead of fighting the battle all alone by a frontal attack, he forms an alliance with the friendly army, and throws the weight of his own will in its favor—he brings up a powerful reserve force, with men, equipment, ammunition, and supplies, and thus gives to the friendly army an enormously increased advantage. One has but to consider the matter in this light in order to see that this is **the best, easiest, and quickest way** to conquer the objectionable mental army.

The above statement is based upon the acknowledged psychological fact expressed in the axiom that: **“To develop a positive quality, it is important to restrain or inhibit its opposing negative; to restrain or inhibit a negative quality, develop and encourage its opposing positive.”** In this axiom is condensed a whole philosophy of character-building and self-improvement.

It is equally important to cultivate positive or desired emotions. Here are the general rules for the Cultivation, Development, and Strengthening of

Desirable Feelings, Emotions, and Desires:

- I. Frequently express, mentally and physically, the feeling, emotion, or desire that you wish to cultivate, develop, and strengthen.
- II. Form the habit of expressing in action the feeling, emotion, or desire that you wish to cultivate, develop, or strengthen.
- III. Keep before you as much as possible the idea or mental image associated with the feeling, emotion, or desire which you wish to cultivate, develop or strengthen.
- IV. Restrain the classes of feelings, emotions, and desires opposed to those you wish to cultivate, develop, or strengthen.

Let us now consider each one of these rules in further detail.

I. Frequently express the positive feelings, emotions, and desires.

As we have seen, a feeling, emotion, or desire is developed by the physical expression thereof, and also by the frequent repetition of the same in consciousness. The expression of the outward physical manifestations of the inner state tends not only to add fuel to the fire of the latter, but also nourishes and strengthens it. Likewise, the frequent bringing into the field of consciousness of the feeling, emotion, or desire tends to deepen the impression, and to cause the mental state to take deep roots in the mental being of the individual.

Exercise and practice develops the emotional muscles, just as they do the physical muscles. Repetition is a potent factor in forming and strengthening mental impressions, and in the cultivation of the mental habits. Consequently, lose no opportunity for exercising and using the feeling, emotion, or desire that you wish to cultivate and develop. If you wish to be courageous, bring up often the idea of courage, and endeavor to feel its thrill through you; and at the same time, deliberately assume the physical attitude of courage. Think of yourself as the courageous individual, and try to walk, carry yourself, and in general act like that individual. Form the correct mental picture, and then endeavor to **act it out**.

Get control of your physical channels of expression, and master the physical expression connected with the mental state you are trying to develop. For instance, if you are trying to develop your will along the lines

of Self-Reliance, Confidence, Fearlessness, etc., the first thing for you to do is to get a perfect control of the muscles by which the physical manifestations or expressions of those feelings are shown. Get control of the muscles of your shoulders, that you may throw them back manfully. Look out for the stooping attitude of lack of confidence. Then get control of the muscles by which you hold up your head, with eyes front, gazing the world fearlessly in the face. Get control of your vocal organs, by which you may speak in the resonant, vibrant tones that compel attention and inspire respect.

You must learn to occasionally actually perform some act requiring physical or moral courage. You must exercise your mental state and will by actual use. Grow by expression and action. Do the deeds, and you will acquire the power to do still greater.

The essence, then, of the above is: **Express frequently, mentally and physically, in “acting out” and actual doing, the feeling, emotion, and desire which you wish to cultivate and develop.**

II. Acquire the Habit of Expression.

By acquiring the Habit of Expression of the feeling, emotion, or desire which you may wish to cultivate and develop, you make a mental path or channel over which the will will naturally and easily travel. Habit renders the expression second nature. Habit is formed by exercise and repetition. Every time you express a mental state, the easier it becomes to express it again, for you have started the formation of a habit. Habit is a form of mental impression, and the oftener you sink the die of action into the soft wax of the mind, the deeper will be the impression. Habit increases ease of performance. When a habit is built, it constitutes the line of least resistance, and you will find it easy to move in that direction, and hard to move in the opposite.

Here you must fight with all your might, but, the first battle once won, the afterfights are less severe, and finally degenerate into mere skirmishes.

The essence, of the above is: **Establish firmly the habit of expressing in action the feeling, emotion, or desire that you wish to cultivate.**

III. Visualize the Associated Subject or Object.

It is an established principle of psychology that the mental picture of the object or subject of a feeling, emotion, or desire, when held before the mind, tends to add force, power, and vitality to the emotional state representing it. And the stronger, deeper, clearer, and more frequently repeated such a mental picture is, the stronger, deeper, and more does the emotional mental state associated with it become. Feelings, emotions, and desires are fed by **ideas**—and the strongest kinds of ideas are those taking form in clear mental pictures of the imagination or memory.

The essence, of the above is: **Feed your mind with the ideas and mental pictures of the object or subject of the feeling, emotion, or desire you wish to develop.**

IV. Restrain and Suppress the Opposites.

As we have seen, the development of an opposite set of feelings, emotions, or desires tends to restrain, suppress, and eventually destroy any particular set of these mental states. Contrariwise, it follows that if we will studiously and determinedly restrain and suppress (by the methods already given) the feelings, emotions, and desires opposed to those we wish to cultivate, then will the favored ones be given the best possible opportunity to nourish, grow, develop, and wax strong. Regard the opposing set as **weeds**, which if allowed to grow will choke and weaken, or possibly even kill, your favorite valuable plants. And you know what you should do in such a case, of course: determinedly **weed out** the harmful growths—pluck them by the roots and cast them out of your mental garden the moment they appear.

By refusing to permit the growth of the objectionable emotional weeds of the “opposites” in your mental garden, you greatly promote the growth of the valuable plants. Remember, there is not room in the mental garden for both of the two opposing sets of emotional qualities to thrive. It is up to you to determine which ones shall be the victors—which ones shall be the fittest to survive. The fittest in such cases is not always the **best**—rather is the one that you strengthen, stimulate, and feed. Will you bear a crop of sturdy, strong and vigorous plants and fruits, which are conducive to your wellbeing, strength, efficiency, and ultimate happiness? It is up to you to **decide**—and then to **act**.

The Mastery of Thought

Speaking in the figurative sense, it may be said that the Kingdom of Mind over which the Ego—or Master Mind—rules (or may rule if it will assert its right and power to rule) is composed of three grand divisions, or states: (1) Feeling; (2) Thought; and (3) Will. The activities of the mind consist of Feeling, Thinking, and Willing. All mental states or processes will be found to come under one or the other of the said classes. And yet, the mental activities are so complex that each of these three respective classes are usually found manifesting in connection with one or more of the others.

We seldom find a Thought without also finding a blending of Feelings, and usually a manifestation of Will, as well. Likewise, we seldom find a Feeling without a Thought connected or associated with it, and usually a manifestation of the presence of Will in connection with it. And, finally, we seldom find a manifestation of Will without the presence of Feeling, and of the Thought associated with the Feeling. But, nevertheless, there is a clear distinction among these three great classes of mental states or processes.

To begin with, let us ask, “What is thought?”

Halleck states: “To think is to compare things with each other, to notice wherein they agree and differ, and to classify them according to these agreements and differences. It enables us to put into a few classes the billions of things that strike our perceptive faculties; to the things with like qualities into a bundle by themselves, and to infer that what is true of one of these things will be true of the others, without actual experience in each individual case; and to introduce law and order into what at first seemed a mass of chaotic materials.”

Man has one resource denied to the animals—**the power of progressive thought**. He has harnessed the forces of Nature, proceeding from the

grosser to the finer—from steam to electricity—and still has a far more wonderful field to explore.

Many people believe they are “thinking” when they are but exercising their faculty of memory, and even that in merely an idle and passive manner. They are simply allowing the stream of memory to flow through their field of consciousness, while the Ego stands on the banks and idly watches the passing waters of memory flow by. They call this “thinking,” while in reality there is no process of Thought under way.

Henry Hazlitt writes: “When I use the word ‘thinking,’ I mean thinking with a purpose, with an end in view, thinking to solve a problem. I mean the kind of thinking that is forced on us when we are deciding on a course to pursue, on a life work you take up perhaps: the kind of thinking that was forced upon us in our younger days when we had to find a solution to a problem in mathematics ... I do not mean ‘thinking’ in snatches, or holding petty opinions on this subject and on that. I mean thought on significant questions which lie outside the bounds of your narrow personal welfare.”

The same writer has said: “**If a man were to know everything, he could not think.** Nothing would ever puzzle him, his purposes would never be thwarted, he would never experience perplexity or doubt, he would have no problems ... If our lives and the lives of our ancestors had always run smoothly, if our every desire were immediately satisfied, if we never met an obstacle in anything we tried to do, thinking would never have appeared on this planet. But adversity forced us to it.”

Real thinking is a process directly under the control, direction, and management of the Master Mind. The importance of this fact can be correctly estimated only when one realizes the all-important part played by Thought in the life and welfare of the individual. We are the result of what we have thought. The Master Mind thinks what it wills to think, not what others will it to think, or what Chance determines it shall think. Thus is the Master Mind the Master of Itself.

Subconscious Mentality

A large share of the mental processes of the individual play out on some fields or on planes of mentality under or above the ordinary plane of consciousness.

The so-called subconscious or unconscious planes of mind **are not unconscious**, but are really conscious in various degrees of consciousness peculiar to themselves. The term “subconscious” is used simply to indicate that the processes and activities of these particular planes of mind are outside of the field of the ordinary consciousness. When I speak of the passing of impressions, ideas, or records in and out of consciousness, I am not trying to convey the idea of passing these mental images from one mind to another, but rather of passing them in and out of the narrow field of the ordinary consciousness, just as the tiny living creatures in a drop of stagnant water under a microscope pass in and out of the field of vision of the apparatus; or as the stars pass in and out of the field of a stationery telescope as the earth revolves.

Mental events imperceptible to consciousness are far more numerous than the others, and we perceive only the highest points of the world that makes up our being—the lighted-up peaks of a continent whose lower levels remain in the shade. Examine closely, and without bias, the ordinary mental operations of daily life, and you will discover that consciousness has not one-tenth the functions we commonly ascribe to it. In every conscious state there are conscious, subconscious, and infra-conscious energies, each one indispensable.

It must not be supposed that the mind is at any time conscious of all its materials and powers. At any moment we are not conscious of a thousandth part of what we know. It is well that such is the case; for when we are studying a subject, or an object, we should not want all we know to rush

into our minds at once. If this occurred, our mental confusion would be indescribable. Between the perception and the recall, the treasures of memory are, metaphorically speaking, away from the eye of consciousness. How these facts are preserved, before they are summoned by memory, consciousness can never tell us. An event may not be thought of for fifty years, and then it may suddenly appear in consciousness.

THE PROCESSES OF IMAGINATION

Imagination, the second class of the processes of the Subconscious Mentality, very closely resembles its brother, the Memory, but there is an important distinction between the two, as follows: Memory reproduces only the original impressions placed within its realm, while Imagination reproduces the recorded impressions of Memory, not in their original condition, but in new groupings, arrangements, and forms.

Memory is the storehouse of impressions, but Imagination is the artist working with these stored up impressions, and making new and wonderful things with them. Imagination takes these stored-away impressions, and **creates** new forms of things from them, but always uses the materials it finds in the Memory storehouse—it makes new combinations, new arrangements, new forms, **but it never makes new materials.**

Imagination is subject to misuse, as well—in fact, the word is frequently employed to indicate the misuse of it, in the form of idle daydreams and vain fanciful flights of the imagination. This misuse arises from the **involuntary** exercise of the Imagination—allowing this subconscious faculty to indulge in purposeless and useless activity. This is like mere daydreaming, and is a habit that often obtains quite a hold over a person if too freely indulged in. It is a mild form of mental intoxication, and the effects are undesirable, for they often manifest in a weakening of the will, and rendering infirm the voluntary purposive faculties of the mind.

The most harmful effects of the idle exercise of the imagination is that it usurps the place rightfully belonging to **action**. It is so much easier and more pleasant to dream of accomplishment than to attempt to make them come true in actual life. The habitual daydreamer gradually loses the desire to participate in the activities of life, and slowly sinks into a passive existence.

The best modern psychology recognizes this danger of the misuse of the Imagination, and lays great stress upon the necessity of transmuting the energies of the Imagination into the images of things connected with the life work of the individual, character-building, self-mastery, and general creative work along the lines of the Constructive Imagination. Creative and constructive imagination furnishes the pattern, design, or mold of future action or material manifestation. Properly used, the imagination is the architect of deeds, actions, and accomplishments.

In this constructive and creative work of the Imagination we have but another example of what has been so positively insisted upon: **the principle of the Ego using its instruments of expression, instead of allowing them to use the Ego.** It is the **positive** use of the faculties, instead of the **negative**.

Here follow a few carefully selected rules for the cultivation of the right habits of using the Imagination.

The Supply of Material. Before the Imagination can build, construct, and create, it must be supplied with the proper materials. The materials with which the Imagination works are to be had only in the subconscious storehouse of Memory. Therefore, the Memory must be supplied with a stock of information concerning the particular subject or object. The impressions stored away should be clear, distinct, and strong.

Develop by Exercise. The Imagination should be developed, cultivated, and strengthened by voluntary and directed exercise and use. Acquire the habit of mapping out the work you have to do in advance, and allowing the creative Imagination to fill in the details of the map after you have made the general outlines. Turn your attention upon the tasks before you, and you will discover, providing you have the strong desire for improvement, that the Imagination will set to work suggesting improvements.

Avoid Idle Daydreaming. Avoid the habit of idle daydreaming, for this only dissipates and wastes the energies of the Imagination. Instead, strive to acquire the habit of the purposeful, voluntary use of the Imagination.

Hold to the Central Idea. In the work of Constructive Imagination, always hold firmly to the central idea and purpose of your thought. Build up, tear down, alter, and change the details as much as you see fit, but always with the idea of improving and creating—never allow yourself to be

sidetracked. Allow the central idea and its purpose to be the framework upon which you build.

Discard Useless Material. Acquire the habit of discarding all ideas and mental images that are not conducive to your creative work. Hold your mind one-pointed while engaged in your imaginative work. Subject all your ideas and mental images to the test: “Is this conducive to the task in view? Does this tend to efficiency?”

See the Result as You Desire It to Be. Always hold before your mental eye the picture of yourself accomplishing the thing you have set out to do, and picture the result taking on proper form and power.

Describing a scene from his novel *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, author Robert Louis Stevenson offered this portrait of his subconscious and imaginative faculties: “My Brownies! God bless them! who do one-half of my work for me when I am fast asleep, and in all human likelihood do the rest for me as well when I am wide awake and foolishly suppose that I do it for myself. I had long been wanting to write a book on man’s double being. For two days I went about racking my brains for a plot of any sort, and on the second night I dreamt the scene in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* at the window; and a scene, afterward split in two, in which Hyde, pursued, took the powder and underwent the change in the presence of his pursuer.”

Many pages could be filled with similar testimony to the reality of the processes of Subconscious Thought, to which has been given the names “automatic thinking,” “unconscious rumination,” or even the picturesque term “the helpful Brownies” of Stevenson.

In the Inner Consciousness of each of us there are forces that act much the same as would countless tiny mental brownies or helpers who are eager to assist us in our mental work, if we will have confidence and trust in them. This is a psychological truth expressed in the terms of the old fairytales. The process of summoning these Inner Consciousness helpers is similar to that we constantly employ to recall some forgotten fact or name. We find that we cannot recollect a desired fact, date, or name, and instead of racking our brains with an increased effort, we (if we have learned the secret) pass on the matter to the Inner Consciousness with a silent command, “Recollect this name for me,” and then continue with our ordinary work. After a few minutes—or it may be hours—all of a sudden,

pop! will appear the missing name or fact—flashed from the planes of the Inner Consciousness by the help of the kindly workers or “brownies” of those planes. The experience is so common that we have ceased to marvel at it, and yet it is a wonderful manifestation of the Inner Consciousness workings of the mind.

Furthermore, if you will look carefully into a subject you wish to master, and will pass along the results of your observations to these Subconscious Brownies, you will find that they will work the raw materials of thought into shape for you in a comparatively short time. They will arrange, analyze, systematize, collate, and arrange in consecutive order the various details of information that you have passed on to them, and will add articles of similar information that they will find stored away in the various recesses of your memory. In this way, they will group together scattered bits of knowledge that you have forgotten.

There are many ways of setting the brownies to work. Perhaps the best way for the average person is for one to get a very clear idea of what one really wants to know—a clear idea or mental image of the question you wish answered. Then after rolling it around in your mind—mentally chewing it, as it were—giving it a high degree of voluntary attention, you can pass it on to your Subconscious Mentality with the mental command: **“Attend to this for me—work out the answer!”** or some similar order. This command may be given silently, or else spoken aloud—either will do. Speak to the Subconscious Mentality—or its little workers—just as you would speak to people in your employ, kindly but firmly. Talk to the little workers, and command them to do your work. And then forget all about the matter—throw it off your conscious mind, and attend to other tasks. In due time will come your answer—flashed into your consciousness—perhaps not until the very minute that you must decide upon the matter, or need the information. You may give your brownies orders to report at such and such a time—just as you do when you tell them to awaken you at a certain time in the morning, or just as they remind you of the hour of your appointment, if you have them well trained.

The above instruction, though conveyed in a fanciful style, really contains the essence and substance of the most approved methods of making use of the faculties of the subconscious mentality. The reader should carefully study this method, and begin to practice it as he wishes to

make use of this wonderful power of the mind. He will find that after a little practice his mental powers will be enormously increased, and his general efficiency added to.

The Mastery of Will

The modern conception of the Will is that of **mental states concerned with action**, the other phases being regarded as subordinate to this.

The Will may be said to present three general phases: (1) The phase in which Desire is being transformed into Will; (2) the phase in which there is the process of Deliberation concerning the respective values of several desires, or several courses of action represented by their respective ideas or mental images; this phase of Deliberation begins with conflicting motives, and ends with a Decision or Choice; (3) the phase of action resulting from the Decision or Choice. The following somewhat fuller statement of each of these phases will aid the reader in perceiving the special characteristics of each.

1. Desire-Will.

All activities of the Will are preceded by Desire. One may Desire without actually setting the Will into operation, but one can scarcely be thought of as Willing without having first experienced the Desire to Will (it being, of course, understood that such Desire may have manifested subconsciously rather than in the conscious field). It is almost impossible to conceive of one willing to do a thing other than from the motive of Desire, either in the form of “wanting to” on the one hand, or of fear on the other hand. Will is always the active expression of some form of Desire.

2. Deliberative Will.

In this second phase of Will activity, there is **a balancing and weighing of desires, or at least a weighing and balancing of several courses of action, in order to determine their values as a channel of expression of the strongest desires.**

Sometimes there is a dominant desire that presses aside all other desires, and asserts its strength and power; in such a case, the deliberation is simply that of determining the best possible channel of expression. But, as a rule, there is first a conflict of desires, which results either in the victory of **the strongest desire present at that moment**, or else **an average struck between several strong desires then present**.

3. Action-Will.

Some persons can never seem to understand that **resolving** to do a thing is not the same as doing it. Such are utterly worthless in this world of action. They **talk**; they **feel**; they do anything **but act**. They appear to derive almost as much comfort from resolving to answer a letter, which should have been answered two months earlier, as they would from actually writing the reply. There may be desire, deliberation, and decision; but if these do not result in action, the process of will is practically incomplete.

TRAINING THE WILL

Just as the Master Mind may train the faculties of Thought, Feeling, and Emotion, so may it train, control, direct, and master the faculties of the Will. And this last is perhaps the most important of all the various forms of mastery manifested by the Ego, or Master Mind, because the Will is the instrument the Ego uses to control the other mental faculties—and control of the Will is control of the entire situation.

The following Rules of Will Development provide a simple, practical system of training and cultivating the Will.

1. Finding the Center of Power.

This rule consists of bidding the student to find the center of his mental being—the place where dwells the Ego, the Master of Mind, the “I.” This involves not only assenting to the presence of the Ego on the part of the intellect, but also of the conscious **feeling** of the presence, reality and power of the “**I**” in the center of the mental field, where it masters, directs, controls, and manages the feelings, emotions, thought processes, objects of attention and desire, and, finally, of the **activities of the will**.

The Ego must learn to turn its attention inward upon itself, and to be conscious of its own presence and existence. It must inwardly cognize itself

as the “I”—an actual living entity or being. To do this fully, the Ego must for the moment separate itself from the various instruments and faculties belonging to it—it must see and feel itself simply as the pure Ego—the “I AM!” Each time you control or direct the mind, say to yourself “**I**, the Ego, the Master Mind, am doing this”—and you will be made conscious of a dawning realization of the Ego, which is Yourself—your **Real Self**.

2. Exert Your Will Power.

Exert Your Will Power by practicing the control over the several mental and emotional faculties: **Will to think; Will to feel; Will to act**. For instance, you may feel a desire to do, or not do a certain thing—here is your chance to prove your Willpower. Deliberately determine that you **shall and will** desire and feel the exact opposite of your present desire, and then proceed to manifest in action that idea and determination. You will find that the original desire or feeling will struggle and rebel—it will fight hard for life and power—but you must oppose it to the deadly cold steel of your will, as directed by the Master Mind. Persevere, and yield not an inch—assert your mastery of your mental domain. Ask no quarter, and give none; and as sure as tomorrow’s sun will rise, so surely will your will triumph. For the Will is positive to other mental states, when it is properly applied and persistently exerted.

3. Consider Your Actions.

Cultivate the faculty of careful deliberation and intelligent determination. In short, look before you leap. Test your feelings, emotions, impulses, and desires by the light of intellect. Test every desire and impulse by the Touchstone of Positivity: “Will this make me stronger, better, and more efficient?” Do not prolong your deliberation too long, however—learn to decide carefully but at the same time quickly and without dawdling. **Then**, when you have determined upon your course of action—have decided **what** to do, and **how** to do it, as well as understanding **why** you should do it—proceed to **actually do it with all your might**. Follow the old maxim: “Be sure you’re right, then go ahead!”

4. Cultivate the Attention.

Carefully cultivate the Attention until you can focus it upon any object or subject with concentrated force and insistent direction. The Attention determines the path of the will—either toward or away from the object of the Attention. Attention is the eye of the Ego, or Master Mind, the driver of the mental chariot.

5. Acquire the Habit of Mastery.

Carefully cultivate and acquire the habit of controlling your mental faculties, feelings, desires, and thoughts, as well as your actions, by the power of your awakened will. When you have acquired this habit, half the battle is over. Then will the wild horses of the mind have learned the lesson of control, and will interpose a constantly decreasing degree of resistance, and a constantly increasing obedience.

6. Occasionally Perform Disagreeable Tasks.

You will find that it is of great benefit to occasionally drive your mental steeds in directions contrary to that which they wish to travel. This course is advisable, not because the agreeable way is necessarily wrong, but simply because such exercise of control trains them and accustoms them to the direction of the Master Mind.

One writer mentions the case of a man who was found reading a particularly dry work on political economy. His friend expressed surprise at his choice of a book, and the man replied: **“I am doing this because I dislike it!”** He was training his mental horses. One of the best and simplest methods of putting this rule into practice is that of heeding the popular adage: **“DO IT NOW!”** Procrastination is a particularly balky horse, and one that requires careful and persistent attention.

THE “JAMES FORMULAS”

No presentation of the best modern thought concerning the Cultivation of Willpower would be complete without mentioning the celebrated formulas of the great American psychologist William James. Professor James based these formulas upon those of philosopher Alexander Bain, elaborating the latter and adding some equally good advice to them. Here is a condensed statement of the “James Formulas.”

1. "In the acquisition of a new habit, or the leaving off of an old one, launch yourself with as strong and decided an initiative as possible. This will give your new beginning such a momentum that the temptation to break down will not occur as soon as it otherwise might; and every day during which a breakdown is postponed adds to the chances of it not occurring at all."
2. "Never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life. Every lapse is like the letting fall of a ball of string which one is carefully winding up—a single slip undoes more than a great many turns will wind again." "It is necessary, above all things, in such a situation, never to lose a battle. Every gain on the wrong side undoes the effect of many conquests on the right. The essential precaution is so to regulate the two opposing powers that the one may have a series of uninterrupted successes, until repetition has fortified it to such a degree as to enable it to cope with the opposition, under any circumstances."
3. "Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you wish to gain. It is not the moment of their forming, but in the moment of their producing motor effects, that resolves, and aspirations communicate their new 'set' to the brain. The actual presence of the practical opportunity alone furnishes the fulcrum upon which the lever can rest, by which the moral will may multiply its strength and raise itself aloft. He who has no solid ground to press against will never get beyond the stage of empty gesture making."
4. "Keep the faculty alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day. That is, be systematically ascetic or heroic in little, unnecessary points; do every day something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it, so that when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test. The man who has daily inured himself to habits of concentrated attention, energetic volition, and self-denial in unnecessary things will stand like a tower when everything rocks around him, and when his softer mortals are winnowed like chaff in the blast."

In closing, the student who is striving to develop his Willpower will do well to hold before his mental vision the Inspiring Ideal of the Goal toward

which he is struggling and striving.

Benjamin Disraeli wrote: “I have brought myself by long meditation to the conviction that a human being with a settled purpose must accomplish it, and that nothing can resist a will which will stake even existence upon its fulfillment.”

Decide which you wish to be: Master Mind or Slave Mind. You have the choice—make it! I have led you to the spring from which bubbles the Waters of Mastery—but I cannot force you to drink. In the words of an old writer: “Man must be either the Anvil or the Hammer—let each make his choice, and then complain not.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“Theron Q. Dumont” was one of several pseudonyms used by WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON, a popular and innovative New Thought writer and publisher in the early twentieth century. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1862, Atkinson became a successful attorney in 1894. Following a series of illnesses, he immersed himself in New Thought literature. He soon became an important figure in the early days of the movement, publishing magazines such as *Suggestion*, *New Thought*, and *Advanced Thought*. Under the aegis of his own publishing company, Yogi Publication Society, Atkinson wrote many self-bylined works, and many titles under the pseudonyms Yogi Ramacharaka, Magus Incognito, Theron Q. Dumont, and Three Initiates. Under the last of these, Atkinson wrote his most popular and enduring work, *The Kybalion*. Published in 1908 by Atkinson’s Chicago-based press, *The Kybalion* is perhaps the most widely read occult book of the twentieth century. Atkinson died in California in 1932.

THE POWER OF AWARENESS

The Extraordinary Guide to Your Limitless Potential
—Now in a Special Condensation

by Neville

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

Doer of the Word

By Mitch Horowitz

The Power of Awareness is, in many respects, the perfect Neville book. The mystic wrote it in full bloom of his abilities as an author and speaker. The book sums up Neville's philosophy of creative imagination with exquisite clarity—indeed *The Power of Awareness* makes me think that of all the writers to emerge from the American metaphysical scene in the last century, Neville was the most elegant as a literary figure and communicator. (In this regard, he's closely rivaled by Alan Watts.)

The book's essential point is that you are a composite of exactly *what you believe to be true about yourself*. Your persistently held assumptions and mental pictures *are* your destiny, more than any past event or present circumstance. This is a message of extraordinary self-liberation.

It is also a deeply challenging message, especially for those experiencing health difficulties or physical maladies. Are such things really malleable to a change of mentality? And, in the face of chronic pain or other tactilely felt conditions, is a change in psyche even possible?

These are areas for the reader to experiment with. It is possible that in order to experience the full sway of our mental powers we must begin with conditions that we feel we can more readily effect, and watch for changes to arrive through already established channels, before moving on to more ambitious aims. It is also possible, as I explore in *The Miracle Club*, that we may be unable to experience, from within our present mentality, the ultimate role of awareness as the shaper of reality. But this should not serve as a deterrent to our personal experiments. Extraordinary events *do* occur, large and small, and Neville urges us to probe such occurrences for correlation between sustained mental picture and outer activity.

Every one of us lives by assumptions, whether or not we acknowledge them. We all harbor untested, psychologically conditioned, and second-

hand notions about life, which we seldom scrutinize. Acknowledging that this is so gives us remarkable freedom to select and road-test new personal philosophies and approaches. That is the spirit in which I hope you will approach this book. You have everything to gain by embracing your freedom to experiment with a new inner creed. That is what Neville offers.

One of Neville's traits that I most love is his continual challenge to the reader or listener to simply *try*. To test his ideas, this very minute, and see if they do not bring results. If not, he urges, forget all about me; but if so then dig deeper.

I want to add on a personal note that you will not be alone in these experiments. I and many others who love Neville's work are laboring with you. I hold a deep conviction that not only was Neville the most beautiful writer and speaker to emerge from the American metaphysical scene in the last century, but that he also conveyed ideas of remarkable and mysterious truth. These ideas will not simply disclose themselves on the page or through a speaker's voice, however. They require application and perseverance. You will likely encounter tantalizing successes and, at times, dispiriting failures, a topic that Neville addresses forthrightly in one of the last chapters in this book.

My hope is that this condensation *The Power of Awareness* will provide you with a springboard to action, and with a lesson plan that can be absorbed in a single sitting. And after you take it in, become, as Neville and Scripture urges, a "doer of the Word." See what transpires.

This book is to reveal your infinite power, against which no earthly force is of the slightest significance. It is to show you who you are, your purpose and your destiny.

1. Consciousness

It is only by a change of consciousness, by actually changing your concept of yourself that you can “build more stately mansions”—the manifestations of higher and higher concepts. (By manifesting is meant experiencing the results of these concepts in your world). It is of vital importance to understand clearly just what consciousness is.

The reason lies in the fact that *consciousness is the one and only reality, it is the first and only cause-substance of the phenomena of life*. Nothing has existence for man save through the consciousness he has of it. Therefore, it is to consciousness you must turn, for it is the only foundation on which the phenomena of life can be explained.

If we accept the idea of a first cause, it would follow that the evolution of that cause could never result in anything foreign to itself. That is, if the first cause-substance is light, all its evolutions, fruits and manifestations would remain light. The first cause-substance being consciousness, all its evolutions, fruits and phenomena must remain consciousness. All that could be observed would be a higher or lower form or variation of the same thing. In other words, if your consciousness is the only reality, it must also be the *only* substance. Consequently, what appears to you as circumstances, conditions and even material objects are really only the products of your own consciousness. Nature, then, as a thing or a complex of things external to your mind, must be rejected. You and your environment cannot be regarded as existing separately. You and your world are *one*.

Therefore, you must turn from the objective appearance of things to the *subjective center* of things, your consciousness, if you truly desire to know the cause of the phenomena of life, and how to use this knowledge to realize your fondest dreams. In the midst of the apparent contradictions, antagonisms and contrasts of your life, *there is only one principle at work*, only your consciousness operating. Difference does not consist in variety of

substance, but in variety of arrangement of the same cause-substance, your consciousness.

The world moves with motiveless necessity. By this is meant that it has no motive of its own, but is under the necessity of manifesting your concept, the arrangement of your mind, and *your mind is always arranged in the image of all you believe and consent to as true*. The rich man, poor man, beggar man or thief are not different minds, but different arrangements of the same mind, in the same sense that a piece of steel when magnetized differs not in substance from its demagnetized state but in the arrangement and order of its molecules. A single electron revolving in a specified orbit constitutes the unit of magnetism. When a piece of steel or anything else is demagnetized, the revolving electrons have not stopped. Therefore, the magnetism has not gone out of existence. There is only a rearrangement of the particles, so that they produce no outside or perceptible effect. When particles are arranged at random, mixed up in all directions, the substance is said to be demagnetized; but when particles are marshalled in ranks so that a number of them face in one direction, the substance is a magnet. Magnetism is not generated; it is displayed. *Health, wealth, beauty and genius are not created; they are only manifested* by the arrangement of your mind—that is, by your concept of yourself. The importance of this in your daily life should be immediately apparent.

The basic nature of the primal cause is consciousness. Therefore, the ultimate substance of all things is *consciousness*.

2. Power of Assumption

Man's chief delusion is his conviction that there are *causes other than his own state of consciousness*. All that befalls a man—all that comes from him—happens as a result of his state of consciousness. A man's consciousness is all that he thinks and desires and loves, all that he believes is true and consents to. That is why a change of consciousness is necessary before you can change your outer world.

“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

To be transformed, the whole basis of your thoughts must change. But your thoughts cannot change unless you have *new ideas*, for you think from your ideas. All transformation begins with an intense, burning desire to be transformed. The first step in the ‘renewing of the mind’ is *desire*. You must want to be different before you can begin to change yourself. Then you must *make your future dream a present fact*. You do this by *assuming the feeling of your wish fulfilled*. By desiring to be other than what you are, you can create an ideal of the person you want to be and *assume that you are already that person*. If this assumption is persisted in until it becomes your dominant feeling, the attainment of your ideal is inevitable. The ideal you hope to achieve is always ready for an incarnation, but unless you yourself offer it human parentage it is incapable of birth. Therefore, your attitude should be one in which—having desired to express a higher state—you alone accept the task of incarnating this new and greater value of yourself.

In giving birth to your ideal you must bear in mind that the methods of mental and spiritual knowledge are entirely different. This is a point that is truly understood by probably not more than one person in a million. You know a thing mentally by looking at it from the outside, by comparing it with other things, by analyzing it and defining it; whereas you can know a thing spiritually only by becoming it. You must be the thing itself and not merely talk about it or look at it.

Just as the moth in his desire to know the flame was willing to destroy himself, so must you in becoming a new person be willing to die to your present self.

You must be conscious of *being* healthy if you are to know what health is. You must be conscious of *being* secure if you are to know what security is. Therefore, to incarnate a new and greater value of yourself, you must assume that you already are what you want to be and then live by faith in this assumption—which is not yet incarnate in the body of your life—in confidence that this new value or state of consciousness will become incarnated through your absolute fidelity to the assumption that you are that which you desire to be. This is what wholeness means, what integrity means. They mean submission of the whole self to the feeling of the wish fulfilled in certainty that that new state of consciousness is the renewing of mind which transforms.

Imagination is the only redemptive power in the universe. However, your nature is such that it is optional to you whether you remain in your present concept of yourself (a hungry being longing for freedom, health and security) or choose to become the instrument of your own redemption, imagining yourself as that which you want to be, and thereby satisfying your hunger and redeeming yourself.

3. Desire

The changes which take place in your life *as a result of your changed concept of yourself* always appear to the unenlightened to be the result, not of a change of your consciousness, but of chance, outer cause or coincidence. However, the only fate governing your life is the fate determined by your own concepts, your own assumptions; for an assumption, *though false*, if persisted in will harden into fact. The ideal you seek and hope to attain will not manifest itself, will not be realized by you, until you have imagined that you are already that ideal. There is no escape for you except by a radical psychological transformation of yourself, except by your assumption of the feeling of your wish fulfilled. Therefore, make results or accomplishments the crucial test of your ability to use your imagination.

Everything depends on your attitude towards yourself. *That which you will not affirm as true of yourself can never be realized by you* for that attitude alone is the necessary condition by which you realize your goal.

You must imagine that you are already experiencing what you desire. That is, you must assume the feeling of the fulfillment of your desire until you are possessed by it and this feeling crowds all other ideas out of your consciousness.

If you do not believe that you are He (the person you want to be) then you remain as you are. Through the faithful systematic cultivation of the feeling of the wish fulfilled, *desire becomes the promise of its own fulfillment.* The assumption of the feeling of the wish fulfilled makes the future dream a present fact.

4. The Truth That Sets You Free

The drama of life is a psychological one in which all the conditions, circumstances and events of your life are brought to pass by your assumptions.

Since your life is determined by your assumptions you are forced to recognize the fact that you are either a slave to your assumptions or their master. To become the master of your assumptions is the key to undreamed of freedom and happiness. You can attain this mastery by deliberate conscious control of your imagination. You determine your assumptions in this way: Form a mental image, a picture of the state desired, of the person you want to be. Concentrate your attention upon the feeling that you are already that person. First, visualize the picture in your consciousness. Then *feel* yourself to be in that state as though it actually formed your surrounding world. By your imagination that which was a mere mental image is changed into a seemingly solid reality.

The great secret is a controlled imagination and a well sustained attention firmly and repeatedly focused on the object to be accomplished. It cannot be emphasized too much that, by creating an ideal within your mental sphere, by assuming that you are already that ideal, *you identify yourself with it and thereby transform yourself into its image*. This was called by the ancient teachers, “Subjection to the will of God” or “Resting in the Lord”, and the only true test of “Resting in the Lord” is that all who *do* rest are inevitably transformed into the image of that in which they rest. You become according to your resigned will, and your resigned will is your concept of yourself and all that you consent to and accept as true. You, assuming the feeling of your wish fulfilled and continuing therein, take upon yourself the results of that state; not assuming the feeling of your wish fulfilled, you are ever free of the results.

5. Attention

Attention is forceful in proportion to the narrowness of its focus, that is, when it is obsessed with a single idea or sensation. It is steadied and powerfully focused only by such an adjustment of the mind as permits you to see one thing only, for you steady the attention and increase its power by confining it. *The desire which realizes itself is always a desire upon which attention is exclusively concentrated*, for an idea is endowed with power only in proportion to the degree of attention fixed on it. Concentrated observation is the attentive attitude directed towards some specific end. The attentive attitude involves selection, for when you pay attention it signifies that you have decided to focus your attention on one object or state rather than on another.

Therefore, when you know what you want you must deliberately focus your attention on the feeling of your wish fulfilled until that feeling fills the mind and crowds all other ideas out of consciousness.

The power of attention is the measure of your inner force. Concentrated observation of one thing shuts out other things and causes them to disappear. *The great secret of success is to focus the attention on the feeling of the wish fulfilled without permitting any distraction*. All progress depends upon an *increase* of attention.

To aid in mastering the control of your attention practice this exercise. Night after night, just before you drift off to sleep, strive to hold your attention on the activities of the day *in reverse order*. Focus your attention on the last thing you did, that is, getting *in* to bed and then move it backward in time over the events until you reach the first event of the day, getting *out* of bed. This is no easy exercise, but just as specific exercises greatly help in developing specific muscles, this will greatly help in developing the “muscle” of your attention. Your attention must be developed, controlled and concentrated in order to change your concept of

yourself successfully and thereby change your future. Imagination is able to do anything *but only according to the internal direction of your attention*.

When you attain control of the internal direction of your attention, you will no longer stand in shallow water but will launch out into the deep of life. You will walk in the assumption of the wish fulfilled as on a foundation more solid even than earth.

6. Renunciation

There is a great difference between *resisting evil and renouncing it*.

When you resist evil, you give it your attention, you continue to make it real. When you renounce evil you take your attention from it and give your attention to what you want. Now is the time to control your imagination and

“Give beauty for ashes, joy for mourning, praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified.”

You give beauty for ashes when you concentrate your attention on things as you would like them to be rather than on things as they are. You give joy for mourning when you maintain a joyous attitude regardless of unfavorable circumstances. You give praise for the spirit of heaviness when you maintain a confident attitude instead of succumbing to despondency. In this quotation the Bible uses the word tree as a synonym for man. You become a tree of righteousness when the above mental states are a permanent part of your consciousness.

7. Preparing Your Place

All is yours. Do not go seeking for that which you are. Appropriate it, claim it, assume it. *Everything* depends upon your concept of yourself. That which you do not claim as true of yourself, cannot be realized by you. The promise is

“Whosoever hath, to him it shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.”

Hold fast, in your imagination, to all that is lovely and of good report for the lovely and the good are essential in your life if it is to be worthwhile. Assume it. You do this by imagining that you *already are* what you want to be—and *already have* what you want to have.

“As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”

Be still and know that you are that which you desire to be, and you will never have to search for it.

In spite of your appearance of freedom of action, you obey, as everything else does, the law of assumption. Whatever you may think of the question of free will, the truth is *your experiences throughout your life are determined by your assumptions* whether conscious or unconscious. An assumption *builds a bridge of incidents that lead inevitably to the fulfillment of itself.*

Man believes the future to be the natural development of the past. But the law of assumption clearly shows that this is not the case. Your assumption places you psychologically where you are not *physically*; then your senses pull you back from where you were psychologically to where you are physically. *It is these psychological forward motions that produce*

your physical forward motions in time. Pre-cognition permeates all the scriptures of the world.

8. Creation

Creation is finished. Creativeness is only a deeper receptiveness, for the entire contents of all time and all space while experienced in a time sequence actually co-exist in an infinite and eternal now. In other words, all that you ever have been or ever will be—in fact, all that mankind ever was or ever will be, exists *now*. This is what is meant by creation and the statement that creation is finished means that nothing is ever to be created, it is only to be manifested. *What is called creativeness is only becoming aware of what already is.*

The whole of creation exists in you and it is your destiny to become increasingly aware of its infinite wonders and to experience ever greater and grander portions of it.

If creation is finished, and all events are taking place now, the question that springs naturally to the mind is “what determines your time track?” That is, what determines the events which you encounter? And the answer is *your concept of yourself*. Concepts determine the route that attention follows. Here is a good test to prove this fact. Assume the feeling of your wish fulfilled and observe the route that your attention follows. You will observe that as long as you remain faithful to your assumption, so long will your attention be confronted with images clearly related to that assumption. For example; if you assume that you have a wonderful business, you will notice how *in your imagination* your attention is focused on incident after incident relating to that assumption. Friends congratulate you, tell you how lucky you are. Others are envious and critical. From there your attention goes to larger offices, bigger bank balances and many other similarly related events. Persistence in this assumption will result in *actually experiencing in fact that which you assumed*.

The same is true regarding any concept. If your concept of yourself is that you are a failure you would encounter in your imagination a whole series of incidents in conformance to that concept.

9. Subjective Control

Your imagination is able to do all that you ask *in proportion to the degree of your attention*. All progress, all fulfillment of desire, depend upon the control and concentration of your attention.

Your attention is directed from within when you deliberately choose what you will be preoccupied with mentally. It is obvious that in the objective world your attention is not only attracted by but is constantly *directed* to external impressions. But, your control in the *subjective state* is almost non-existent, for in this state attention is usually the servant and not the master—the passenger and not the navigator—of your world. There is an enormous difference between attention directed objectively and attention directed subjectively, and the *capacity to change your future depends on the latter*. When you are able to control the movements of your attention in the subjective world you can modify or alter your life as you please. But this control cannot be achieved if you allow your attention to be attracted constantly from without. Each day, set yourself the task of deliberately withdrawing your attention from the objective world and of focusing it *subjectively*. In other words, concentrate on those thoughts or moods which you deliberately determine.

You will no longer accept the dominance of outside conditions or circumstances. You will not accept life on the basis of the world without. Having achieved control of the movements of your attention, and having discovered the mystery hid from the ages, that *Christ in you is your imagination*, you will assert the supremacy of *imagination* and put all things in subjection to it.

10. Acceptance

However much you seem to be living in a material world, *you are actually living in a world of imagination.*

Whenever you become completely absorbed in an emotional state you are at that moment assuming the feeling of the state fulfilled. If persisted in, whatsoever you are intensely emotional about you will experience in your world. These periods of absorption, of concentrated attention, are the beginnings of the things you harvest.

This shock reverses your time sense. By this is meant that *instead of your experience resulting from your past, it now becomes the result of being in imagination where you have not yet been physically.* In effect, this moves you across a bridge of incident to the physical realization of your imagined state. The man who at will can assume whatever state he pleases has found the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. The keys are *desire, imagination and a steadily focused attention on the feeling of the wish fulfilled.*

Assume the spirit, the feeling of the wish fulfilled, and you will have opened the windows to receive the blessing. To assume a state is to get into the spirit of it. Your triumphs will be a surprise only to those who did not know your hidden passage from the state of longing to the assumption of the wish fulfilled.

The Lord of hosts will not respond to your wish until you have assumed the feeling of already being what you want to be, for *acceptance is the channel of His action.* Acceptance is the Lord of hosts in action.

11. The Effortless Way

The principle of 'Least Action' governs everything in physics from the path of a planet to the path of a pulse of light. Least Action is the minimum of energy, multiplied by the minimum of time. Therefore, in moving from your present state to the state desired, you must use the minimum of energy and take the shortest possible time. Your journey from one state of consciousness to another, is a psychological one, so, to make the journey you must employ the psychological equivalent of 'Least Action' and the psychological equivalent is mere assumption.

The day you fully realize the power of assumption, you discover that it works in complete conformity with this principle. It works by means of attention, minus effort. Thus, with least action through an assumption you hurry without haste and reach your goal without effort.

Because creation is finished, *what you desire already exists*. It is excluded from view because you can see only the contents of your own consciousness. It is the function of an assumption to call back the excluded view and restore full vision. *It is not the world but your assumptions that change*. An assumption brings the invisible into sight. It is nothing more nor less than seeing with the eye of God, i.e., imagination.

12. Essentials

The essential points in the successful use of the law of assumption are these: First, and above all, *yearning, longing, intense burning desire*. With all your heart you must want to be different from what you are. Intense, burning desire *is* the mainspring of action, the beginning of all successful ventures. In every great passion desire is concentrated.

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.”

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.”

Here the soul is interpreted as the sum total of all you believe, think, feel and accept as true; in other words, your present level of awareness. God means I AM, the source and fulfillment of all desire. This quotation describes how your present level of awareness longs to transcend itself. *Righteousness is the consciousness of already being what you want to be.*

Second, *cultivate physical immobility*, a physical incapacity not unlike the state described by Keats in his ‘Ode to a Nightingale’.

“A drowsy numbness pains my senses, as though of hemlock I had drunk.”

It is a state akin to sleep, but one in which you are still in control of the direction of attention. You must learn to induce this state at will, but experience has taught that it is more easily induced after a substantial meal, or when you wake in the morning feeling very loath to arise. Then you are naturally disposed to enter this state. The value of physical immobility shows itself in the accumulation of mental force which absolute stillness brings with it. It increases your power of concentration.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

In fact, the greater energies of the mind seldom break forth save when the body is stilled and the door of the senses closed to the objective world.

The third and last thing to do is to *experience in your imagination what you would experience in reality had you achieved your goal*. Imagine that you possess a quality or something you desire which hitherto has not been yours. Surrender yourself completely to this feeling until your whole being is possessed by it. This state differs from reverie in this respect: it is the result of a *controlled imagination and a steadied concentrated attention*, whereas reverie is the result of an uncontrolled imagination—usually just a daydream. In the controlled state, a minimum of effort suffices to keep your consciousness filled with the feeling of the wish fulfilled. The physical and mental immobility of this state is a powerful aid to voluntary attention and a major factor of minimum effort.

Apply these three points:

- Desire
- Physical immobility
- The assumption of the wish already fulfilled

This is the way to at-one-ment or *union with your objective*.

13. Free Will

The question is often asked, “what should be done between the assumption of the wish fulfilled and its realization?” *Nothing*. It is a delusion that, other than assuming the feeling of the wish fulfilled you can do anything to aid the realization of your desire. You think that you can do something, you want to do something; but, actually you can do nothing. *The illusion of the free will to do is but ignorance of the law of assumption* upon which all action is based. Everything happens automatically. All that befalls you, all that is done by you—*happens*. Your assumptions, *conscious or unconscious*, direct all thought and action to their fulfillment. To understand the law of assumption, to be convinced of its truth, means getting rid of all the illusions about free will to act. Free will actually means *freedom to select any idea you desire*. By assuming the idea *already* to be a fact, it is converted into reality. Beyond that, *free will ends* and everything happens in harmony with the concept assumed.

It is impossible to *do* anything. You must *be* in order to do.

If you had a different concept of yourself, everything would be different. You are *what you are*, so everything *is as it is*. The events which you observe are determined by the concept you have of yourself. If you change your concept of yourself, the events ahead of you in time are altered, but, thus altered, they *form again a deterministic sequence* starting from the moment of this changed concept. You are a being with powers of intervention, which enable you, by a change of consciousness, to alter the course of observed events—in fact, to *change your future*.

Deny the evidence of the senses, and assume the feeling of the wish fulfilled. Inasmuch as your assumption is *creative* and forms an atmosphere, your assumption, if it be a noble one, increases your assurance and helps you to reach a higher level of being. If, on the other hand, your assumption be an unlovely one, it hinders you and makes your downward way swifter.

Just as the lovely assumptions create a harmonious atmosphere, so the hard and bitter feelings create a hard and bitter atmosphere.

Make your assumptions the highest, noblest, happiest concepts. There is no better time to start than *now*. The present moment is always the most opportune in which to eliminate all unlovely assumptions and to concentrate only on the good.

If you would change your life, you must begin at the very source *with your own basic concept of self*. Outer change, becoming part of organizations, political bodies, religious bodies, is not enough. The cause goes deeper. The essential change must take place *in yourself*, in your own concept of self. You must assume that you are what you want to be and continue therein, for the *reality of your assumption has its being in complete independence of objective fact*, and will clothe itself in flesh if you persist in the feeling of the wish fulfilled. When you know that assumptions, if persisted in, harden into facts, then events which seem to the uninitiated mere accidents will be understood by you to be the logical and inevitable *effects* of your assumption.

The important thing to bear in mind is that you have *infinite free will in choosing your assumptions*, but no power to determine conditions and events. *You can create nothing, but your assumption determines what portion of creation you will experience.*

14. Failure

This book would not be complete without some discussion of *failure* in the attempted use of the law of assumption. It is entirely possible that you either have had or will have a number of failures in this respect—many of them in really important matters. If, having read this book, having a thorough knowledge of the application and working of the law of assumption, you faithfully apply it in an effort to attain some intense desire and fail, what is the reason? If to the question, did you persist enough?, you can answer yes—and still the attainment of your desire was not realized, what is the reason for failure?

The answer to this is the most important factor in the successful use of the law of assumption. *The time it takes your assumption to become fact, your desire to be fulfilled, is directly proportionate to the naturalness of your feeling of already being what you want to be—of already having what you desire.*

The fact that it does not feel *natural* to you to be what you imagine yourself to be is *the secret of your failure*. Regardless of your desire, regardless of how faithfully and intelligently you follow the law if you do not feel *natural* about what you want to be *you will not be it*. If it does not feel natural to you to get a better job you will not get a better job. The whole principle is vividly expressed by the Bible phrase “you die in your sins”—you do not transcend from your present level to the state desired.

How can this feeling of naturalness be achieved? The secret lies in one word *imagination*. For example, this is a very simple illustration. Assume that you are securely chained to a large heavy iron bench. You could not possibly run, in fact you could not even walk. In these circumstances it would not be natural for you to run. You could not even *feel* that it was natural for you to run. But you could easily *imagine* yourself running. In that instant, while your consciousness is filled with your *imagined* running,

you have forgotten that you are bound. In *imagination* your running was completely natural.

The essential feeling of naturalness can be achieved by *persistently filling your consciousness with imagination*—imagining yourself being what you want to be or having what you desire.

Progress can spring only from your imagination, from your desire to transcend your present level. What you truly and literally *must* feel is that *with your imagination, all things are possible*. You must realize that changes are not caused by caprice, but by a change of consciousness. You may fail to achieve or sustain the particular state of consciousness necessary to produce the effect you desire. But, once you know that consciousness is the only reality and is the sole creator of your particular world and have burnt this truth into your whole being, then you know that success or failure is entirely in your own hands. Whether or not you are disciplined enough to sustain the required state of consciousness in specific instances has no bearing on the truth of the law itself—that an assumption, if persisted in, will harden into fact. The certainty of the truth of this law must remain despite great disappointment and tragedy—even when you “see the light of life go out and all the world go on as though it were still day.” You must not believe that because your assumption failed to materialize, the truth that assumptions do materialize is a lie. If your assumptions are not fulfilled it is because of some error or weakness in your consciousness. However, these errors and weaknesses *can be overcome*. Therefore, press on to the attainment of ever-higher levels by feeling that you *already are* the person you want to be. And remember that the time it takes your assumption to become reality is *proportionate to the naturalness of being it*.

15. Destiny

Your destiny is that which you must inevitably experience. Really it is an infinite number of individual destinies, each of which when attained is the starting place for a new destiny.

Since life is *infinite* the concept of an ultimate destiny is inconceivable. When we understand that consciousness is the only reality, we know that it is the only creator. This means that your consciousness is the creator of your destiny. The fact is, you are creating your destiny every moment, *whether you know it or not*. Much that is good and even wonderful has come into your life without you having any inkling that you were the creator of it.

However, the understanding of the causes of your experience, and the *knowledge that you are the sole creator of the contents of your life, both good and bad, not only make you a much keener observer of all phenomena but through the awareness of the power of your own consciousness, intensifies your appreciation of the richness and grandeur of life.*

Regardless of occasional experiences to the contrary it is *your destiny to rise to higher and higher states of consciousness, and to bring into manifestation more and more of creation's infinite wonders*. Actually you are destined to reach the point where you realize that through your own desire you can consciously create your successive destinies.

The study of this book, with its detailed exposition of consciousness and the operation of the law of assumption, is the master key to the conscious attainment of your highest destiny.

This very day start your new life. Approach every experience in a new frame of mind—with a new state of consciousness. Assume the noblest and the best for yourself in every respect and continue therein.

Make believe—great wonders are possible.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NEVILLE GODDARD was one of the most remarkable mystical thinkers of the past century. In more than ten books and thousands of lectures, Neville, the solitary public name that he used, expanded on one radical principle: *the human imagination is God*. As such, he taught, everything that you experience results from your thoughts and feeling states. Born to an Anglican family in Barbados in 1905, Neville travelled to New York City at age seventeen in the early 1920s to study theater. Although he won roles on Broadway and toured internationally with a dance troupe, Neville abandoned the stage in the early 1930s to dedicate himself to metaphysical studies and chart a new career as a writer and lecturer. He was a compelling presence at metaphysical churches, spiritual centers, and auditoriums until his death in West Hollywood, California, in 1972. Neville was not widely known during his lifetime, but today his books and lectures, which he permitted to be freely recorded and are now circulated online, have attained bounding popularity. Neville's principles about the creative properties of the mind prefigured some of today's most radical quantum theorizing, and have influenced several major spiritual writers, including Carlos Castaneda and Joseph Murphy.

THE POWER OF CONCENTRATION

The Classic to Harnessing Your Mental Power

by Theron Q. Dumont

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Voice of a Pioneer

If you're an avid reader of metaphysical books, as I am, you might find the voice in this valuable little volume, published in 1916, somewhat familiar.

It belongs to the remarkably energetic New Thought philosopher and publisher William Walker Atkinson, who wrote under several pseudonyms and produced nearly one hundred New Thought books in the three decades leading up to his death in 1932. The most popular of these works was *The Kybalion*, which Atkinson wrote under the name "Three Initiates" in 1908, eight years before this similarly enduring volume.

In *The Power of Concentration*, Atkinson used the name French name of Theron Q. Dumont, which was often his chosen byline to explore matters of psychology, willpower, suggestion, and self-hypnosis, all of which were closely associated with French thinkers in the early twentieth century. This was particularly the case with hypnosis, which was introduced in its earliest form in Paris in the late 1770s by occult healer Franz Anton Mesmer. Although the arrival of the France Revolution, and the ensuing years of social upheaval, interrupted the progress of hypnotic theory in France, the nation once more popularized the therapeutic uses of the craft in the late-nineteenth century through the so-called Nancy School of hypnotism, which promoted practices of suggestion and hypnotherapy. The Nancy movement produced the immensely popular French healer Emile Coué, who became famous in Europe and America in the 1910s and 20s for his self-help mantra, "Day by day, in every way, I am getting better and better."

This was the tradition to which Atkinson sought to attach himself with his persona Theron Q. Dumont. Under the name Dumont, he wrote several works on the power of personal magnetism, the uses of will and suggestion, and the self-shaping forces of the mind, of which *The Power of Concentration* is probably the most compelling, persuasive, and enduring.

As is often the case with Atkinson's works, the book is a feast of practicality and idealism. It is at once inspiring and hard-knuckled—there is no toleration for dreamy visualizations unmoored from outer action. Rather, *The Power of Concentration* shows how to harness your thoughts and habits to heighten your personal performance. Nearly every page contains injunctions to act, do, and strive.

The book's advice, reduced to its essentials in this condensation, remains potent and fresh more than a century after its publication. Atkinson's language often prefigures terms and concepts heard today in the fields of neuroplasticity and cognitive behavioral therapy. Yet his book contains an infectious dynamism and scale of purpose rarely found in either of those fields. The book captures both the epic hopes and the applicability of the early days of New Thought. Its techniques have never been eclipsed or surpassed.

—Mitch Horowitz

FOREWORD

We all know that in order to accomplish a certain thing we must concentrate. It is of the utmost value to learn how to concentrate. To make a success of anything, you must be able to concentrate your entire thought upon the idea.

Do not become discouraged if you are unable to hold your thought on the subject very long at first. Very few can. It seems a peculiar fact that it is easier to concentrate on something that is *not* good for us than on something that is beneficial. This tendency is overcome when we learn to concentrate consciously.

Did you ever stop to think what an important part your thoughts play in your life? This book shows their far-reaching and all-abiding effects.

Man is a wonderful creature, but requires training and development to be useful. A great work can be accomplished by every man if he can be awakened to do his very best. But the greatest man would accomplish little if he lacked concentration and effort. Dwarfs can do the work of giants when they are transformed by the almost-magical power of great mental concentration. But giants will only do the work of dwarfs when they lack this power.

We accomplish more by concentration than by fitness; the man that is apparently best suited for a place does not always fill it best. It is the man who concentrates on every possibility that makes an art of both his work, and his life.

This course will stimulate and inspire you to achieve success; it will bring you into perfect harmony with the laws of success. It will give you a firmer hold on your duties and responsibilities.

The methods of thought-concentration given in this work, if put into practice, will open up interior avenues that will connect you with the everlasting laws of Being and their exhaustless foundation of unchangeable truth.

Concentration Finds the Way

Everyone has two natures. One wants to advance and the other wants to pull back. The one that we cultivate and concentrate on decides what we are at the end. Both natures are vying for control. The will alone decides the issue. A man by one supreme effort of the will may change his whole career, and almost accomplish miracles. You may be that man. You can be if you Will to be, for Will can find a way, or make one.

It is a matter of choice whether we allow our diviner self to control us, or whether we get controlled by the brute within. No man has to do anything he does not want to do. He is therefore the director of his life, if he wills to be. What we do is the result of our training. We are like putty, and can be completely controlled by our willpower.

Many people read good books, but say they do not get much out of them. They do not realize that all any book or lesson can do is to awaken them to their possibilities. One of the most beneficial practices I know of is looking for the good in everyone and everything, for there is good in all things. We encourage a person by seeing his good qualities, and we also help ourselves by looking for them. We gain their good wishes, a most valuable asset. We get back what we give out. The time comes when most all of us need encouragement; need buoying up. So, form the habit of encouraging others, and you will find it a wonderful tonic for both others and yourself, for you will get back encouraging and uplifting thoughts.

The first of each month, a person should sit down and examine the progress he has made. If he has not come up to expectations he should discover the reason, and by extra exertion measure up to what is demanded.

I know that every man who is willing to pay the price can be a success. The price is not in money, but in effort. The first essential quality for success is the desire to do—*to be something*. The next thing is to learn how

to do it; the next to carry it into execution. The man best able to accomplish anything is the one with a broad mind; a man may acquire knowledge that is foreign to a particular case, but is, nevertheless, of some value in all cases. So, the man who wants to be successful must be liberal; he must acquire all the knowledge he can; he must be well posted not only in one branch of his business but in every part of it. Such a man achieves success.

The secret of success is to try always to improve yourself no matter where you are or what your position. Learn all you can. Don't see how little you can do, but how much you can do. Such a man will always be in demand.

The man with grit and will may be poor today and wealthy in a few years; willpower is a better asset than money. Will will carry you over chasms of failure, if you but give it the chance.

Everyone *really wants* to do something, but few will put forward the effort to make the necessary sacrifice to secure it. There is only one way to accomplish anything, and that is to go ahead and do it. A man may accomplish almost anything today, if he just sets his heart on it and lets nothing interfere with his progress. Obstacles are quickly overcome by the man that sets out to accomplish his heart's desire. The "bigger" the man, the smaller the obstacle appears. The "smaller" the man the greater the obstacle appears. Always look at the advantage you gain by overcoming obstacles, and it will give you the needed courage for their conquest.

The Self-Mastery Power of Concentration

Man from a psychological standpoint of development is not what he should be. He does not possess the self-mastery, the self-directing power of concentration that is his right.

He has not trained himself to promote his self-mastery. Every balanced mind possesses faculties whose chief duties are to engineer, direct, and concentrate the operations of the mind, both in a mental and physical sense. Man must learn to control not only his mind but also his bodily movements.

When the self-regulating faculties are not developed the impulses, appetites, emotions, and passions have full swing, and the mind becomes impulsive, restless, emotional, and irregular. This makes mental concentration poor.

When the self-guiding faculties are weak, the person always lacks the power of mental concentration. Therefore, you cannot concentrate until you develop those very powers that *qualify* you to concentrate. If you cannot concentrate, one of the following is the cause:

1. Deficiency of the motor centers.
2. An impulsive and emotional mind.
3. An untrained mind.

The last fault can soon be removed by systematic practice. It is easiest to correct.

The impulsive and emotional state of mind can best be corrected by restraining anger, passion and excitement, hatred, strong impulses, intense emotions, fretfulness, etc. It is impossible to concentrate when you are in any of these excited states. You can help naturally decrease these by avoiding food and drinks as have nerve weakening or stimulating

influences, or a tendency to stir up the passions, impulses, and emotions. It is also a good practice to watch and associate with people who are steady, calm, controlled, and conservative.

Many have the idea that when they get into a negative state they are concentrating, but this is not so. Their power of concentration becomes weaker, and they find it difficult to concentrate on anything. The mind that cannot center itself on a special subject or thought, is weak; as is the mind that cannot draw itself from a subject or thought. But the person who can center his mind on any problem, no matter what it is, and remove any unharmonious impressions, has strength of mind. Concentration, first, last, and all the time, means strength of mind.

A concentrated mind pays attention to thoughts, words, acts, and plans. The person who allows his mind to roam at will, will never accomplish a great deal in the world. He wastes his energies. You concentrate the moment you say, "I want to, I can, I will."

Concentration of the mind can only be developed by watching yourself closely. All kinds of development commence with close attention. You should regulate your every thought and feeling. When you commence to watch yourself, your own acts, and also the acts of other people, you use the faculties of autonomy, and, as you continue to do so, you improve your faculties, until in time you can engineer your every thought, wish, and plan. Only the trained mind can focalize. To hold a thought before it until all the faculties have had time to consider that thought is concentration.

The person who cannot direct his thoughts, wishes, plans, resolutions, and studies cannot possibly succeed to the fullest extent. The person who is impulsive one moment and calm the next has not the proper control over himself. He is not a master of his mind, nor of his thoughts, feelings, and wishes. Such a person cannot be a success. When he becomes irritated, he irritates others and spoils all chances of any concerned doing their best. But the person who can direct his energies and hold them at work in a concentrated manner controls his every work and act, and thereby gains power to control others. He can make his every move serve a useful end, and every thought a noble purpose.

He is consciously attentive and holds his mind to one thing at a time. He shuts out everything else. When you are talking to anyone give him your sole and undivided attention. Do not let your attention wander or be

diverted. Give no heed to anything else, but make your will and intellect act in unison.

Start out in the morning and see how self-poised you can remain all day. At times, take an inventory of your actions during the day and see if you have kept your determination. If not, see that you do tomorrow. The more self-poised you are the better your concentration. Never be in too much of a hurry; and, remember, the more you improve your concentration, the greater are your possibilities. Concentration means success, because you are better able to govern yourself and centralize your mind; you become more in earnest in what you do, and this almost invariably improves your chances for success.

When you are talking to a person have your own plans in mind. Concentrate your strength upon the purpose you are talking about. Watch his every move, but keep your own plans before you. Unless you do, you will waste your energy and not accomplish as much as you should.

I want you to watch the next person you see who has the reputation of being a strong character, a man of force. Watch and see what a perfect control he has over his body. Then I want you to watch just an ordinary person. Notice how he moves his eyes, arms, fingers; notice the useless expenditure of energy. These movements lessen the person's power in vital and nerve directions. Center your mind on one purpose, one plan, one transaction.

There is nothing that uses up nerve force so quickly as excitement. This is why an irritable person is never magnetic; he is never admired or loved; he does not develop those finer qualities that a real gentleman possesses. Anger, sarcasm, and excitement weaken a person in this direction. The person that allows himself to get excited will become nervous in time, because he uses up his nerve forces and his vital energies. The person that cannot control himself and keep from becoming excited cannot concentrate.

But those whose actions are slower and directed by their intelligence develop concentration. Sometimes dogmatic, willful, excitable persons can concentrate, but it is spasmodic, erratic concentration instead of controlled and uniform concentration. Their energy works by spells; sometimes they have plenty, other times very little; it is easily excited; easily wasted. The best way to understand it is to compare it with the discharge of a gun. If the gun goes off when you want it to, it accomplishes the purpose, but if it goes

off before you are ready, you not only waste ammunition, but are also likely to do some damage. That is just what most people do. They allow their energy to explode, thus not only wasting it, but also endangering others. They waste their power, their magnetism, and so injure their chance of success.

The brain is the storehouse of the energy. Most all persons have all the dynamic energy they need if they would concentrate it. They have the machine, but they must also have the engineer, or they will not go very far. The engineer is the self-regulating, directing power. The good engineer controls his every act. By what you do you either advance or degenerate. This is a good idea to keep always in mind. When you are uncertain whether you should do something, just think whether by doing it you will grow or deteriorate, and act accordingly.

I am a firm believer in “work when you work, play when you play.” When you give yourself up to pleasure you can develop concentration by thinking of nothing else but pleasure; when your mind dwells on love, think of nothing but this and you will find you can develop a more intense love than you ever had before. When you concentrate your mind on the “you” or real self, and its wonderful possibilities, you develop concentration and a higher opinion of yourself. By doing this systematically, you develop power, because you cannot be systematic without concentrating on what you are doing. When you walk out into the country and inhale the fresh air, studying vegetation, trees, etc., you are concentrating. Whenever you fix your mind on a certain thought and hold your mind on it at successive intervals, you develop concentration.

If you hold your mind on some chosen object, you centralize your attention, just like the lens of the camera centralizes on a certain landscape. Therefore, always hold your mind on what you are doing, no matter what it is.

Practice inhaling long, deep breaths, not simply for the improvement of health, although that is no small matter, but also for the purpose of developing more power, more love, more life. All work assists in development.

If you want to get more out of life you must think more of love. Unless you have real affection for something, you have no sentiment, no sweetness,

no magnetism. So arouse your love affections by your will, and enter into a fuller life.

The next time you feel yourself becoming irritable, use your will and be patient. This is a very good exercise in self-control. It will help you to keep patient if you will breathe slowly and deeply. If you find you are commencing to speak fast, just control yourself and speak slowly and clearly. Keep from either raising or lowering your voice, and concentrate on the fact that you are determined to keep your poise, and you will improve your power of concentration.

If you feel yourself getting irritable, nervous or weak, stand squarely on your feet with your chest up and inhale deeply, and you will see that your irritability will disappear and a silent calm will pass over you.

If you are in the habit of associating with nervous, irritable people, quit it until you grow strong in the power of concentration, because irritable, angry, fretful, dogmatic, and disagreeable people will weaken what powers of resistance you have.

When your eye is steady, your mind is steady. One of the best ways to study a person is to watch his physical movements, for, when we study his actions, we are studying his mind. Because actions are the expressions of the mind. As the mind is, so is the action. When you learn to control the body, you are gaining control over the mind.

How to Gain What You Want Through Concentration

The ignorant person may say, “How can you get anything by merely wanting it?” I say that through concentration you can get anything you want. Every desire can be gratified. But whether it is, will depend upon you concentrating to have that desire fulfilled. Merely wishing for something will not bring it. Wishing you had something shows a weakness, and not a belief that you will really get it. So never merely wish, as we are not living in a “fairy age.” You use up just as much brain force in “vain imaginings” as you do when you think of something worthwhile.

Be careful of your desires, make a mental picture of what you want and set your will to this until it materializes. Never allow yourself to drift without helm or rudder. Know what you want to do, and strive with all your might to do it, and you will succeed.

Feel that you can accomplish anything you undertake. Many undertake to do things, but feel when they start they are going to fail, and usually they do. I will give an illustration. A man goes to a store for an article. The clerk says, “I am sorry, we do not have it.” But the man that is determined to get that thing inquires if he doesn’t know where he can get it. Again receiving an unsatisfactory answer the determined buyer consults the manager, and finally finds where the article can be bought.

That is the whole secret of concentrating on getting what you want. And, remember, your soul is a center of all-power, and you can accomplish what you will to. “I’ll find a way or make one!” is the spirit that wins. I know a man who is now head of a large bank. He started there as a messenger boy. His father had a button made for him with a “P” on it and put it on his coat. He said, “Son, that ‘P’ is a reminder that some day you are to be the

president of your bank. I want you to keep this thought in your mind. Every day do something that will put you nearer your goal.” Each night after supper he would say, “Son, what did you do today?” In this way the thought was always kept in mind. He concentrated on becoming president of that bank, and he did. His father told him never to tell anyone what that “P” stood for. His associates made a good deal of fun of it. And they tried to find out what it stood for, but they never did until he was made president, and then he told the secret.

Don’t waste your mental powers in wishes. Don’t dissipate your energies by trying to satisfy every whim. Concentrate on doing something really worthwhile. The man that sticks to something is not the man that fails.

“Power to him who power exerts.”

—EMERSON

This great universe is interwoven with myriad forces. You make your own place, and whether it is important depends upon you. Through the Indestructible and Unconquerable Law you can, in time, accomplish all right things, and therefore do not be afraid to undertake whatever you really desire to accomplish and are willing to pay for in effort. *Anything that is right is possible.* That which is necessary will inevitably take place. If something is right, it is your duty to do it, though the whole world thinks it to be wrong.

“God and one are always a majority,” or in plain words, that omnipotent interior law which is God, and the organism that represents you, is able to conquer the whole world if your cause is absolutely just. Don’t say, “I wish I were great.” You can do anything that is proper, and that you want to. Just say: You can. You will. You must. *Realize this* and the rest is easy.

The Silent Force That Produces Results

Through concentrated thought power you can make yourself whatever you please. By thought you can greatly increase your efficiency and strength. You are surrounded by all kinds of thoughts, some good, others bad, and you are sure to absorb some of the latter if you do not build up a positive mental attitude.

If you will study the needless moods of anxiety, worry, despondency, discouragement, and others that are the result of uncontrolled thoughts, you will realize how important the control of your thoughts are. Your thoughts make you what you are.

When I walk along the street and study the different people's faces I can tell how they spent their lives. It all shows in their faces, just like a mirror reflects their physical countenances. In looking in those faces I cannot help thinking how most of the people you see have wasted their lives.

Understanding the power of thought will awaken possibilities within you that you never dreamed of. Never forget that your thoughts are making your environment and your friends, and as your thoughts change these will also. The desire to do right carries with it a great power. I want you to thoroughly realize the importance of your thoughts, and how to make them valuable, to understand that your thoughts come to you over invisible wires and influence you.

In order to speak wisely you must secure at least a partial concentration of the faculties and forces upon the subject at hand. Speech interferes with the focusing powers of the mind, as it withdraws the attention to the external and therefore is hardly to be compared with that deep silence of the subconscious mind, where deep thoughts, and the silent forces of high potency, are evolved. It is necessary to be silent before you can speak wisely. The person who is really alert, well poised, and able to speak wisely

under trying circumstances, is the person who has practiced in the silence. Most people do not know what the silence is and think it is easy to go into the silence, but this is not so. In the real silence, we become attached to that interior law and the forces become silent, because they are in a state of high potency. Hold the thought: In-silence-I-will-allow-my-higher-self-to-have-complete-control. I-will-be-true-to-my-higher-self. I-will-live-true-to-my-conception-of-what-is-right. I-realize-that-it-is-in-my-self-interest-to-live-up-to-my-best. I-demand-wisdom-sothat-I-may-act-wisely-for-myself-and-others.

In the next chapter, I tell you of the mysterious law that links all humanity together by the powers of cooperative thought, and chooses for us companionship and friends.

How Concentrated Thought Links All Humanity

Success is the result of how you think. I will show you how to think to be successful.

The power to rule and attract success is within yourself. The barriers that shut these off from you are subject to your control. You have unlimited power to think, and this is the link that connects you with your omniscient source.

Success is the result of certain moods of mind or ways of thinking. These moods can be controlled by you, and produced at will.

Concentrated thought will accomplish seemingly impossible results and make you realize your fondest ambitions. At the same time that you break down barriers of limitation new ambitions will be awakened. If you will just realize that through deep concentration you become linked with thoughts of omnipotence, you will kill out entirely your belief in your limitations, and at the same time will drive away all fear and other negative and destructive thought forces, which constantly work against you.

It is just as easy to surround your life with what you want as it is with what you don't. It is a question to be decided by your will. There are no walls to prevent you from getting what you want, *providing you want what is right*. If you choose something that is not right, you are in opposition to the omnipotent plans of the universe, and deserve to fail. *But, if you base your desires on justice and good will, you avail yourself of the helpful powers of universal currents, and instead of having a handicap to work against, can depend upon ultimate success, though the outward appearances may not at first be bright.*

Never stop to think of temporary appearances, but maintain an unflinching belief in your ultimate success. Make your plans carefully, and see that they are not contrary to the tides of universal justice. The main

thing for you to remember is to keep at bay the destructive and opposing forces of fear, anger, and their satellites.

There is no power so great as the belief which comes from the knowledge that your thought is in harmony with the divine laws of thought, and the sincere conviction that your cause is right.

All just causes succeed in time, though temporarily they may fail. So if you should face the time when everything seems against you, quiet your fears, drive away all destructive thoughts, and uphold the dignity of your moral and spiritual life.

The following method may assist you in gaining better thought control. If you are unable to control your fears, just say to your faulty determination, "Do not falter or be afraid, for I am not really alone. I am surrounded by invisible forces that will assist me to remove the unfavorable appearances." Soon you will have more courage. The only difference between the fearless man and the fearful one is in his will, his hope. So if you lack success, believe in it, hope for it, claim it. You can use the same method to brace up your thoughts of desire, aspiration, imagination, expectation, ambition, understanding, trust, and assurance.

If you get anxious, angry, discouraged, undecided or worried, it is because you are not receiving the cooperation of the higher powers of your mind. By your Will you can so organize the powers of the mind that your moods change only as you want them to instead of as circumstances affect you. If you allow the mind to wander while you are doing small things, it will be likely to get into mischief and make it hard to concentrate on the important act when it comes.

The will does not act with clearness, decision and promptness *unless it is trained to do so*. Comparatively few people really know what they are doing every minute of the day. This is because they do not observe with sufficient orderliness and accuracy. It is not difficult to know what you are doing all the time, if you will just practice concentration, and with a reposeful deliberation train yourself to think clearly, promptly, and decisively.

If you allow yourself to worry or hurry in what you are doing, it will not be clearly photographed upon the sensitized plate of the subjective mind, and therefore you will not be really conscious of your actions. So practice

accuracy and concentration of thought, and also absolute truthfulness, and you will soon be able to concentrate.

The Training of the Will to Do

The Will To Do is the greatest power in the world that is concerned with human accomplishment, and no one can predetermine its limits.

The Will To Do is a force that is strictly practical, yet it is difficult to explain just what it is. It can be compared to electricity because we know it only through its cause and effects. Every time you accomplish any definite act, consciously or unconsciously, you use the principle of the Will. You can Will to do anything, whether right or wrong, and therefore how you use your will makes a big difference in your life.

Every person possesses some “Will To Do.” It is the inner energy that controls all conscious acts. *Genius is but a will to do little things with infinite pains. Little things done well open the door of opportunity for bigger things.*

Study yourself carefully. Find out your greatest weakness and then use your willpower to overcome it. In this way eradicate your faults, one by one, until you have built up a strong character and personality.

Rules for Improvement. A desire arises. Now think whether this would be good for you. If it is not, use your Willpower to kill out the desire; but, on the other hand, if it is a righteous desire, summon all your Willpower to your aid, crush all obstacles that confront you, and secure possession of the coveted Good.

Slowness in Making Decisions. This is a weakness of Willpower. You know you should do something, but you delay doing it through lack of decision. It is easier not to do a certain thing, but conscience says to do it. The vast majority of people are failures because of the lack of deciding to do a thing when it should be done. Those that are successful have been quick to grasp opportunities by making a quick decision. This power of will can be used to bring culture, wealth, and health.

Some Special Pointers. For the next week try to make quicker decisions in your little daily affairs. Set the hour you wish to get up and arise exactly at the fixed time. Anything that you should accomplish, do on or ahead of time. You want, of course, to give due deliberation to weighty matters, but by making quick decisions on little things you will acquire the ability to make quick decisions in bigger things.

You Are as Good as Anyone. You have willpower, and if you use it, you will get your share of the luxuries of life. So use it to claim your own. Don't depend on anyone else to help you. We have to fight our own battles. All the world loves a fighter, while the coward is despised by all. Every person's problems are different, so I can only say "analyze your opportunities and conditions and study your natural abilities." Don't make an indefinite plan, but a definite one, and then don't give up until your object has been accomplished. Put these suggestions into practice with true earnestness, and you will soon note astonishing results, and your whole life will be completely changed. An excellent motto for one of pure motives is: *Through my willpower I dare do what I want to.* You will find this affirmation has a very strengthening effect.

The Spirit of Perseverance. The spirit of "sticktoitiveness" is the one that wins. Many go just so far and then give up, whereas, if they had persevered a little longer, they would have won out. Many have much initiative, but instead of concentrating it into one channel they diffuse it through several, thereby dissipating it to such an extent that its effect is lost.

Lack of Perseverance is nothing but the lack of the Will To Do. It takes the same energy to say, "I will continue," as to say, "I give up." Just the moment you say the latter you shut off your dynamo, and your determination is gone. Every time you allow your determination to be broken you weaken it. Don't forget this. Just the instant you notice your determination beginning to weaken, concentrate on it and by sheer Will Power make it continue on the "job."

Never try to make a decision when you are not in a calm state of mind. If in a "quick temper," you are likely to say things you regret. In anger, you follow impulse rather than reason. No one can expect to achieve success if he makes decisions when not in full control of his mental forces. Therefore make it a fixed rule to make decisions only when at your best.

Special Instructions to Develop the Will To Do. This is a form of mental energy, but requires the proper mental attitude to make it manifest. We hear of people having wonderful willpower, which really is wrong. It should be said that they *use* their willpower, while with many it is a latent force. I want you to realize that no one has a monopoly on willpower. What we speak of as willpower is but the gathering together of mental energy, the concentration of power at one point. So never think of someone as having a stronger will than you. Each person will be supplied with just that amount of willpower that he demands.

The Concentrated Mental Demand

The Mental Demand is the potent force in achievement. The attitude of the mind affects the expression of the face, determines action, changes our physical condition, and regulates our lives.

The mental demand must be directed by every power of the mind, and every possible element should be used to make the demand materialize. You can so intently desire a thing that you can exclude all distracting thoughts. When you practice this singleness of concentration until you attain the end sought, you have developed a Will capable of accomplishing whatever you wish.

The men looked upon as the world's successes have not always been men of great physical power, nor at the start did they seem very well adapted to the conditions around them. In the beginning, they were not considered men of superior genius, but they won their success by their resolution to achieve results by permitting no setback to dishearten them; no difficulties to daunt them. Nothing could turn them or influence them against their determination. They never lost sight of their goal. In all of us there is this silent force of wonderful power. If developed, it can overcome conditions that would seem insurmountable. It is constantly urging us on to greater achievement. The more we become acquainted with it the better strategists we become, the more courage we develop, and the greater the desire within us for self-expression along many lines.

No one will ever be a failure if he becomes conscious of this silent force within that controls his destiny. But without the consciousness of this inner force, you will not have a clear vision, and external conditions will not yield to the power of your mind. It is the mental resolve that makes achievement possible. Once this has been formed it should never be allowed to cease to press its claim until its object is attained.

Perseverance is the first element of success. In order to persevere you must be ceaseless in your application. It requires you to concentrate your thoughts upon your undertaking, and bring every energy to bear upon keeping them focused upon it until you have accomplished your aim. To quit short of this is to weaken all future efforts.

The Mental Demand seems an unreal power because it is intangible; but it is the mightiest power in the world. It is a power that is free for you to use. No one can use it for you. Every time you make a Mental Demand you strengthen the brain centers by drawing to you external forces.

Few realize the power of a Mental Demand. It is possible to make your demand so strong that you can impart what you have to say to another without speaking to him. Have you ever, after planning to discuss a certain matter with a friend, had the experience of having him broach the subject before you had a chance to speak of it? These things are neither coincidences nor accidents, but are the results of mental demand launched by strong concentration. The person that never wants anything gets little. To demand resolutely is the first step toward getting what you want.

Once the Mental Demand is made, however, never let it falter. If you do, the current that connects you with your desire is broken. Take all the necessary time to build a firm foundation, so that there need not be even an element of doubt to creep in. Just the moment you entertain "doubt" you lose some of the demand force, and force once lost is hard to regain. So whenever you make a mental demand hold steadfastly to it until your need is supplied.

And every man of AVERAGE ability, the ordinary man that you see about you, can be really successful, independent, free of worry, HIS OWN MASTER, if he can manage to do just two things: First, remain forever dissatisfied with what he IS doing and with what he HAS accomplished. Second, develop in his mind a belief that the word "impossible" was not intended for him. Build up in his mind the confidence that enables the mind to use its power.

Concentration Gives Mental Poise

You will find that the man that concentrates is well poised, whereas the man that allows his mind to wander is easily upset. When in this state wisdom does not pass from the subconscious storehouse into the consciousness. There must be mental quiet before the two forms of consciousness can work in harmony.

When you are able to concentrate, you have peace of mind.

If you are in the habit of losing your poise, form the habit of reading literature that has a quieting power. Just the second you feel your poise slipping, say, "Peace," and then hold this thought in mind and you will never lose your self-control. Think of yourself as a child of the infinite, possessing infinite possibilities. Write on a piece of paper, "I have the power to do and to be whatever I wish to do and be." Keep this mentally before you, and you will find the thought will be of great help to you.

The Mistake of Concentrating on Your Business While Away. In order to be successful today, you must concentrate, but don't become a slave to concentration, and carry your business cares home. Just as sure as you do, you will be burning the life forces at both ends, and the fire will go out much sooner than intended.

Many men become so absorbed in their business that when they go to church they do not hear the preacher because their minds are on their business. If they go to the theater they do not enjoy it because their business is on their minds. When they go to bed they think about business instead of sleep. This is the wrong kind of concentration and is dangerous. It is involuntary. It is a big mistake to let a thought rule you, instead of ruling it. He who does not rule himself is not a success. If you cannot control your concentration, your health will suffer.

Never become so absorbed with anything that you cannot lay it aside and take up another. This is self-control. Concentration is paying attention to a chosen thought.

Self-Study Valuable. Everyone has some habits that can be overcome by concentration. We will say for instance, you are in the habit of complaining, or finding fault with yourself or others; or, imagining that you do not possess the ability of others; or feeling that you are not as good as someone else; or that you cannot rely on yourself; or harboring any similar thoughts. These should be cast aside, and instead thoughts of strength should be put in their place. Just remember that every time you think of yourself as being weak, in some way you are making yourself so. Our mental conditions make us what we are. Just watch yourself and see how much time you waste in worrying, fretting, and complaining. The more of it you do, the worse off you are.

Just the minute you are aware of thinking a negative thought immediately change to a positive one. If you start to think of failure, change to thinking of success. You have the germ of success within you. Care for it the same as the setting hen broods over the eggs, and you can make it a reality.

You can make those that you come in contact with feel as you do, because you radiate vibrations of the way you feel, and your vibrations are felt by others. When you concentrate on a certain thing you turn all the rays of your vibrations on this. Thought is the directing power of all Life's vibrations. If a person should enter a room with a lot of people and feel as if he were a person of no consequence, no one would know he was there unless they saw him; and even if they did, they would not remember seeing him, because they were not attracted towards him. But let him enter the room feeling that he was magnetic and concentrating on this thought, others would feel his vibration. So remember, the way you feel you can make others feel.

If you will study all of the great characters of history you will find that they were enthusiastic. First, they were enthusiastic themselves, and then they could arouse others' enthusiasm. It is latent in everyone. It is a wonderful force when once aroused. This is the keynote of success.

“Think, speak, and act just as you wish to be, And you will be that which you wish to be.”

You are just what you think you are, and not what you may appear to be. You may fool others, but not yourself. You may control your life and actions just as you can control your hands. If you want to raise your hand, you must first think of raising it. If you want to control your life, you must first control your thinking. Easy to do, is it not? Yes it is, if you will but concentrate on what you think about.

How can we secure concentration? To this question, the first and last answer must be: by interest and strong motive. The stronger the motive, the greater the concentration.

Successful Lives Are the Concentrated Lives. Train yourself so that you will be able to centralize your thought, develop your brainpower, and increase your mental energy, or you can be a slacker, a drifter, a quitter, or a sleeper. It all depends on how you concentrate, or centralize your thoughts. Your thinking then becomes a fixed power and you do not waste time thinking about something that would not be good for you. You pick out the thoughts that will be the means of bringing you what you desire, and they become a material reality. Whatever we create in the thought world will some day materialize. That is the law. Never forget this.

Why People Often Do Not Get What They Concentrate On. Because they sit down in hopeless despair and expect it to come to them. But if they will just reach out for it with their biggest effort they will find it is within their reach. No one limits us but ourselves.

Through our concentration we can attract what we want, because we became en rapport with the Universal forces, from which we can get what we want.

A man starts to think on a certain subject. He has all kinds of thoughts come to him, but by concentration he shuts out all these but the one he has chosen. Concentration is just a case of willing to do a certain thing, and doing it.

If you want to accomplish anything, first put yourself in a concentrating, reposeful, receptive, acquiring frame of mind. In tackling unfamiliar work make haste slowly and deliberately, and then you will secure that interior activity, which is never possible when you are in a hurry or under a strain. When you “think hard,” or try to hurry results too quickly, you generally shut off the interior flow of thoughts and ideas. You have often no doubt

tried hard to think of something but could not, but just as soon as you stopped trying to think of it, it came to you.

Concentration Can Overcome Bad Habits

Habits make or break us to a far greater extent than we like to admit. Habit is both a powerful enemy and wonderful ally of concentration. You must learn to overcome habits that are injurious to concentration, and to cultivate those that increase it.

Most people are controlled by their habits, and are buffeted around by them like waves of the ocean tossing a piece of wood. They do things in a certain way because of the power of habit. They seldom ever think of concentrating on why they do them this or that way, or study to see if they could do them in a better way.

The first thing I want you to realize is that all habits are governed consciously or unconsciously by the will. Most of us are forming new habits all the time. Very often, if you repeat something several times in the same way, you will have formed the habit of doing it that way. But the oftener you repeat it the stronger that habit grows, and the more deeply it becomes embedded in your nature. After a habit has been in force for a long time, it becomes almost a part of you, and is therefore hard to overcome. But you can still break any habit by strong concentration on its opposite.

You will find the following maxims worth remembering.

First Maxim: “We must make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy.”

Second Maxim: “In the acquisition of a new habit as in the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible.”

Surround yourself with every aid you can. Don't play with fire by forming bad habits. Make a new beginning today. Study why you have been

doing certain things. If they are not for your good, shun them henceforth. Don't give in to a single temptation, for every time you do, you strengthen the chain of bad habits. Every time you keep a resolution you break the chain that enslaves you.

Third Maxim: "Never allow an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life."

Fourth Maxim: "Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain."

Keep every resolution you make, for you not only profit by the resolution, but it furnishes you with an exercise that causes the brain cells and physiological correlatives to form the habit of adjusting themselves to carry out resolutions. A tendency to act becomes effectively engrained in us in proportion to the uninterrupted frequency with which the actions actually occur, and the brain "grows" to their use.

Fifth Maxim: "Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day."

The more we exercise the will, the better we can control our habits. Every few days, do something for no other reason than its difficulty, so that when the hour of dire need draws near, it may find you not unnerved or untrained to stand the test. Asceticism of this sort is like the insurance that a man pays on his house and goods. So with the man who has daily insured himself to habits of concentrated attention, energetic volition, and self-denial in unnecessary things.

Habits have often been called a labor-saving invention, because when they are formed they require less of both mental and material strength. The more deeply the habit becomes ingrained, the more automatic it becomes. Therefore habit is an economizing tendency of our nature, for if it were not for habit we should have to be more watchful. We walk across a crowded street; the habit of stopping and looking prevents us from being hurt. Habits mean less risk, less fatigue, and greater accuracy.

In order to overcome undesirable habits, two things are necessary. You must have trained your will to do what you want it to do, and the stronger the will the easier it will be to break a habit. Then you must make a resolution to do just the opposite of what the habit is. I will bring this chapter to a close by giving Doctor Oppenheim's instructions for overcoming a habit:

“If you want to abolish a habit, and its accumulated circumstances as well, you must grapple with the matter as earnestly as you would with a physical enemy. You must go into the encounter with all tenacity of determination, with all fierceness of resolve—and yea, even with a passion for success that may be called vindictive. No human enemy can be as insidious, so persevering, as unrelenting as an unfavorable habit. It never sleeps, it needs no rest.

“It is like a parasite that grows with the growth of the supporting body, and, like a parasite, it can best be killed by violent separation and crushing.”

It is not in the easy, contented moments of our life that we make our greatest progress, for then it requires no special effort to keep in tune. But it is when we are in the midst of trials and misfortunes, when we think we are sinking, being overwhelmed, then it is important for us to realize that we are linked to a great Power, and if we live as we should, there is nothing that can occur in life that could permanently injure us, nothing can happen that should disturb us. Always remember you have within you unlimited power, ready to manifest itself in the form which fills our need at the moment.

Business Results Through Concentration

Business success depends on well-concentrated efforts. You must use every mental force you can master. The more these are used, the more they increase. Therefore the more you accomplish today the more force you will have at your disposal to solve your problems tomorrow. Then when you have resolved what you want to do, you will be drawn towards it. There is a law that opens the way to the ful-fulfillment of your desires. Of course, back of your desire you must put forward the necessary effort to carry out your purpose; you must use your power to put your desires into force. Once they are created, and you keep up your determination to have them fulfilled, you both consciously and unconsciously work toward their materialization. Set your heart on your purpose, concentrate your thought upon it, direct your efforts with all your intelligence, and in due time you will realize your ambition.

Feel yourself a success, believe you are a success, and thus put yourself in the attitude that demands recognition and the thought current draws to you what you need to make you a success. Don't be afraid of big undertakings. Go at them with grit, and pursue methods that you think will accomplish your purpose. You may not at first meet with entire success, but aim so high that if you fall a little short you will still have accomplished much.

What others have done you can do. You may even do what others have been unable to do. Always keep a strong desire to succeed in your mind. Be in love with your aim and work, and make it, as far as possible, square with the rule of the greatest good to the greatest number, and your life cannot be a failure.

The successful business attitude must be cultivated to make the most out of your life: the attitude of expecting great things from both yourself and

others. This alone will often cause men to make good; to measure up to the best that is in them.

It is not the spasmodic spurts that count on a long journey, but the steady efforts. Spurts fatigue, and make it hard for you to continue.

When once you reach a conclusion abide by it. Let there be no doubt, or wavering. If you are uncertain about every decision you make, you will be subject to harassing doubts and fears, which will render your judgment of little value. The man that decides according to what he thinks right, and who learns from every mistake, acquires a well-balanced mind that gets the best results. He gains the confidence of others. He is known as the man who knows what he wants, and not as one that is as changeable as the weather. Reliable firms want to do business with men of known qualities, with men of firmness, judgment, and reliability.

So, if you wish to start in business for yourself, your greatest asset, with the single exception of a sound physique, is that of a good reputation.

A successful business is not hard to build if we can concentrate all our mental forces upon it. We hear people say that business is trying on the nerves, but it is the unsettling elements of fret, worry, and suspense that are nerve exhausting, and not the business. Executing one's plans may cause fatigue, but enjoyment comes with rest. If there has not been any unnatural strain, the recuperative powers replace what energy has been lost.

By attending to each day's work properly, you develop the capacity to do a greater work tomorrow. It is this gradual development that makes possible the carrying out of big plans.

Even brilliant men's conceptions of the possibilities of their mental forces are so limited and below their real worth that they are far more likely to belittle their possibilities than they are to exaggerate them. You don't want to think that an aim is impossible because it has never been realized in the past. Everyday someone is doing something that was never done before.

The natural leader always draws to himself, by the law of mental attraction, all the ideas in his chosen subject that have ever been conceived by others. This is of the greatest importance and help. If you are properly trained you benefit much by others' thoughts, and, providing you generate from within yourself something of value, they will benefit from yours. "We are heirs of all the ages," but we must know how to use our inheritance.

The confident, pushing, hopeful, determined man influences all with whom he associates, and inspires the same qualities in them. There is no reason why your work or business should burn you out. When it does, something is wrong. You are attracting forces and influence that you should not, because you are not in harmony with what you are doing. There is nothing so tiring as trying to do work for which we are unfitted both by temperament and training.

Each one should be engaged in a business that he loves; he should be furthering movements with which he is in sympathy. Only then will he do his best, and take intense pleasure in his business. In this way, while constantly growing and developing his powers, he is at the same time rendering through his work genuine and devoted service to humanity.

Concentrate On Your Courage

Courage is the backbone of man. The man with courage has persistence. He states what he believes, and puts it into execution.

Lack of courage creates financial, as well as mental and moral difficulties. When a new problem comes, instead of looking upon it as something to be achieved, the man or woman without courage looks for reasons why it cannot be done, and failure is naturally the almost inevitable result. This is a subject well worth your study. Look upon everything within your power as a possibility, and you will accomplish a great deal more, because by considering a thing as impossible you immediately draw to yourself all the elements that contribute to failure. Lack of courage destroys your confidence in yourself.

The man without courage unconsciously draws to himself all that is contemptible, weakening, demoralizing, and destructive. We must first have the courage to *strongly desire something*. A desire to be fulfilled must be backed by the strength of all our mental forces. Such a desire has enough commanding force to change all unfavorable conditions.

What is courage? It is the *Will To Do*. It takes no more energy to be courageous than to be cowardly. It is a matter of the right training, in the right way. Courage concentrates the mental forces on the task at hand. It then directs them thoughtfully, steadily, deliberately, while attracting all the forces of success toward the desired end.

As we are creatures of habits, we should avoid people who lack courage. They are easy to discover because of their habits of fear in attacking new problems. The man with courage is never afraid.

Start out today with the idea that there is no reason why you should not be courageous. If any fear-thoughts come to you, cast them off as you would the deadly viper. Form the habit of never thinking of anything

unfavorable to yourself or anyone else. In dealing with difficulties, new or old, hold ever the thought: "I am courageous." Whenever a doubt crosses the threshold of your mind, banish it. Remember, you as master of your mind control its every thought, and here is a good one to often affirm: "I have courage because I desire it; because I need it; because I use it; and because I refuse to become such a weakling as cowardice produces."

There is no justification for the loss of courage. The evils by which you will almost certainly be overwhelmed without it are far greater than those which courage will help you to meet and overcome. Right, then, must be the moralist who says that the only thing to fear is fear.

Never let another's opinion affect you; he cannot tell what you are able to do; he does not know what you can do with your forces. The truth is, you do not know yourself until you put yourself to the test. Therefore, how can someone else know? Never let anyone else put a valuation on you.

Almost all wonderful achievements have been accomplished after it had been "thoroughly" demonstrated that they were impossibilities. Once we understand the law, all things are possible. If they were impossibilities, we could not conceive them.

Just the moment you allow someone to influence you against what you think is right, you lose that confidence that inspires courage and carries with it all the forces that courage creates. Just the moment you begin to swerve in your plan you begin to carry out another's thought, and not your own. You become the directed and not the director. You forsake the courage and resolution of your own mind, and you therefore lack the very forces that you need to sustain and carry out your work. Instead of being self-reliant you become timid, and this invites failure. When you permit yourself to be influenced from your plan by another, you are unable to judge as you should, because you have allowed another's influence to deprive you of your courage and determination without absorbing any of his in return, so you are in much the same predicament as you would be in if you turned over all your worldly possessions to another without getting value received.

Concentrate on just the opposite of fear, want, poverty, sickness, etc. Never doubt your own ability. You have plenty, *if you will just use it*. A great many men are failures because they doubt their own capacity. Instead of building up strong mental forces, which would be of the greatest use to them, their fear thoughts tear them down. Fear paralyzes energy. It keeps us

from attracting the forces that make success. Fear is the worst enemy we have.

Few people really know that they can accomplish much. They desire the full extent of their powers, but alas, it is only occasionally that you find a man who is aware of the great possibilities within him. When you believe with all your mind and heart and soul that you can do something, you thereby develop the courage to steadily and confidently live up to that belief. You have now gone a long way towards accomplishing it. Strong courage eliminates the injurious and opposing forces by summoning their masters, the yet-stronger forces that will serve you.

Courage is yours for the asking. All you have to do is to believe in it, claim it, and use it. One man of courage can fire with his spirit a whole army of men, whether military or industrial, because courage, like cowardice, is contagious.

Concentrate on Wealth

It was never intended that man should be poor. When wealth is obtained under the proper conditions, it broadens the life. Everything has its value. Everything has a good use and a bad use. The forces of mind, like wealth, can be directed either for good or evil. A little rest will re-create forces. Too much rest degenerates into laziness, and brainless, dreamy longings.

So, the first step toward acquiring wealth is to surround yourself with helpful influences; to claim for yourself an environment of culture, place yourself in it, and be molded by its influences.

Wealth is usually the fruit of achievement. It is not, however, altogether the result of being industrious. Thousands of persons work hard who never grow wealthy. Others with much less effort acquire wealth. Seeing possibilities is another step toward acquiring wealth. A man may be as industrious as he can possibly be, but if he does not use his mental forces he will be a laborer, to be directed by the man who uses to good advantage his mental forces.

No one can become wealthy in an ordinary lifetime by mere savings from earnings. Many scrimp and economize all their lives; but by so doing waste all their vitality and energy. For example, I know a man who used to walk to work. It took him an hour to go and an hour to return. He could have taken a car and gone in twenty minutes. He saved ten cents a day, but wasted an hour and a half. It was not a very profitable investment, unless the time spent in physical exercise yielded him large returns in the way of health.

The same amount of time spent in concentrated effort to overcome his unfavorable business environment might have firmly planted his feet in the path of prosperity.

One of the big mistakes made by many people is that they associate with those who fail to call out or develop the best that is in them. When the social side of life is developed too exclusively, and recreation or entertainment becomes the leading motive of a person's life, he acquires habits of extravagance instead of economy; habits of wasting his resources, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual, instead of conserving them.

The other day I attended a lecture on Prosperity. I knew the lecturer had been practically broke for ten years. I wanted to hear what he had to say. He spoke very well. He no doubt benefited some of his hearers, but he had not profited by his own teachings. I introduced myself and asked him if he believed in his maxims. He said he did. I asked him if they had made him prosperous. He said not exactly. I asked him why. He answered that he thought he was fated not to experience prosperity.

In half an hour, I showed that man why poverty had always been his companion. He had dressed poorly. He held his lectures in poor surroundings. By his actions and beliefs he attracted poverty. He did not realize that his thoughts and his surroundings exercised an unfavorable influence. I said: "Thoughts are moving forces; great powers. Thoughts of wealth attract wealth. Therefore, if you desire wealth you must attract the forces that will help you to secure it. Your thoughts attract a similar kind of thoughts. If you hold thoughts of poverty you attract poverty. If you make up your mind you are going to be wealthy, you will instill this thought into all your mental forces, and you will at the same time use every external condition to help you."

Business success depends on foresight, good judgment, grit, firm resolution, and settled purpose. But never forget that thought is as real a force as electricity. Let your thoughts be such that you will send out as good as you receive; if you do not, you are not enriching others, and therefore deserve not to be enriched.

Again I repeat that the first as well as the last step in acquiring wealth is to surround yourself with good influences—good thought, good health, good home and business environment, and successful business associates. Cultivate, by every legitimate means, the acquaintance of men of big caliber. Bring your thought vibrations in regard to business into harmony with theirs. This will make your society not only agreeable, but sought after, and, when you have formed intimate friendships with clean, reputable

men of wealth, entrust to them, for investment, your surplus earnings, however small, until you have developed the initiative and business acumen to successfully manage your own investments. By this time you will, through such associations, have found your place in life which, if you have rightly concentrated upon and used your opportunities, will not be among men of small parts.

There is somewhere in every brain the energy that will get you out of that rut and put you far up on the mountain of success, if you can only use the energy. And hope, self-confidence, and the determination to do something supply the spark that makes the energy work.

You Can Concentrate, But Will You?

All have the ability to concentrate, but will you? You can, but whether you will or not depends on you. It is one thing to be able to do something, another to do it. There is far more ability not used than is used. Why do not more men of ability make something of themselves? There are comparatively few successful men, but many ambitious ones. Why do not more get along? Cases may differ, but the fault is usually their own. They have had chances, perhaps better ones than some others that have made good.

What would you like to do that you are not doing? If you think you should be “getting on” better, why don’t you? Study yourself carefully. Learn your shortcomings. Sometimes only a mere trifle keeps one from branching out and becoming a success. Discover why you have not been making good—the cause of your failure. Have you been expecting someone to lead you, or to make a way for you? If you have, concentrate on a new line of thought.

There are two things absolutely necessary for success—energy and the will to succeed. Nothing can take the place of either of these.

When we see those with handicaps amounting to something great in the world, the able-bodied man should feel ashamed of himself if he does not make good. There is nothing that can resist the force of perseverance. The way ahead for all of us is not clear sailing, but all hard passages can be bridged.

Many men will not begin an undertaking unless they feel sure they will succeed in it. What a mistake! This would be right, if we were sure of what we could and could not do. But who knows? *There may be an obstruction there now that might not be there next week. There may not be an obstruction there now that will be there next week.* The trouble with most

people is that just as soon as they see their way blocked they lose courage. They forget that usually there is a way around the difficulty. It's up to you to find it. If you tackle something with little effort, when the conditions call for a big effort, you will, of course, not win. Tackle everything with a feeling that you will use all the power within you to make it a success. This is the kind of concentrated effort that succeeds.

Most people are beaten before they start. They think they are going to encounter obstacles, and they look for them instead of for means to overcome them. The result is that they increase their obstacles instead of diminishing them. Have you ever undertaken something that you thought would be hard, but afterwards found it easy? That is the way a great many times. Things that look difficult in advance turn out to be easy of conquest when once encountered. So start out on your journey with the idea that the road is going to be clear for you, and that if it is not you will clear the way.

The one great keynote of success is to do whatever you have decided on. Don't be turned from your path, but resolve that you are going to accomplish what you set out to do. Don't be frightened at a few rebuffs, for they cannot stop the man that is determined—the man that knows in his heart that success is only bought by tremendous resolution, by concentrated and whole-hearted effort.

It is not so much skill that wins victories, as it is activity and great determination. There is no such thing as failure for the man who does his best. No matter what you may be working at, don't let this make you lose courage. *The tides are continually changing, and tomorrow or some other day they will turn to your advantage if you are a willing and ambitious worker.* There is nothing that develops you and increases your courage like work. If it were not for work how monotonous life would become!

So I say to the man who wants to advance: "Don't look upon your present position as your permanent one. Keep your eyes open, and add those qualities to your makeup that will assist you when your opportunity comes. Be ever alert and on the watch for opportunities. Remember, we attract what we set our minds on. If we look for opportunities, we find them."

The Art of Concentration with Practical Exercises

Select some thought, and see how long you can hold your mind on it. It is well to have a clock at first and keep track of the time. If you decide to think about health, you can get a great deal of good from your thinking besides developing concentration. Think of health as being the greatest blessing in the world. Don't let any other thought drift in. The moment one starts to obtrude, make it get out.

Make it a daily habit of concentrating on this thought for, say, ten minutes. Practice until you can hold it to the exclusion of everything else. You will find it of the greatest value to centralize your thoughts on health. Regardless of your present condition, see yourself as you would like to be, and be blind to everything else. You will find it hard at first to forget your ailments, if you have any, but after a short while you can shut out these negative thoughts and see yourself as you want to be. Each time you concentrate, you form a more perfect image of health, and, as you come into its realization, you become healthy, strong, and wholesome.

I want to impress upon your mind that the habit of forming mental images is of the greatest value. It has always been used by successful men of all ages, but few realize its full importance.

Do you know that you are continually acting according to the images you form? If you allow yourself to mold negative images, you unconsciously build a negative disposition. You will think of poverty, weakness, disease, fear, etc., just as surely as you think of these will your objective life express itself in a like way. Just what we think, we will manifest in the external world.

In deep concentration you become linked with the great creative spirit of the universe, and the creative energy then flows through you, vitalizing your creations into form. In deep concentration your mind becomes attuned

with the infinite and registers the cosmic intelligence and receives its messages. You become so full of the cosmic energy that you are flooded with divine power. This is a most desired state. It is then we realize the advantages of being connected with the supra-consciousness. The supra-consciousness registers the higher cosmic vibrations. It is often referred to as the wireless station, the message recorded coming from the universal mind.

Watch yourself during the day and see that your muscles do not become tense or strained. See how easy and relaxed you can keep yourself. See how poised you can be at all times. Cultivate a self-poised manner, instead of a nervous, strained appearance. This mental feeling will improve your carriage and demeanor. Stop all useless gestures and movements of the body. These mean that you have not proper control over your body. After you have acquired this control, notice how “ill-at-ease” people are that have not gained this control.

Get rid of any habit you have of twitching or jerking any part of your body. You will find that you make many involuntary movements. You can quickly stop any of these by merely centering your attention on the thought: “I will not.”

No matter what you may be doing, imagine that it is your chief object in life. Imagine you are not interested in anything else in the world but what you are doing. Do not let your attention get away from the work you are at. Your attention will no doubt be rebellious, but control it, and do not let it control you. When once you conquer the rebellious attention, you have achieved a greater victory than you can realize at the time.

By concentration you can control your temper. If you are one of those that flare up at the slightest “provocation” and never try to control yourself, just think this over a minute. Does it do you any good? Do you gain anything by it? Doesn't it put you out of poise for some time? Don't you know that this grows on you, and will eventually make you despised by all that have any dealings with you?

Many of you that read this may think you are not guilty of either of these faults, but if you will carefully watch yourself, you will probably find that you are, and, if so, you will be greatly helped by repeating this affirmation each morning:

“I am going to try today not to make a useless gesture or to worry over trifles, or become nervous or irritable. I intend to be calm, and, no difference what may be the circumstances, I will control myself. Henceforth, I resolve to be free from all signs that show lack of self-control.”

Now, a word on needless talking. It seems natural to want to tell others what you know; but, by learning to control these desires, you can wonderfully strengthen your powers of concentration. Remember, you have all you can do to attend to your own business. Do not waste your time in thinking of others, or in gossiping about them.

If, from your own observation, you learn something about another person that is detrimental, keep it to yourself. Your opinion may afterwards turn out to be wrong anyway; but whether right or wrong, you have strengthened your will by controlling your desire to communicate your views.

If you hear good news, resist the desire to tell it to the first person you meet and you will be benefited thereby. It will require the concentration of all your powers of resistance to prohibit the desire to tell. After you feel that you have complete control over your desires, you can then tell your news. But you must be able to suppress the desire to communicate the news until you are fully ready to tell it. Persons that do not possess this power of control over desires are apt to tell things that they should not, thereby often involving both themselves and others in needless trouble.

If you are in the habit of getting excited when you hear unpleasant news, just control yourself and receive it without any exclamation of surprise. Say to yourself, “Nothing is going to cause me to lose my self-control.” You will find from experience that this self-control will be worth much to you in business. You will be looked upon as a cool-headed businessman, and this in time becomes a valuable asset. Of course, circumstances alter cases. At times it is necessary to become enthused. But be ever on the lookout for opportunities for the practice of self-control. “He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that ruleth a city.”

Concentrate So You Will Not Forget

We remember only that which makes a deep impression; hence we must first deepen our impressions by associating in our minds certain ideas that are related to them.

Let's say a wife gives her husband a letter to mail. He does not think about it, but automatically puts it in his pocket and forgets all about it. When the letter was given to him had he said to himself, "I will mail this letter. The box is at the next corner and when I pass it I must drop this letter," it would have enabled him to recall the letter the instant he reached the mailbox.

The same rule holds good in regard to more important things. For example, if you are instructed to drop in and see Mr. Smith while out to lunch today, you will not forget it, if, at the moment the instruction is given, you say to yourself something similar to this: "When I get to the corner of Blank Street, on my way to lunch, I shall turn to the right and call on Mr. Smith." In this way the impression is made, the connection established, and the sight of the associated object recalls the errand.

The important thing to do is to deepen the impression at the very moment it enters your mind. This is made possible not only by concentrating the mind upon the idea itself, but by surrounding it with all possible association of ideas, so that each one will reinforce the others.

The mind is governed by laws of association, such as the law that ideas that enter the mind at the same time emerge at the same time, one assisting in recalling the others. You can train yourself to remember in this way by the concentration of the attention on your purpose, in accordance with the laws of association.

How Concentration Can Fulfill Your Desire

It is a spiritual law that the desire to do necessarily implies the ability to do.”

All natural desires can be realized. It would be wrong for the Infinite to create wants that could not be supplied. Man’s very soul is in his power to think, and it, therefore, is the essence of all created things. Every instinct of man leads to thought, and in every thought there is great possibility because true thought development, when allied to those mysterious powers which perhaps transcend it, has been the cause of all the world’s true progress.

Silent, concentrated thought is more potent than spoken words, for speech distracts from the focusing power of the mind by drawing more and more attention to the without.

Man must learn more and more to depend on himself; to seek more for the Infinite within. It is from this source alone that he gains the power to solve his practical difficulties. No one should give up when there is always the resources of Infinity. The cause of failure is that men search in the wrong direction for success, because they are not conscious of their real powers, which when used are capable of guiding them.

The Infinite within is foreign to those who go through life without developing their spiritual powers. But the Infinite helps only he who helps himself. There is no such thing as a Special “Providence.” Man will not receive help from the Infinite except to the extent that he believes and hopes and prays for help from this great source.

Remember that the first step in concentration is to form a Mental Image of what you wish to accomplish. This image becomes a thought-seed that attracts thoughts of a similar nature. Around this thought, when it is once planted in the imagination or creative region of the mind, you group or

build associated thoughts, which continue to grow as long as your desire is keen enough to compel close concentration.

Form the habit of thinking of something you wish to accomplish for five minutes each day. Shut every other thought out of consciousness. Be confident that you will succeed; make up your mind that all obstacles will be overcome, and that you can rise above any environment.

A great aid in the development of concentration is to write out your thoughts on that which lies nearest your heart and to continue, little by little, to add to it until you have as nearly as possible exhausted the subject. You will find that each day as you focus your forces on this thought at the center of the stream of consciousness, new plans, ideas, and methods will flash into your mind.

We can attract those things that will help us. Very often we seem to receive help in a miraculous way. It may be slow in coming, but once the silent unseen forces are put into operation, they will bring results so long as we do our part. By forming a strong mental image of your desire, you plant the thought-seed that begins working in your interest and, in time, that desire, if in harmony with your higher nature, will materialize.

It may seem that it would be unnecessary to caution you to concentrate only upon achievement that will be good for you, and work no harm to another, but there are many who forget others and their rights, in their anxiety to achieve success. All good things are possible for you to have, but only as you bring your forces into harmony with that law that requires that we mete out justice to fellow travelers as we journey along life's road. So first think over the thing wanted and if it would be good for you to have. Say: "I want to do this; I am going to work to secure it. The way will be open for me."

If you fully grasp mentally the thought of success and hold it in mind each day, you gradually make a pattern or mold, which in time will materialize. But by all means keep free from doubt and fear, the destructive forces. Never allow these to become associated with your thoughts.

At last you will create the desired conditions, and receive help in many unlooked-for ways that will lift you out of the undesired environment. Life will then seem very different to you, for you will have found happiness through awakening within yourself the power to become the master of circumstances, instead of their slave.

Remember the mystical words of Jesus, the Master: “Whatever thing ye desire when ye pray, pray as if ye had already received and ye shall have.”

Ideals Developed by Concentration

We often hear people spoken of as idealists. The fact is we are all idealists to a certain extent, and upon the ideals we picture depend our ultimate success. You must have the mental image if you are to produce the material thing. Everything is first created in the mind. When you control your thoughts, you become a creator. You receive divine ideas and shape them to your individual needs. All things of this world are to you just what you think they are. Your happiness and success depend upon your ideals.

Concentrate Upon Your Ideals and They Will Become Material Actualities. Through concentration we work out our ideals in physical life. Your future depends upon the ideals you are forming now. Your past ideals are determining your present. Therefore, if you want a bright future, you must begin to prepare for it today.

We say that a man is as changeable as the weather. What is meant is his ideals change. Every time you change your ideal you think differently. You become like a rudderless boat on an ocean. Therefore realize the importance of holding to your ideal until it becomes a reality.

You get up in the morning determined that nothing will make you lose your temper. This is your ideal of a person of real strength and poise. Something takes place that upsets you completely, and you lose your temper. For the time being you forget your ideal. If you had just thought a second of what a well-poised person implies you would not have become angry. *You lose your poise when you forget your ideal.* Each time we allow our ideals to be shattered we also weaken our willpower. Holding to your ideals develops willpower. Never forget this.

Why do so many fail? Because they don't hold to their ideal until it becomes a mental habit. When they concentrate on it to the exclusion of all other things, it becomes a reality. "I am that which I think myself to be."

You must give some hours to concentrated, consistent, persistent thought. You must study yourself and your weaknesses.

No man gets over a fence by wishing himself on the other side. He must climb.

No man gets out of the rut of dull, tiresome, monotonous life by merely wishing himself out of the rut. He must climb.

If you are standing still, or going backward, there is something wrong. You are the person to find out what is wrong.

Don't think that you are neglected, or not understood, or not appreciated. Such thoughts are the thoughts of failure.

You know that the only thing in the world that you have got to count upon is yourself.

Concentration Reviewed

In this closing chapter, I want to impress you to concentrate on what you do, instead of performing most of your work unconsciously or automatically, until you have formed habits that give you the mastery of your work, and your life powers and forces.

Very often the hardest part of work is thinking about it. When you get right into it, it does not seem so disagreeable. This is the experience of many when they first commence to learn how to concentrate. So never think it a difficult task, but undertake it with the "I Will Spirit," and you will find that its acquirement will be as easy as its application will be useful.

Read the life of any great man, and you will generally find that the dominant quality that made him successful was the ability to concentrate. Study those who have been failures, and you will often find that lack of concentration was the cause.

Never say, "I can't concentrate today." You can do it just the minute you say, "I will." You *can* keep your thoughts from straying, just the same as you can control your arms. Once you realize this fact, you can train the will to concentrate on anything you wish. If it wanders, it is your fault. You are not using your will. But don't blame it on your will, and say it is weak. The will is the same whether you act as if it were weak or as if it were strong. When you act as if your will is strong you say, "I can." When you act as if it were weak you say, "I can't." It requires the same amount of effort.

Some men get in the habit of thinking, "I can't," and they fail. Others think, "I can," and succeed. So remember, it is for you to decide whether you will join the army of "I can't" or "I can."

The big mistake with so many is that they don't realize that when they say, "I can't," they really say, "I won't try." You cannot tell what you can do until you try. "Can't" means you will not try.

Before going to bed tonight, repeat: “I am going to choose my own thoughts, and to hold them as long as I choose. I am going to shut out all thoughts that weaken or interfere, that make me timid. My Will is as strong as anyone else’s.” While going to work the next morning, repeat this Keep this up for a month, and you will find you will have a better opinion of yourself. These are the factors that make you a success. Hold fast to them always.

Concentration is nothing but willing to do a certain thing. All foreign thoughts can be kept out by willing that they stay out. You cannot realize your possibilities until you commence to direct your mind.

You have at times been in a position that required courage, and you were surprised at the amount you showed. Now, when once you arouse yourself, you have this courage all the time and it is not necessary to have a special occasion reveal it. My object in so strongly impressing this on your mind is to make you aware that the same courage, the same determination that you show at certain exceptionable times, you have at your command at all times. It is a part of your vast resources. Use it often and well, in working out the highest destiny of which you are capable.

Father Time keeps going on and on. Every day he rolls around means one less day for you on this planet. Most of us only try to master the external conditions of this world. We think our success and happiness depend on us doing so. These are, of course, important, and I don’t want you to think they are not; but I want you to realize that when death comes, only those inherent and acquired qualities and conditions within the mentality—your character, conduct, and soul growth—will go with you. If these are what they should be, you need not be afraid of not being successful and happy, for with these qualities you can mold external materials and conditions.

Now start from this minute to act according to the advice of the higher self in everything you do. If you do, its ever-harmonious forces will necessarily ensure a successful fulfillment of all your life purposes. Whenever you feel tempted to disobey your higher promptings, hold the thought: “My-higher-self-ensures-to-me-the-happiness-of-doing-that-which-best-answers-my-true-relations-to-all-others.”

You possess latent talents, which when developed and used are of assistance to you and others. But if you do not properly use them, you shirk

your duty, and you will be the loser and suffer from the consequences. Others will also be worse off if you do not fulfill your obligations.

Hold the thought: “I-will-live-for-my-best. I-seek-wisdom, self-knowledge, happiness-and-power-to-help-others. I-act-from-the-higher-self, therefore-only-the-bestcan-come-to-me.”

The more we become conscious of the presence of the higher self, the more we should try to become a true representative of the human soul in all its wholeness and holiness, instead of wasting our time dwelling on some trifling external quality or defect. We should try to secure a true conception of what we really are so as not to over value the external furnishings. You will then not surrender your dignity or self-respect when others ignorantly make a display of material things to show off. Only the person who realizes that he is a permanent Being knows what the true self is

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“Theron Q. Dumont” was one of several pseudonyms used by WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON, a popular and innovative New Thought writer and publisher in the early twentieth century. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1862, Atkinson became a successful attorney in 1894. Following a series of illnesses, he immersed himself in New Thought literature. He soon became an important figure in the early days of the movement, publishing magazines such as *Suggestion*, *New Thought*, and *Advanced Thought*. Under the aegis of his own publishing company, Yogi Publication Society, Atkinson wrote many self-bylined works, and many titles under the pseudonyms Yogi Ramacharaka, Magus Incognito, Theron Q. Dumont, and Three Initiates. Under the last of these, Atkinson wrote his most popular and enduring work, *The Kybalion*. Published in 1908 by Atkinson’s Chicago-based press, *The Kybalion* is perhaps the most widely read occult book of the twentieth century. Atkinson died in California in 1932.

THE POWER OF FAITH

*The Founding Father of Positive Thinking On How to
Lead a Healthful Life*

Norman Vincent Peale

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The Faith That Heals

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Foundations of Positive Thinking

By Mitch Horowitz

This short book is a condensation of Norman Vincent Peale's first collaboration with psychiatrist Smiley Blanton, originally titled *Faith Is the Answer*. Their 1940 effort presents a valuable summary of Peale's therapeutic theology and of the themes he explored to worldwide notice twelve years later in his *Power of Positive Thinking*.

But in *The Power of Faith* you will discover a different Norman Vincent Peale from the one who later authored one of the world's most popular books.

The authorial voice of *The Power of Faith* reveals the younger Peale not only as a trenchant and elegant writer, but also as a figure of considerable literary breadth. In *The Power of Faith*, Peale effortlessly weaves Scriptural analysis and little-known works of theology with the ethical insights of figures including Marcus Aurelius, William James, Henry Drummond, and Daniel Defoe, as well as the modern voices of his own congregants.

Peale wanted to be understood not only as a theologian of good tidings, but also as a true intellectual, which he was. One of the pains of Peale's life was that, despite his worldwide fame and in some ways because of it, he got rundown in lettered circles after the publication of *The Power of Positive Thinking*. Critics and academics, many of whom I doubt read or more than skimmed Peale's books, often depicted the minister a kind of philosopher for simpletons. This was a profoundly unfair judgment, which I explore in my historical treatment of Peale in *One Simple Idea: How Positive Thinking Reshaped Modern Life*.

The Power of Faith is less mystical in nature than many of Peale's later works. The minister had not yet fully immersed himself in the study of New Thought, Science of Mind, Christian Science, and other variants of the mind metaphysics that characterized *The Power of Positive Thinking*. Yet

the telltale influence of early twentieth-century French mind theorist Emile Coué appears in *The Power of Faith*. In Peale's chapter on self-criticism he notes, "imagination is stronger than will." That was one of Coué's key insights. Coué noted that our behavioral patterns are dictated by subliminal emotion and self-image much more than by personal determination. Hence, Coué—who coined the mantra "day by day, in every way, I am getting better and better"—considered self-reconditioning essential to the pursuit of a happy and purposeful life. Peale's resonance with this principle warmed him to concepts he later discovered in New Thought, including the therapeutic uses of visualization, prayer, and affirmation. You will see that Peale also examines the Proverb "as a man thinketh," which served as the basis of the spiritual-psychology brought by early New Thought author James Allen in 1903.

Peale and psychiatrist Smiley Blanton originally wrote this book in alternating chapters. My condensation retains only the key points of Peale's own chapters. In some cases, Blanton's considerable psychological insights have been supplanted by more recent developments in neuroscience, cognitive restructuring, and psychopharmacology. But Peale's spiritual observations and Scriptural analyses remain universal, actionable, and revealing of his earliest attitudes toward the therapeutic value of faith.

I believe that in this book you will discover Norman Vincent Peale not only as a deeply appealing storyteller and communicator, but also as a man whose vision of religion as a workable, practical philosophy helped transform the spiritual landscape of the past century—and of our own. His early vision may transform your life, as well.

The Power of Faith

If I were to tell you that everything troubling you, every weakness, every unhappiness can be eliminated; if I were to declare that everything about your life can be strong and effective, what would be your reaction? Probably many of you would be skeptical or at least wistful, doubtful that such marvelous results are possible. Some people have never had anything great happen to them, so they doubt that it can happen. They suffer from what a great thinker once referred to as “the vast inertia of the soul.”

But it is a fact that any person’s life can be so completely changed that every crippling thing known and unconscious which interferes with his well-being can be eliminated or effectively controlled. This is no academic assertion but one that can be fully documented from the experiences of many people in whom the most amazing results were obtained. These people learned the technique of faith and so tapped a curative element so potent that no malady of personality could resist its health-giving force. And like many epoch-making processes, it operates simply.

You may develop the art of having faith through two suggestions, if they are faithfully followed: (1) the practice of simple but habitual prayer and devotional meditation; (2) the surrender of your life in childlike trust to the will of God.

We shall now proceed to explain the content and operation of this workable formula.

The late Henry Drummond was one of the superior intellects and scholars of his time. Beyond this, he was a spiritual genius, one of those rare characters who gain acute insight into spiritual laws. Drummond’s secret was so simple that anyone can put it into practice. He stated his formula as follows: “Ten minutes spent in Christ’s society every day, aye, two minutes, will make the whole day different.” Multiply one day by every

day and add the cumulative effect of habit and the changed mental outlook, and you will understand how this brief period faithfully observed can change everything, even to your entire life.

We have all known men who have been like saints—strong, radiantly happy. Examination of their daily program reveals regular periods of spiritual meditation. Drummond tells us that a few minutes daily spent in thinking about Christ and in consciously and sincerely seeking to secure his power will make the whole day different. This simple practice gives control over fears, weaknesses, and those tragic ineptitudes which interfere so disastrously with success in life.

Wordsworth was another who discovered the amazing values in a daily period of spiritual meditation. Wordsworth's method was unusual but exceedingly rewarding if we may judge by the quality of his mind and character. It was his custom every day to meditate on a few of Jesus' words, reading them slowly and endeavoring to bring out their full meaning. He would stop and say, "I wonder what Jesus meant when he said that. What was the expression on his face, the tone of his voice?" This approach served to make Christ come near to Wordsworth as a vital living character and to walk with him in his own time.

The hurry and rush of our lives is often advanced as a reason why the daily period of personal prayer and meditation is impossible today. This, of course, is a specious excuse, for we have ample time for what we want to do. It is possible for every person to go apart alone for at least ten minutes every day to relax body, mind, and soul, open himself to God and allow the divine energies to flood his receptive spirit.

There is a quality of the mind through which, with practice, we can retire into ourselves, open a little door, and be in our own quiet inner temple. On a train, or bus, or rushing subway we may close our eyes, turn our minds to Christ and withdraw from the busy world into a few minutes of communion that will give us calm strength and imperturbable poise for the day.

I stress this practice, for it is a certain and workable method for developing faith. The result of this habitual daily meditation is that we come finally to believe absolutely in him and consequently develop a depth of faith that is sure and positive. Live with Christ in daily spiritual associations and your faith in God will be deep and certain. This makes God a real factor rather than a vague concept. An old blind Indian in the

West, a magnificent person with inner peace and kindly spirit, revealed the source of his strength when he said, “it is easy to believe in God when you live alone with him in the dark.” He knew how to have faith because spiritually he lived with God.

I could write page after page of theory about how to have faith, but I will save you much reading, and myself much labor of writing, by saying that if you will definitely set aside a few minutes, ten or even five, or, as Drummond says, two minutes, to think about God and Christ, to confess your sins, to pray for those who have done wrong against you, and to ask for strength, and if you do this consistently day after day, a true faith will before long begin to send spiritual health and power through your personality.

A Chinese gentleman, a successful broker, recently told his story in our Church Clinic. It was a spiritual narrative, full of tragedy and rising to stirring drama. He came of a wealthy family and had every opportunity that wealth and social connections afford. He ultimately lost his wife through his dissipation and his money went the same way, the bulk of it through gambling. His health failed and a nervous breakdown made him unfit for any except very limited activity. At this juncture he met some people whose joy and delight in life amazed him. It awakened the hope that there might be a way out of his sad failure. They told him the way was by faith, but the advice was futile. Faith was just the thing he did not have either in God, his fellow man, or himself. But he was one of those rare souls who, once being convinced of great possibilities, is not daunted by any obstacle however formidable.

He began a daily plan of communion with God, that being on the advice of a wise friend the sure method of gaining faith. Perseverance was difficult because of his nervous state and the dulled condition of his mind. But he kept at it desperately, feeling it was his last hope. For thirty minutes each morning he gave himself to a period of meditation and asked four questions:

What have I to thank God for during the last twenty-four hours?

What sins have I committed in the last twenty-four hours?

What does God want me to do?

Whom should I pray for?

The first two questions he limited to twenty-four hours because the memory is inclined not to be specific unless the period of analysis is short.

Our Chinese friend's story ended with his finding a restored life. He overcame his disability, his mind began to function with its old time efficiency. He is today a happy man.

Sometimes in my interviews, when deep springs of experience have been opened, I have clearly felt the presence of Christ. It was so when this gentleman asserted his positive conviction that faith in God has remade his entire life, even to his health and business acumen.

And now the second and ultimate method for having faith is simply to have faith. Many people get lost exploring abstruse procedures, unaware that the secret is to believe by an act of trust. It was for this reason that Christ, the supreme Teacher, told us we could not enter his kingdom until we had a childlike heart.

The New Testament says, "According to your faith be it unto you." We receive good in direct proportion to the amount of faith we exercise. "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief," is the attitude that opens the door to new life. In plain vernacular that means, "I trust you, O Lord. I believe, even though I cannot see how it can be. I believe even though shadowy questions haunt my mind." The spirit struggles to believe, triumphing over the weak doubtings of the earth-bound body. The release of power that comes with this victory of faith is the most impressive phenomenon of human experience.

I was asked to call on a patient in a tuberculosis hospital. This man said he had been helped by my radio program and wanted to talk with me. I went to see him at considerable expenditure of time, for the hospital was some distance from the city, but it proved to be very worthwhile—one of my most inspiring and enlightening experiences. I found this man lying on a mattress on a board because of the condition of his spine. His hand was off at the wrist, but he was one of the happiest men I ever met all my life long. I who had gone to comfort him was myself comforted, even thrilled by the story he told.

He was taken to the hospital in 1936 and given up to die. He had been a successful lawyer, with a wife and two sons. Everything he owned went into the battle to save his life.

At the time he became hospitalized he was having frequent hemorrhages with severe pain. He was in an apparently hopeless condition. It was at this juncture that he listened to the radio talk in which occurred this quotation from the New Testament, “I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.”

“You said,” he explained, “whoever you are, wherever you are, and in whatever condition or circumstance, if you surrender your life completely to God and put your trust in him, you can obtain Divine power by which you can win over anything.”

“You also spoke of the amount of faith that would help us. ‘Even as a grain of mustard seed.’ This seemed to me like a small investment for the return offered.”

Looking straight at me, this man said, “I had heard that sort of thing all my life—that is, when I went to church, which was not too often—and it never moved me. In fact,” he continued, “I guess I never really knew what it meant. I’m sure I didn’t appreciate how deep it went. But this time,” he declared, “it came over me as by a wave that it was true. I bowed my head,” he went on, “and did just as you said. I guess I was at the end of my rope and I meant it absolutely when I put my life in God’s hands. A strange thing happened. I felt a surge of peace. I came to have a conviction that regardless of the number and pain of hemorrhages nothing could ever hurt me again. I went farther, repeating my surrender every day, several times a day, and one day I came to believe that my hemorrhages would stop. That was late in 1936, and in early 1937 they did stop and I’ve had none to this day.” (This conversation took place in 1939.)

With a happy smile, the narrator continued: “I am slowly getting better, but that is not the chief thing that has happened to me. The main thing is the strange new strength, this wonderful inner peace, this absolute sense of being attached to the very power of God himself. We, my family and I, have had to face many difficult problems. Again and again we have been caught in what seemed a blind alley with no way out, but God opened a way every time, and he always will.”

I sat there looking at that heroic and inspiring man. I was listening to one of the most amazing accounts of God’s grace that has ever come to my attention. We both knew that day that we were talking about no imaginary happening but were awed by the real experience of a man who in his dire

need stumbled upon the greatest thing that can happen to a human being—the actual release, through faith, of the power of God into human experience. There is in religious faith and for our benefit a greater power than we realize.

The Hidden Energies of the Mind

Men habitually use only a small part of the powers which they possess and which they might use under appropriate circumstances.” The eminent psychologist William James, great genius in understanding personality, said this. Every person has it in him to be far more and accomplish far more, according to this great expert in personality.

Deep within every normal individual is a vast reservoir of untapped power waiting to be used. In most of us only a small trickle of power is seeping to the surface, and on that we live and do our work. It is little wonder that many of us are tired and unhappy, frustrated and ineffectual. A sixteen-cylinder car, if it possessed feeling and reason, would not be very happy, or in any sense satisfactory, if it went sputtering and limping along on one cylinder. That is exactly what most of us are doing. This book is intended to help people learn and practice the secret of using all their power and ability.

The first step toward being what you can be is to know what you are. That is to say, no man can have the use of all his potential power until he learns to understand himself. The trouble with so many people who fail in this life is that they go through the world thinking deep within them that they are ordinary, commonplace persons. Thus, having no fundamental belief in themselves, they dissipate their energies in undisciplined living. Such persons live aimless and erratic lives very largely because they never had a glimpse of what life really can be and what they can become. There exist possibilities for successful living in the unconscious mind. How can they be released and how can religion help?

A man has a good book in his hand when he turns the pages of the Bible. Why does the Bible retain its hold on humanity after hundreds of years?

The answer, of course, is that the Bible contains more than any book ever written, the most astute insight into, and knowledge of, human beings.

In it is a story of a young man who became fed up on the orderly, decent life at the old home, and, getting a sizable sum of money from his father, went off and drank it up. We are told he went into “a far country,” which is indeed an apt description. It is a far country, for some get so far into it they never get back. But this boy did get back. When his money was gone, his job lost, and he had gone the rounds of his associates getting only the cold shoulder, “He came to himself,” as the Bible says with eloquent finality.

Here is an example of the remarkable insight of the Bible. Here is a man, ruining himself not because he was wicked, but because he was ignorant about himself. When he came to himself, when he came to his senses, he had the inestimable thrill of self-discovery. He saw, as in a flash, that he was on the wrong track; that he was really throwing his energies, his abilities, and his future away. “He came to himself” and saw with sharp discernment what he was and what he could become. Then, continues the Bible, he said, “I will arise.” From then on life is an onward, upward movement. It becomes aggressive, victorious living.

Christianity is coming to be more widely recognized every day as possessing the surest techniques for helping people realize themselves. It has an astounding genius for touching men’s ordinary lives and unlocking doors behind which their personalities have long atrophied. Many people have the mistaken notion that religion restricts and imprisons. On the contrary, sin does that, while religion swings open the door and invites men out to freer and happier lives. An old hymn sings of Christ, “He sets the prison free,” and that, of course, is what many ineffectual people are—prisoners. They are prisoners of the senses, prisoners of social customs, prisoners of themselves. Christ sets them free, when, coming to themselves, they say, “I will arise and go to my Father.”

One element in the adventure of self-discovery is to become aware of our innate goodness. Whether you are prepared to admit it or not, you *are* a good person basically. No man can go far in unworthy living without provoking the increasing protests of the finer self. It is impossible for any man long to escape the relentless challenge of the great personality in his soul.

Some years ago a distinguished playwright wrote a play that bore the title, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. This was Luigi Pirandello. The play pictured a rehearsal at which several characters came bursting in, demanding to be played by the actors. That is an accurate picture of our lives. On our life's stage great characters burst out from within us demanding to identify themselves with us, to perform in us before the world.

Nathaniel Hawthorne left among his papers an outline of a play, which he never wrote, but which intrigues us with its possibilities. It was to be a play in which the principal character never appears. Hawthorne with his superb genius could have made much of such an idea, but he did not have to write it for us, for you and I have lived it often enough. It is tragic to think of a man playing on the stage of life only the minor, and often unworthy, parts that are in him. He is the bigot, the coward, the defeated spirit, the sinner, the liar, or the cheat. But for a man never to play the principal character within himself—that is tragical. Never to perceive and act the hero in his life; never to see the Galahad within him, never to see the saint in him—that is deepest tragedy; that is indeed to have the principal character never appear.

In every weak person there is a strong person. In every evil person is a good person. In every defeated person is a victorious person. To become aware of this nobility and power within ourselves, is to know and to be able to practice the Art of Living.

This adventure of self-discovery is working out along another great line. Many people are discovering through their religious faith that in themselves there is a great old rugged character whom no one can discourage or defeat. Many modern people whom I happen to know had received so many blows and hard knocks that the comeback spirit, had all but gone from them. They were about ready to admit they were defeated and that they could do nothing about it except complain and grow bitter.

I have seen scores, even hundreds, of men and women turn to religious faith in earnest attempt to get power into their lives. I have seen them come, saying, "Lord, I am run down, my life is empty, circumstances are too strong for me—I can no longer do anything by my own strength." Then I have seen them do the wisest thing in the world, which is to turn the switch and contact the circuit of creative spiritual energy; that is, to put their lives,

with all problems, completely into God's hands. This they have done, with wholehearted faith that God is interested in them and will turn his power into their lives like water into a reservoir long empty and dry. In the Bible we read, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power," and so He does, and modern people are finding out this great secret in increasing numbers every day.

A young businessman in his late thirties told me his experience. He was brought up in a devout home, but like many others, drifted away from the religious life in college days. Later he married and got into business and social life, and the church would see him at Easter, but that was about all. His connection with spiritual values was exceedingly tenuous. Then hard times came. Business grew difficult. His domestic situation became complicated. His and his wife's life were rooted only in material things, and such roots are insecure. To sum it up, his life crashed in on him and his courage ran out. Life had rained blow after blow upon him, and it was almost more than the spirit could bear.

Then he encountered a radiant personality who seemed to possess a depth of peace and confidence in a situation not unlike his own, a man who was not beaten. On the contrary, he was overcoming adversity by an unwavering perseverance and sustained attack. My friend saw that this man was being fed by what seemed an unfailing stream of power. He asked the secret and the answer was, Christ.

"Why, I have always believed in Christ," my friend said.

"Yes," the other man replied, "but have you ever absolutely and completely given yourself into his hands?"

My friend was forced to admit that he hadn't, but that state didn't last long. He turned to Christ in faith. Live wires now tap his personality and a spiritual transformer has stepped up his physical and mental energy. He said an interesting thing to me recently.

"All my life," he declared, "I have been more or less around religion, but it always seemed a rather dead thing to me. Strange, how different it is now." And then he concluded, "But one thing is sure, when you actually take it into your life spiritually, it does everything it says it will."

Layer upon layer of childhood influences form in the unconscious mind the basis of our moral nature. Religion attempts to govern the fundamental instincts and impulses by saturating the mind with spiritual ideals to such an

extent that the automatic functioning of a man's life will be on a basis of strength and goodness. Religion teaches us to allow only good and beautiful thoughts to enter the unconscious because of the obvious fact often demonstrated that the unconscious can only send back what was first sent down. Let in bad thoughts freely and bad motivation will be sent back. Habitually send in thoughts of an elevated nature and the unconscious will inevitably return attitudes and actions of a corresponding quality.

As William James pointed out, the molecules and cells of our bodies and brains are storing up day by day every action, emotion, and thought to use either for or against us, quite automatically, in crises which ultimately arrive.

The Bible expresses the deepest insight into human nature in a well-known phrase, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." That is one of the profoundest truths ever set down for man's guidance. The word "heart" is used to describe the inmost part of man's thought and feeling; in all likelihood what the modern psychiatrist refers to as "the unconscious." That is to say, a man is in the last analysis what he has been predominantly sending into the controlling center of his life.

The ideas or thoughts which finally determine our actions and character are not those which we receive and examine in the conscious mind. It is not "as a man thinketh in his conscious mind" that constitutes his personality. That is only a receiving station, or perhaps it can be compared to a reception office, where thoughts, good, bad, and innocuous, are examined and passed upon. Some are rejected. If these rejected thoughts are evil, their temporary presence in the conscious mind has done little if any harm. If they are good thoughts, they have had little opportunity to have any effect. But the thought, good or bad, which is received hospitably and is ushered into the mind repeatedly with a welcome, becomes eventually the thought a man "thinketh in his heart," and presently it may be said, "So is he."

People come to us complaining of having what they describe as "bad thoughts." These are thoughts of hate, or immorality, or dishonesty, or sometimes even murder. These people are troubled by the feeling that the thought which passed through the mind has made them guilty of sin. Sometimes they have quoted the Biblical passage, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

No sin is committed if a thought enters the mind, provided it is not made welcome. The thought first passes into an anteroom, where it stands before the mind acting as a judge. No matter how sordid or evil, it has not touched the personality with its infamy or in any way laid guilt upon the soul unless and until the mind acting as judge admits it with a welcome. If the mind decides against it and dismisses it, the personality is not only unsullied, but is, on the contrary, by this act of rejection stimulated and strengthened in moral power. You cannot prevent the birds from flying over your head but you can keep them from building nests in your hair.

A thought that enters the mind, is weighed and rejected, and is passed, condemned, from the mind, leaves no stain of guilt but instead greatly increases spiritual power.

There can be no doubt that Jesus held this point of view, for in the passage quoted above the phrase, "Looketh on a woman to lust after her" does not imply a passing and unadmitted impure thought but a definitely entertained desire. The word "lust," which is the important word in the passage, means a premeditated and active attitude implying an idea welcomed and pleasurably entertained.

In my experience as pastor I have known many people whose lives were made exceedingly unhappy by their failure to make this wholehearted distinction between the evil thought examined and rejected and an evil thought accepted and entertained.

Consideration of this problem, which affects so many people, makes it plain that a conscious mind, clear, penetrating, morally discriminating and vigorous, standing guard over the unconscious mind, is profoundly essential equipment for happy and effective living.

That which is received and accepted by the conscious mind determines ultimately the automatic reaction of the unconscious and in effect may be summed up as character. Before every deed there is a thought or more properly a succession of thoughts. Before the thief steals with his hand he steals with his mind. Before the immoral act is preformed the mind has already committed the offense. If the thought of a wrong act has never been favorably entertained by the mind, the act itself will never take place. The issue is determined, not at the moment of crisis by rational and objective thinking, but by the resistance or lack of it in the unconscious, a resistance

which has been strengthened or weakened each time the conscious mind rejected or accepted the thought.

In a certain small town one family had operated the local bank for three generations. Grandfather, father, and son in succession had filled the important position of banker to the community. The family was held in the highest esteem and respect. The Great Depression came, and the son, who had become president of the bank, had been lured by the speculation mania sweeping the country and had overtaxed his ability to meet his obligations. He had to have money.

One night, alone in the bank, the thought of falsifying the books came to him, but he resolutely put it aside. It returned again and again. No one would ever know. He could make good out of his earnings before the bank examiners would discover the default. The pressure became great. In other relationships, as it later appeared, he had played fast and loose with fidelity. His inner supports had been weakened.

The unconscious could only return what he had given it, and one night the hand crept out hesitantly but surely to perform the deed which sent him to the penitentiary and broke the long and honored tradition of a fine family. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." What we are will eventually appear. The mask will some day slip from the face. The truth will out.

In the unconscious are all the forces which make for our success or failure, our misery or our happiness. These forces according to their strength control the mind, determining our choices and decisions. In the unconscious lie hidden energies which can defeat us if not understood and properly used but which wisely used can endow us with great power. Religion says that when these hidden energies are brought under the influence of Christ as Master of life, the most amazing results appear in people whose lives were hitherto commonplace or defeated.

By the phrase "coming under the influence of Christ" we mean the acceptance of Christ's way of life as our own. Further than that, it requires an attitude which we like to call spiritual experience. The standard word for it is "conversion." It is a surrender of self to God by an act of faith, a wholehearted readiness to follow God's will.

This spiritual experience goes deeply into the personality laying a controlling hand upon the unconscious mind, the inner life force, holding

firmly in check the destructive elements and releasing the hidden energies to produce a person of wisdom and power.

Fear, Worry, and Anxiety

There are many businessmen in America today who are failing in business or not getting ahead. The free functioning of their intellectual and emotional capacities is inhibited by anxiety and fear. Here, for example, is a man who goes down to his office in the morning and sits down to a desk full of business.

This man needs to be able to draw upon every bit of his mental equipment in order to dispose effectively of the problems before him. But he is haunted by anxiety and fear. He is worried about the condition of the stock market, about meeting the payroll, or about holding his job. He worries about the war in Europe or the condition of this country. He worries about his family, or how to meet the payments on his home. He worries about whether he has heart trouble or high blood pressure, or fears that some sin he committed will catch up with him and put its bony and terrifying finger into his business to his undoing. His powers should be drawn to a focus as the divergent rays of the sun are caught by the glass and brought to a point of heat. But his powers are drawn off in a score of different directions by the wide sprouting of his anxieties, and the emotional and mental energy which he needs for success is lacking. Deeply buried anxiety in the unconscious mind is the cause of an astoundingly large number of inefficient and desultory careers in our time.

“What is courage?” a small boy recently asked his mother, and then added, “Is it like our cat when he arches his back and spits when he is afraid?”

His mother tried to think of a way to make the real meaning of courage clear to her son, for she believed that the first and finest lesson that parents can teach little children is courage. She took him for a long walk in the

country, and they finally came to a place where a destructive forest fire had raged. In a blackened, fire-swept field they saw one little red flower.

Pointing to that little, courageous, optimistic red flower, she said, “There is courage, my son—a fragile red flower growing in a fire-swept land.” It is a good symbol of courage. Soon or late, the fires of adversity will roar across the life of each one of us, and in the blackened desolation that remains it will be hard to see any hope, but in that hour we must project the flower of courage in a fire-swept land. That one flower of courage will be the forerunner of restored life.

What is the cure for anxiety and fear? How many have this kind of courage? The best answer to that question is not any comment of mine or suggestion from the experts but is a statement found in the Bible which reads, “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on ... But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

What does that mean? It means that we are not to worry about the necessities of life, but to strive for inner peace and mental, emotional, and spiritual harmony, developing an organized and integrated personality which will be able to meet life so effectively that these necessary things will indeed “be added unto you.” This admonition from the Bible implies what is directly stated in many other Scripture references—that an habitual resting of our worries upon the goodness of God through real faith releases a power into our lives which is not of this world, the power of God, through which we accomplish what otherwise would be impossible.

One of the practical ways of putting into practice this wise advice is to develop the habit of not talking about our anxieties and our worries. The average anxious person is constantly telling everybody how worried and apprehensive he is about everything. It should be recalled that speech has greater effect on emotion than thinking has. An actor, for example, can talk himself into the desired emotions he wishes to portray. Get your anxiety out of your general conversations and it will tend to drop out of your mind. On the other hand, it is advisable to go to someone who has the insight and skill to help you become free from your worries.

Go to your minister, or your priest, or your rabbi, or to your psychiatrist and unburden yourself. Tell everything that is on your heart, including your

sins, real and imaginary, the haunting sense of guilt, and every suppressed desire. This confession, this unburdening of yourself will throw sunlight into every dark corner of the mind, drive out the shadows, bring blessed relief, and open the way for complete healing of the malady of anxiety.

Religion is a practical method for solving this problem. Many people do not understand present-day religious practice; they think of it as something dull and musty, quite remote from real life. Thereby they miss the one thing that could make them happy and successful and useful. Some time ago I was in the police station—a voluntary visit—and in talking with the burly sergeant I told him I had just given a radio talk on “How Religion Can Conquer Nervousness.” He was astounded and said: “I never heard of religion having anything to do with nervousness. I thought religion was just going to church and acting as decent as you can.”

“Go read your Bible,” I replied, “and you will find religion is a medicine for every human ill.”

“I sure will,” he said, “because if religion can do what you say, I’ll have to try a little.”

It will do everything it claims to do for the man who really tries it.

How does the fact that we turn to God in trust and faith relieve us of our fears? For one thing, when a man gets his mind on God, he gets it off himself. Fears, in reality, accompany excessive thinking about oneself. They are nurtured by the egocentered attitude as a nest is warmed by a sitting hen. Our minds sit on the nest of our real and imaginary fears, and they grow up rapidly. We need to engage in more physical activity and less introspection if we are to eliminate fear from our lives.

Mary Ellen Chase writes in *The Good Fellowship*: “Manual labor to my father was not only good and decent for its own sake, but, as he was given to saying, it straightened out one’s thoughts—a contention which I have since proved on many occasions; indeed, the best antidote I know to a confused head or to tangled emotions is to work with one’s hands. To scrub a floor has alleviated many a broken heart, and to wash and iron one’s clothes has brought order and clarity to many a perplexed and anxious mind.”

For this reason a well-known psychologist very wisely advised a young man to run around the block every night until he was dead tired, as an effective means toward conquering his fears.

But there are other and better things to do to conquer fear than run around the block. The one sure method of eradicating fear from the mind is by surrendering one's life to God. By that I mean avoiding the mistake of attempting to pluck fear out by a process of effort and struggle or by power of will. This only serves to implant it more firmly in the consciousness. The surrender of life to God means that all fear and worry is laid before Him and the future is left in His hands in perfect trust. We are then able to avoid any worried thought for the morrow, for God knows our needs and will take care of us.

For my part, I have found it absolutely true that when I sincerely put my life in God's hands and trust him to take care of me, he does so with amazing fidelity and kindness. This is one of the greatest secrets in the world. It gives any man peace and strength beyond calculation. Let all your fears go—give them to God. He will not let you down. Did you ever carry a tired child in your arms? You will recall the complete relaxation of the little body. The child rests in your arms perfectly free from tension. There is in him no fear that he will be dropped. Feeling this trust, you hold the little form all the closer and with the greater care, for you cannot fail such complete confidence.

If this kind of love and faith passes between grown-ups and tired, sleepy children, how much more profoundly does God take to his heart adults who are tired and worn in the dark nights of this life?

A stout heart and a courageous spirit constitute a basic necessity for this life. Samuel Johnson understood this fact when he said that courage is the primary virtue! "Unless a man have that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other."

I once spoke to the students of a New England university, and afterward went home to dinner with an old and very wise professor. As we sat by the fire that stormy day, he presented me with a little book by J.M. Barrie, saying, "You will need this often. Make a companion of it."

He was right. It was Barrie's famous essay on "Courage," and I have always kept it nearby. Its deep philosophy, written in his inimitable style, has meant much when my courage has ebbed. In it, among other things, Barrie says: "Pray for courage with your daily bread, for courage will keep you lighthearted and gay and you must keep lighthearted and gay."

How to have courage is a practical problem faced by every reader of this volume.

In a terrifying scene, Lady Macbeth—strong, masterful as well as cruel—strove to buttress her husband’s ebbing courage. “But if we fail?” he asked, timorously. “Screw your courage to the sticking-place,” she belligerently declared, “and we’ll not fail.” Granted that this illustration comes through the commission of a famous crime, it nevertheless portrays an important fact about life. There come times when courage ebbs and some more vigorous personality may admonish us to screw our courage to the sticking place. That is exactly what we must do—but how to do it?

One of the most pathetic things in the world is to see human beings struggling against great odds, trying desperately to screw their courage to the sticking place. It is pathetic, but it is also inspiring, for it reveals the magnificent heroism of the average man. The more we watch people fighting gallantly against discouragement and hardship and pain and fear, the more wonderful we feel they are. The great need of this life is to develop courage.

Many people miss the best rewards of life simply because of their inability to screw their courage to the sticking place and keep it there until the game is won. Browsing through an old library recently, I came across a book written by a very wise man of a bygone generation. The book told a story showing that ebbing courage has been a problem in every generation.

Its author had a friend who had acquired a claim in a far Western gold field. The claim was in a lonely spot in the mountains. When the friend started to dig for gold, he found evidence that much work had been done on the claim a long while before. Farthest in, in the excavation he found an old rusted pick, its handle rotted off but its point sticking firmly in the rocky soil. He threw the pick aside and went to work and to his amazement, just a few feet beyond where he had found it, he came upon a rich vein of gold. He could not escape thinking about the tragedy of the old pick, and sometime later he heard the story.

A prospector had learned of the probability of a rich strike in this locality, had staked out his claim and had gone to work. Day after day, until his back ached unbearably, he worked with his pick, but never a glimpse of gold did he see. Gradually, the acid of discouragement crept through his system, eating away his resolution. His courage slowly ebbed, and one day

in desperation, and with a sense of complete futility, he drove his pick hard into the rocky earth, gathered up his belongings, and went away. The passing years rusted the pick and ate away the handle.

The tragedy of ebbing courage which failed just short of success, was not revealed until the prospector of our story many years later came and found, a few feet farther on, the vein which would have fallen to the first man had he been able to solve the problem of failing courage. The man is fortunate indeed who, no matter how desperate his condition, how unpromising his prospects, still has growing within his soul the red flower of courage.

What is the secret of this kind of courage? When courage fails the secret is to fill your mind and saturate your consciousness with simple and trusting faith in God. I emphasize this procedure, for it is the heart of the problem of fear.

There is a quotation from the Bible which every man with ebbing courage would do well to hang on his bedroom wall, where he could look at it every morning before starting out to face the day's struggle and every evening so that it might leaven his unconscious mind as he slept. That great sentence is this, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Now, I do not mean to say that every person who belongs to the church, or who believes academically in God, has the kind of faith that keeps courage from ebbing. But I do say that every individual I have ever known who truly practices the faith of the New Testament always kept a sturdy heart. I have never yet known a man who believes in and practices—and the emphasis is on "practices"—sincere faith in God to be defeated. I can produce scores of present-day people, young and old, from every walk of life who will tell you from their own experience that they have discovered that it is absolutely a fact that they have become more than conquerors "through him that loved us."

Conscience and the Sense of Guilt

An impressive line in Axel Munthe's book, *The Story of San Michele*, says, "A man can stand a lot as long as he can stand himself. He can live without hope, without books, without friends, without music as long as he can listen to his own thoughts." Because this is so patently true, the wise thing, the absolutely necessary thing for every man is to cultivate at all costs a self with which he can live in peace and happiness. He must look to his conscience and eradicate the sense of guilt.

One thing is sure, whether you like it or not, you have to live with yourself. Goethe once said, "Beloved brother, let us not forget that a man can never get away from himself."

Lord Byron, when fleeing from England, heartbrokenly asked: "What exile from himself can flee?"

Indeed, it is a fact that a man may flee from other men and from familiar scenes and the obligations of life, and may even become a recluse in an obscure corner of the earth, he may turn his back on the social conventions and on early training and beliefs, but from himself there is no escape. I saw in a newspaper an account of a young man who was attempting to flee after having done a great wrong. He traveled the world over, but finally said this pathetic thing, "Everywhere I go I am still myself, and I myself am the penalty for the wrong I have done."

This is one of the inescapable facts of life—you have to live with what you are. For some this may be described as heaven; for others, it is literally hell. For some it is romance; for others it is intolerable boredom. In some men happiness and delight well up out of their hearts. They are alive and vibrant with the sheer joy of living. Life for them is an ever-fresh adventure. Every morning means a fresh beginning, every evening brings the deep satisfaction of a day richly lived. Such men are constantly finding

within themselves unexplored riches and fresh sources of happiness. It is a joy to live with a self like that.

There are other men for whom it is not so. They have divided and conflicting personalities. In them is a contentious internecine spirit. They are at odds with themselves most of the time. They are like one of the characters in a modern novel about whom the author says, "He was not a personality, he was a civil war." Theirs is a self which desires to do right, but all too readily acquiesces in evil. Theirs is a self stung by remorse and haunted by a sense of guilt over past misdeeds. Theirs is a self which is horribly conscious of self because it is concerned only with self. To live with a self like that is hell. Nor is there any evasion, any escape. We have to live with what we are.

In the light of this grace and inescapable fact it becomes evident that the supremely important thing is to develop a self with which we can live satisfactorily. Since whether we like it or not we do have to live with ourselves, we profoundly want to become good company for ourselves. Each of us wants to be able to enjoy the self we have to live with.

The soul becomes apparent only as it develops. We are continuously building up or breaking down the self with which we were born. Through the years every thought, every emotion, every experience contributes to the quality of the self. No matter how old we are, or how set we may be, our self is in the making. We are all in the continuous process of creating the self we have to live with. Everything contributes to its greatness or littleness. You will remember Tennyson's discerning remark, "I am part of all I have met." By the same token everything we have met is part of us.

Winfred Rhodes, the helpful writer, expressed it in a great phrase, "Life's greatest achievement is the continual remaking of your self so that at last you know how to live." This constant process of self-development is expressed in such everyday remarks as: "How he has grown!" or "He is not the man he used to be."

These remarks represent a statement of the fact that we are constantly developing, whether for good or bad.

How go about developing a self we can live with happily, a self free from the domination of a wounded conscience and carrying a sense of guilt? We could indulge in much theory and speculation at this point, but a more effective method is to analyze an actual specimen in the laboratory of

life. Let us take a man who had tremendous difficulty living with himself, but who solved the problem so effectively that he became one of the greatest men of all time. He is the eminent thinker, philosopher, and leader in the Christian Church, Paul, the apostle. He was a man who, by his own admission, suffered acute inner conflict and division. He once cried, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

That is a very graphic description of inner conflict. He evidently had trouble with his good intentions too, for he complained that “The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” But he won his fight with himself, and finally at the end of a life of heroic proportions, great in achievement but studded with pain, shipwreck, stonings, beatings, and prison, ending in martyrdom, he was able to say: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” The man who said that was a man at peace with himself, who had developed a self with which he could live with profound inner contentment.

And what was his secret? It is expressed in these words, without which no explanation of this great life is possible: “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” That is to say, his life was now centered not in his divided and inharmonious personality, but in Christ, in whom are no divisions nor conflicts. Christ became the center around which his personality organized itself, and so the divisions in Paul’s personality were healed and he became a self with whom it was pleasant for him to live.

Psychiatrists are now saying what the ministers have always said, that a clear mind, free of, or forgiven for, wrongdoing, is essential to the harmonious organization of a man’s personality. Marcus Aurelius, one of the world’s wisest men, knew the truth of these things. “The one thing worth living for,” he declared, “is to keep one’s soul pure.”

The right may also be determined on the basis of results. Is wrong workable? Is it sensible? Seneca wisely declared, “If thou wouldst bring all things under subjection, subject thyself to reason.” Jesus said to the man who sinned, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.”

Men afterward say, “I was a fool to have done that.” It is not “the morning after” that is most tragic but “the years afterward.”

A good skill to develop is a capacity for moral previewing, the ability to foresee the result; to project the mind ahead and see how a thing will look

after it is done. A man thinking about committing a sin would do well to practice reading about it as if it had afterward become public.

The first function of religion, and I believe of psychiatry too, is to point the way to happier lives by teaching men and women how to cope with a sense of guilt which is due to their own unwisdom.

Psychiatry uses its own method of diagnosis and treatment.

Religion brings to distressed minds the knowledge of God's forgiveness and thus of the peace that passeth all understanding.

Self-Criticism, Failure, and Success

A distinguished statesman said that in his youth he heard one sentence which, through the later years, had done him no end of good. He has, he declared, repeated it frequently all his adult life, and it has proved a marvelous source of strength. The sentence is: "You can become strongest in your weakest place."

It is a good sentence and states two important things about you and me. First, it calls attention to the obvious fact that we have weak places and a weakest place. Of course we do not like to admit that fact; we prefer to dwell on our strong points. We do not like to be honest with ourselves.

It is not easy to be absolutely honest with ourselves owing to what psychiatrists call rationalization. That is, we have a tendency not to be objective in our attitude toward ourselves. We set our minds to work, not upon dealing with the facts as they are, but upon inventing rational reasons for our courses of conduct. Our unconscious minds play tricks on us, and unless we watch our minds they will deceive us, keeping us from being entirely honest with ourselves, from realizing that we have weak places.

Second, the sentence tells us that we can be strongest in our weakest place. It does not say that we may become merely strong in the places where we are now weak, but that we may become strongest in the place which is now our weakest spot. Some of the tribes of Africa believe that when one man vanquishes another, the strength of the vanquished passes into the victor and he thereby becomes that much stronger. When you conquer a weakness, the strength that lies in that weakness, its power over you, passes into you. Each time you overcome the weakness you acquire an additional part of its strength. Its strength is diminished with each victory and your strength is correspondingly increased.

The ultimate result is the complete destruction of your weakness and your acquisition of the strength it had over you. When we vigorously set ourselves to overcome a weakness which we recognize, the direct campaign which we wage tends to bring all of our forces into play at that point. We concentrate a great measure of strength at our weakest point, making it our strongest.

Let the process known as “welding” illustrate the thought. Welding is a process in which two pieces of metal are fused at their point of contact, making a joint that is usually stronger than the parent metal itself. Intense heat is applied at the point of contact. The intense heat and resulting fusion makes the point that was weak stronger than any other.

We should keep in mind that the tendency of our personality is to palliate, to excuse and to defend our weaknesses. At times we need to be jarred out of ourselves, so as to see ourselves with such distinctness that our minds will be forced to honestly accept the fact of our woeful weakness. Holding this realization firmly in mind, attack your weakest place with determination and it will become your strongest place.

Here is an example from everyday life of the operation of the power of faith. A young man came to see me and said he had an insatiable appetite for alcohol which was fast destroying his effectiveness in business. His craving was so great that several times he had arisen in the middle of the night to get himself a drink. A psychiatrist would probably have diagnosed his case as “the will to fail,”—that is, that, basically, he wanted to fail. That is not infrequently the correct assumption in such cases. He wanted me to pray with him, comfort him, and urge him to go out and fight a fight which he confidently expected to lose, and then, having failed, come back for more prayer and more comfort. After he did just that several times, I told him there was no use trying and advised him not to try. He was amazed at this, and I explained that the gospel really does not urge us to try harder, but to believe harder. If the gospel did otherwise, it would be only for those of strong will. The only fight it urges is the fight of faith, the struggle to believe.

I assured him that however much he stirred up his will to succeed, he would probably fail because he visualized himself as failing. His will might heroically declare, “I will,” but at the same time his imagination whispered,

“I cannot.” And because imagination is stronger than will, his will would lose. He needed to imagine himself not to be failing but winning. His faith needed to paint that picture firmly on his inner consciousness. So I asked him to believe by an act of pure faith that he would vanquish his craving—not tomorrow, or sometime in the future, but to believe that by the grace of God he was that very minute freed from its domination.

“According to your faith, be it done unto you,” said Christ. He asked me if I was certain of that, and I assured him that I was. By an act of faith he accepted the idea, and whatever were the mental operations involved in the process, the fact remains that at the end of the month he told me he had not had the slightest desire for alcohol. Now, at the end of a year and a half he has had no recurrence of the desire. The moral lesion was healed by so great a curative force that no vestige of diseased tissue remains. What fruitless struggle could not do was accomplished by the tremendous power of faith in Christ. Any problem of this life can be successfully handled if by faith we merely open our minds to the power of God.

Grief and Sorrow

Some years ago I had a friend, a great soul. He was a big man, big physically and big of heart. One stormy night his home telephone rang and at the other end was the agonized voice of an acquaintance who had just had great tragedy come to him. It was one of the most terrible tragedies that can happen to a man, the discovery of the infidelity of a beloved wife. She had gone, left his home. He was alone in the dawning knowledge that her love was a broken thing. Piteously, like a child in the dark, his heart dead within him, he called my friend over the telephone. My friend immediately got out his car, drove for a good many miles through the storm to this man's home, and found him bowed in hopeless grief. My friend walked in without a word, went up to the broken man, put his great arms about him, pulled him up close and said, "Come with me."

They gathered up a few of his belongings and got into the tight little car where the man sat with his shoulder pressed against my big bulky friend. The stricken man told me, afterward, that as they drove through the night not a word was spoken. What could be said? The unspoken attitude of human sympathy had to speak the message, and he said that as he looked upon the strong, kindly face of his friend, lighted by the dim glow of the dash light, and reflected in the windshield, there came over him a great sense of peace and protection and calm comfort. My friend had thrown his tabernacle over him. So God, who loves us with an infinite love, has spread his tabernacle over our dear departed loved ones.

Death has always been pictured as a dark angel, as a sinister figure. I wonder if the metaphor of going home to a mother, to a father, isn't a better and more accurate one. I know a man who, in the struggle in these difficult days in the heart of a great city, became overwhelmed with trouble. He is a strong, resourceful man, but life hit him many blows, and the going became

exceedingly hard. He felt a deep and irresistible desire to go back to his boyhood home and have a visit with his aged mother.

He wanted, somehow, to recapture the enthusiasm and zest of life which had been drained from his spirit. Streaks of gray were beginning to show in his hair, and as Charles Lamb once said, "Our spirits grow gray before our hair," so it was with this man.

He told me afterward that he went back to the old home, and his mother, like mothers in every age and in every place, wanted to feed him, give him a good dinner such as he used to have. She put food and drink before him and talked to him about old-fashioned, intimate family matters. She was slaking his thirst, and feeding the deeper hunger of his life. As he sat at the table, as she passed by, she put her hands, soft and tender and wrinkled, on his head as if she knew the burden he carried and the pain in his heart, and was trying as only a mother can to wipe away the tears from his eyes.

He said that in the quietness of that place peace came over him and a new enthusiasm for living came stealing back into his heart. What we often find in a mother or in a loving father here on earth, our dead have found in the great mother heart, in the great father heart of God. Their eyes, closed in death, have opened in the light of an eternal home.

So I say to you who mourn, that if we are to believe the Scriptures, and I know that we can believe them, we may be sure that those whom we have "loved long since and lost awhile" are happy and peaceful and contented, for they are in the Father's house and the Father is with them.

Jesus once said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: If it were *not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am, there ye may be also." He is there, and wherever he is cannot be other than a place of beauty and happiness and peace. Thus sorrow is lifted by our faith in the goodness of God.

But there is another and profound source of grief which we must consider. It is very common and is subtle, for the average person does not think of it as a deep grief resting upon the spirit, subtracting from life its color and enjoyment. Deep-centered grief often emanates from a loss of ideas and of faith.

Many people are trying to satisfy deep hungers and do not know how to do it. The only way that has occurred to some is loose living, compromised morality, and even dissipation. But apparently that method is proving a sad

disappointment, for in ever-increasing numbers, people, and particularly younger people—for they are still honest and frank—are turning to religious experience as the only sure antidote for redundant boredom. Here is a generation in confusion, which has lost its way, not only with regard to its collective economic and social life, but also in its individual life. It may be said that multitudes have “come to grief” because their ideals have been lost.

What is the answer to this tragic condition? There is only one thinker who has the answer, the wisest man who ever lived, a man named Jesus Christ. What does he have to say? He says, and the statement shows magnificent insight, uncanny genius: “The kingdom of God is within you.” What did he mean by that?

In each of us is God. If we reject him, he is still there in us just the same, for he never rejects us. But unless we give him control of our inward life he can do little for us. Weak as we are, we have the power to render the God in us ineffective. The minute a man says with sincerity to God within him, “you take control,” that very minute he realizes the kingdom of God within him, and radiant life begins for him. The secret of happiness lies in exercising the spiritual power within yourself. Simply say with a whole heart: “God, you are in me—dominate me,” and presently your life is at springtime, radiant and beautiful. When Jesus Christ says, “the kingdom of God is within you,” he is saying what wise men have always said, namely, that in you yourself is the answer to your own happiness. This is the antidote to deep inward grief of the spirit.

The Company of the Lonely

In compiling a list of the world's greatest novels an eminent professor of literature gave first place to that thrilling old classic, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe. He justified giving the primacy to this book on the ground that not only is it the first English novel, but it is wrought, as every great novel must be, out of a fundamental fact of human experience. A great novel must deal with a profound truth about life. This *Robinson Crusoe* does with surpassing genius.

It portrays a man fallen upon a most terrible fate—that of loneliness. The highlight of the book which stirs every reader is where the cure for that loneliness is found. Every day Crusoe comes to his lookout point, where he has rigged up a cloth at the top of a pole. He stands gazing across the sea, hands shading his eyes, searching for white sails against the empty horizon.

Standing there in his tatters, skin bronzed, hair long and unkempt, the beach grass waving at his feet, utterly alone, he is a tragic figure. He longs for the touch of a human hand, the sound of a human voice, and the friendly light on a human face. His solitary vigil once again unrewarded, he turns to go but stops short, in wild surprise, for before him in the sands of his supposedly desert island is an unmistakable human footprint, not his own.

In a manner usually less dramatic but no less poignant, every man in the long voyage of the years is likely to find himself like Crusoe upon some lonely island of the spirit. Indeed, there is a fundamental loneliness which haunts all who think deeply upon human experience. Man, at birth, enters this world alone from out the vast silences. Here he comes to be closely bound to others by strong ties of love and friendship. Yet in him remains a mystic homesickness, as if he does not really belong here but is, as an old hymn says, "A pilgrim and a stranger." Literature, art, and music, man's means of expressing himself, give utterance to this cosmic loneliness.

Sculptors, painters, and writers have given us the thought that we are not detached spirits, each living his allotted three score and ten, but elements in the ceaseless flow of eternity. Sir James Jeans, the eminent scientist, touched on the same thought when he said, "It may be that each individual consciousness is a brain cell in a universal mind." We do not live, according to Jeans, as distinct entities for a limited moment of time but tarry on earth during what is called human life, passing on finally, not to extinction, as though our purpose were accomplished, but to further functioning in other capacities in the never-ending process of cosmic mind of which each of us is a constituent part. It is a noble thought and may explain that vague loneliness which the thoughtful man feels now and then as though somehow he did not really belong here but felt the pull of some mystic homeland ever drawing his restless feet toward it.

My experience as a pastor has clearly shown me that a genuine Christian is never a victim of loneliness. Mark you, I said a genuine Christian, and that, of course, does not mean everyone who goes to church and glibly recites the creeds. A genuine Christian is one who sincerely tries to live in the spirit of Christ, has a simple trust and who has mastered the workable techniques of faith. This type of Christian has a friendly and sympathetic attitude toward all men. He is kindly in his relationships, and possesses a generous spirit, which is well able to lift him above everyday frictions. Moreover, he has learned to cope with shyness and oversensitiveness, because he has conquered the ego centeredness which causes them. The Christlike spirit that actuates him makes him too big for that carping pettiness which destroys friendship, leaving us forsaken and alone.

Another thing I have noticed about the genuine Christian is that though he may be compelled by circumstances to be much alone, he is not lonely, for he has inner resources to draw upon and consequently always finds himself in good company. As a man playing solitaire while away the lonely hours pleasantly because he enjoys his own game, so the man with worthwhile things in his own mind can play life's game in solitary because he is interesting even to himself. The important factor is what is in a man's mind.

Many people never read anything worthwhile; some never read at all, save the newspaper headlines. The extent of this indifference to good reading is evidenced by the astonishing prevalence of picture publications.

The person who stocks his mind with great thought lays up treasures and resources upon which he may live happily, finding himself interesting enough to make loneliness impossible.

Faith is the answer to the problem of loneliness. As a pastor I have seen evidence of this assertion too many times to have any doubt about it. Consider the loneliness of bereavement. A loved one has been taken by death. For a while the reaction is one of lonesomeness, the agony of separation. The bereaved one misses the object of his love withal the pain of grief. The danger is that the grief may become abnormal through the withdrawal of one's love into oneself and through a spirit of bitterness toward an unkind world. There are thousands of people today whose lives are disintegrating because they have not developed enough faith to cope with the sorrow that is breaking down their personalities.

The man of faith, although he suffers all the pain of loss, at the same time believes that "all things work together for good to them that love God." He believes that the soul is immortal and that God is a Being with absolute love in his heart. He turns to God for comfort, and God does not disappoint him. If his faith is strong enough, it makes his consciousness of the Divine compassion and protection so complete that loneliness vanishes and a sense of companionship takes its place.

An old Russian proverb says, "The hammer shatters glass, but forges steel." Some people are like glass—the hammer of circumstance breaks them in pieces. Other people are like steel—the hammer strikes and instead of breaking them, forges them into new forms of strength and beauty. Christianity puts the steel-like element in people, so that they do not break under the hammers of circumstance. That precious ingredient is given them by faith.

Love and Marriage

I believe any man and wife can make a success of their marriage if they enter upon it with a spiritual attitude. I advise couples to pray together the first night of their marriage and every night thereafter. I know scores of present-day young couples who say grace at meals and many more who frequently read together from the Bible. These marriages do not break. They are cemented by the greatest power in the world—faith in God.

I have seen many failing marriages saved and permanently restored when both or even one of the partners was willing to bring religion into the situation.

A young woman came to me and said she and her husband had reached the breaking point. Misunderstandings had grown to enormous proportions and frequent differences had become hateful and bitter quarreling. She was about ready for the divorce court, she said, and from what I gathered he felt the same way. But she had a sensitive conscience about divorce, and, besides, down deep, as it later appeared, she still loved her husband and, of course, wanted to save their marriage.

“Have you, as a minister, any suggestion to make?” she asked.

“Yes, I have a suggestion,” I replied. “I have known it to work in other cases like yours, and, in fact, it will work in any situation if it is faithfully tried.”

“What is it?” she demanded, half skeptical, half hopeful.

“Pray with your husband,” I said. “Go home and get him to kneel down and pray with you.”

“Oh,” she answered, her face fallen with disappointment, “I couldn’t do that. He would make fun of me. We used to pray together every night, when we were first married, but we gave that up long ago.”

“It will work,” I replied. “I want you to promise you will pray with him tonight.”

She did not say she would, but the next day she was back again as radiant a young woman as I ever saw. She fairly bubbled over with excitement and joy as she told me how she had struggled all evening for courage to make the suggestion to her husband, sunk behind his paper.

Finally she went over to him and said, “Jim, we can’t seem to get together any other way, and all our arguments don’t get us anywhere, and, Jim, in spite of everything, I really love you. Will you do one thing for me—will you—will you pray with me like we used to?”

She said he looked at her rather strangely.

“And then what do you think he said?” she asked. “He said, ‘I thought of that a couple of times myself, but I didn’t have the nerve to suggest it.’”

“Why,” she cried, “it was wonderful, unbelievable; we got down on our knees as we did when we were first married and we talked to God like a couple of children, and all the trouble seemed to melt away all at once.”

“Keep it up,” I urged her, “and you will hold that refound happiness.”

Religion works when used in human relationships. If you want happiness in marriage—and, of course, you do—practice your religion, and if your husband or wife will not join you in prayer and faith, then do all the praying yourself. One person with real faith can bring to bear a spiritual force sufficient to destroy irritating differences. Faith is so potent that one partner can lift both to that higher level where understanding and unity are attained.

The Faith That Heals

Many miracles of prayer and faith are taking place today in the field of physical and mental health.

This was once a very important aspect of Christianity. The New Testament is full of accounts of healing by Christ and his disciples. The tendency of the Christian religion under the influence of our era's naturalistic-scientific zeal has been to ignore its healing element. But now that science is becoming more mature, and its real harmony with religion better established, it is becoming evident that even as science has set free forces in the material world, so a more scientific application of prayer and faith tends to set free once more the healing forces such as are described in the New Testament as being of usual occurrence. There is now, I feel, a happy tendency by psychiatry, and general medicine, and surgery to work together with religion, each in its own realm to be sure, but with sympathy and understanding, in the common cause of healing body, mind and soul.

One doctor put it very well: "I treated my patient and God healed her." If we will avail ourselves of the best that medical science can give us and at the same time by faith and prayer put ourselves in the hands of God, being sure to pray always that God's will be done whatever that may involve, we shall be the object of curative and restorative forces of remarkable efficacy. The head of the medical service in a great university hospital said, "One should send for his minister as he sends for his doctor when he becomes ill." That is to say that God helps the sick in two ways, through the science of medicine and surgery, and through the science of faith and prayer. This latter brings the mind and spirit of the sick into harmony with God so that his healing power may operate. The physician thereby receives a superb cooperation.

My brother, Dr. Robert C. Peale, a physician and surgeon, says: "Because of the abiding faith and trust in the Almighty of the injured or sick person, I constantly see, as a surgeon, recoveries that were thought impossible. I also see poor results because of an attempted cure by religion or science alone. I have therefore become convinced that there is a definite and fixed relationship between religion and science and that God has given us both as weapons against disease and unhappiness. Used together for the benefit of mankind, their possibilities are unlimited, separately they can only be of limited benefit."

Simple faith in God opens our lives in an amazing manner to the forces of healing and strength and growth. All serious students of mankind know that man's essential quality is not physical or material but spiritual. A man can live a purely physical and material life for a while, but he will be beaten eventually, because he has cut himself off from the source of life-giving vitality. Like a pool of water separated from the living waters of a running stream he presently becomes unhealthy. Life is unhappy and sinful because it is cut off from the flow of life-giving force. Simple faith and surrender to God correct this condition. It is remarkable what a sincere attempt to harmonize our lives with God's power will do physically, mentally, and spiritually.

If we only believe, there is no limit to the blessings God will give us. We are told that Christ came to give us an abundant life. That means something far beyond the narrow, limited, frustrated lives most of us live. The whole emphasis of the New Testament which we so tragically miss is that God wants to pour out blessings in overflowing generosity. No blessing is too great, no power too strong, no victory too complete. All is ours.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE (1898–1993) was among the most influential and prolific ministers of the twentieth century. His worldwide classic *The Power of Positive Thinking*, published in 1952, revolutionized the field of self-help and practical spirituality, and it popularized mystical themes of mind-power metaphysics throughout the world.

THE PROPHET

*The Unparalleled Classic on Life's Meaning—Now in
a Special Condensation*

by Khalil Gibran

A Guide to Powerful Living

By Mitch Horowitz

Poet Khalil Gibran's *The Prophet* is probably the most widespread and influential work of modern inspirational literature. Its impact is difficult to overstate, touching the lives of readers from politicians and radicals to movie stars and pop singers. *The Prophet* impacted the revolution in alternative spirituality that was travelling the globe when the book first appeared in 1923. It impacted the Beat culture of the 1950s, with its calls for a boundary-free search for truth. Its spirit of love and rebelliousness influenced the Woodstock generation. And today it remains a standard work for people who consider themselves spiritual but not religious—yet it also finds a place on the bookshelves of traditional seekers since none of its principles run counter to mainline religion.

Gibran's brilliance in writing *The Prophet*—in which an unnamed figure delivers a series of aphorisms to a group of villagers—is that he distilled the highest and most universal principles of all faiths, East and West, ancient and modern. That his book resonates so deeply with readers of diffuse backgrounds testifies to the truth, sensed instinctively by so many people and enunciated within the book's pages, that, issues of doctrine and dogma aside, there really *does* exist a common core of ethics and values at the heart of the world's enduring faiths. This core is distilled in *The Prophet*.

In terms of meaning and influence, I group *The Prophet* with works like the *Tao Te Ching* and the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius. All of these expressions have attained posterity because they return us to what was being sought from religions before religions themselves were formed.

In essence, *The Prophet* is a guide to ethical living. The purpose of my condensation is not to replace the original, which no book can do, but rather to distill the poet's most poignant and applicable ideals. That you can

experience the book in a single sitting makes me hope you will become a lifelong reader of it, and also venture into the original text.

Gibran's verse has so fully permeated our culture that you may be surprised to encounter passages that remind you of some of our best-known expressions. Take for example Gibran's maxim: "And what is fear of need but need itself?" Ten years after he wrote those words, Franklin Roosevelt in 1933 announced in his first inaugural speech: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Writer Joseph Wakim detected a similar parallel in the widely repeated lines from John F. Kennedy's 1961 inaugural address: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." Writing in 2011 in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Wakim noted that the Lebanese-American poet Gibran "never intended these words to be addressed by a president to his people." Rather:

He was writing an open letter, in Arabic, to Lebanese parliamentarians in 1925, during the fall of the Ottoman Empire. His letter was titled 'The New Frontier,' which gives a completely different meaning and context. 'Are you a politician asking what your country can do for you or a zealous one asking what you can do for your country?' he wrote.

What's more, JFK had used the phrase "New Frontier" as the signature of his convention acceptance speech several months earlier and, as Wakim notes, made it a keynote of his administration, saying: "We stand today on the edge of a new frontier—the frontier of the 1960s, the frontier of unknown opportunities and perils, the frontier of unfilled hopes and unfilled threats." Few Americans would have connected the president's soaring words with the work of an Arab-American poet who had died nearly three decades earlier.

Part of the power of Gibran's work is that every reader seems to find within it exactly what he or she most needs. This has been my personal experience. For about ten years I was a vegetarian for ethical reasons. Shortly before writing these words, I had, as a personal decision, returned to eating meat. I

felt conflicted. Then I encountered these lines by Gibran, which seemed to offer a way out of my conflict:

But since you must kill to eat, and rob the newly born of its mother's milk to quench your thirst, let it then be an act of worship ...

*When you kill a beast say to him in your heart,
"By the same power that slays you, I too am slain; and I too shall be consumed ..."*

This outlook is not for everyone but it gave me an open door.

Likewise, we can find wisdom in Gibran's work for the run-amuck tone and content of much of today's social media: "And in much of your talking, thinking is half murdered."

Another facet of today's social media is the widespread pirating of intellectual property and the feckless conviction that all songs, art, movies, books, and imagery should be free. Gibran issued a call to always compensate artists and those who create:

*And suffer not the barren-handed to take part in your transactions,
who would sell their words for your labour.*

To such men you should say,

*"Come with us to the field, or go with our brothers to the sea and
cast your net;*

For the land and the sea shall be bountiful to you even as to us."

Above all, Gibran believed that the contemplative life and the search for meaning are not bound to any ideology or doctrine—nor do they reject any. On this count he wrote: "Your daily life is your temple and your religion."

That one line could sum up his entire philosophy. May this short volume bring you phrases and ideas that enable you to find your own personal philosophy within its folds.

The Prophet

The prophet walked among the people. One woman said, Speak to us of Love.

The prophet spoke thus:
When love beckons to you, follow him,
Though his ways are hard and steep.
And when his wings enfold you yield to him,
Though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you.
And when he speaks to you believe in him,
Though his voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays waste the garden.

For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning.

Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun,

So shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth.

Like sheaves of corn he gathers you unto himself.
He threshes you to make you naked.
He sifts you to free you from your husks.
He grinds you to whiteness.
He kneads you until you are pliant;
And then he assigns you to his sacred fire, that you may become sacred bread for God's sacred feast.

All these things shall love do unto you that you may know the secrets of your heart, and in that knowledge become a fragment of Life's heart.

But if in your fear you would seek only love's peace and love's pleasure,

Then it is better for you that you cover your nakedness and pass out of love's threshing-floor,

Into the seasonless world where you shall laugh, but not all of your laughter, and weep, but not all of your tears.

Love gives naught but itself and takes naught but from itself.
Love possesses not nor would it be possessed;
For love is sufficient unto love.

Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself.

To know the pain of too much tenderness.
To be wounded by your own understanding of love;
And to bleed willingly and joyfully.



Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together yet not too near together:
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.



And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of Children.

And he said:

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of to-morrow, which you cannot visit,
not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor carries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent
forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you
with

His might that His arrows may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is
stable.



Then said a rich man, Speak to us of Giving.
And he answered:
You give but little when you give of your possessions.
It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.
For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear
you may need them tomorrow?

And tomorrow, what shall to-morrow bring to the over-prudent dog
burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy
city?

And what is fear of need but need itself?
Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, the thirst that is
unquenchable?

There are those who give little of the much which they have—and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gifts unwholesome.

And there are those who have little and give it all.

These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.

And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;

They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space.

Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth.

It is well to give when asked, but it is better to give unasked, through understanding;

And to the open-handed the search for one who shall receive is joy greater than giving.

And is there aught you would withhold?

All you have shall some day be given;

Therefore give now, that the season of giving may be yours and not your inheritors'.

You often say, "I would give, but only to the deserving."

The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture.

They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish.

Surely he who is worthy to receive his days and his nights is worthy of all else from you.

And he who has deserved to drink from the ocean of life deserves to fill his cup from your little stream.

And what desert greater shall there be, than that which lies in the courage and the confidence, nay the charity, of receiving?

And who are you that men should rend their bosom and unveil their pride, that you may see their worth naked and their pride unabashed?

See first that you yourself deserve to be a giver, and an instrument of giving.

For in truth it is life that gives unto life-while you, who deem yourself a giver, are but a witness.

And you receivers—and you are all receivers—assume no weight of gratitude, lest you lay a yoke upon yourself and upon him who gives.

Rather rise together with the giver on his gifts as on wings;

For to be overmindful of your debt is to doubt his generosity who has the freehearted earth for mother, and God for father.



Then an old man, a keeper of an inn, said, Speak to us of Eating and Drinking.

And he said:

Would that you could live on the fragrance of the earth, and like an air plant be sustained by the light.

But since you must kill to eat, and rob the newly born of its mother's milk to quench your thirst, let it then be an act of worship.

And let your board stand an altar on which the pure and the innocent of forest and plain are sacrificed for that which is purer and still more innocent in man.

When you kill a beast say to him in your heart,

“By the same power that slays you, I too am slain; and I too shall be consumed.

For the law that delivered you into my hand shall deliver me into a mightier hand.

Your blood and my blood is naught but the sap that feeds the tree of heaven.”

And when you crush an apple with your teeth, say to it in your heart,

“Your seeds shall live in my body,

And the buds of your to-morrow shall blossom in my heart,

And your fragrance shall be my breath,

And together we shall rejoice through all the seasons.”

And in the autumn, when you gather the grapes of your vineyards for the winepress, say in your heart,

“I too am a vineyard, and my fruit shall be gathered for the winepress,
And like new wine I shall be kept in eternal vessels.”

And in winter, when you draw the wine, let there be in your heart a song for each cup;

And let there be in the song a remembrance for the autumn days, and for the vineyard, and for the winepress.



Then a ploughman said, Speak to us of Work.

And he answered, saying:

You work that you may keep pace with the earth and the soul of the earth.

For to be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons, and to step out of life's procession that marches in majesty and proud submission towards the infinite.

When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.

Which of you would be a reed, dumb and silent, when all else sings together in unison?

Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune.

But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born,

And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life,

And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret.

You have been told also that life is darkness, and in your weariness you echo what was said by the weary.

And I say that life is indeed darkness save when there is urge,

And all urge is blind save when there is knowledge,

And all knowledge is vain save when there is work,
And all work is empty save when there is love;
And when you work with love you bind your self to yourself, and to one
another, and to God.



And a merchant said, Speak to us of Buying and Selling.
And he answered and said:
To you the earth yields her fruit, and you shall not want if you but know
how to fill your hands.
It is in exchanging the gifts of the earth that you shall find abundance
and be satisfied.
Yet unless the exchange be in love and kindly justice it will but lead
some to greed and others to hunger.

When in the market-place you toilers of the sea and fields and vineyards
meet the weavers and the potters and the gatherers of spices,—
Invoke then the master spirit of the earth, to come into your midst and
sanctify the scales and the reckoning that weighs value against value.

And suffer not the barren-handed to take part in your transactions, who
would sell their words for your labour.
To such men you should say,
“Come with us to the field, or go with our brothers to the sea and cast
your net; For the land and the sea shall be bountiful to you even as to us.”

And if there come the singers and the dancers and the flute players,—
buy of their gifts also.
For they too are gatherers of fruit and frankincense, and that which they
bring, though fashioned of dreams, is raiment and food for your soul.

And before you leave the market-place, see that no one has gone his way
with empty hands.
For the master spirit of the earth shall not sleep peacefully upon the wind
till the needs of the least of you are satisfied.



Then one of the judges of the city stood forth and said, Speak to us of Crime and Punishment.

And he answered, saying:

It is when your spirit goes wandering upon the wind,
That you, alone and unguarded, commit a wrong unto others and therefore unto yourself.

And for that wrong committed must you knock and wait a while unheeded at the gate of the blessed.

Like the ocean is your god-self;
It remains for ever undefiled.
And like the ether it lifts but the winged.
Even like the sun is your god-self;
It knows not the ways of the mole nor seeks it the holes of the serpent.
But your god-self dwells not alone in your being.
Much in you is still man, and much in you is not yet man,
But a shapeless pigmy that walks asleep in the mist searching for its own awakening.

And of the man in you would I now speak.

For it is he and not your god-self nor the pigmy in the mist that knows crime and the punishment of crime.

Oftentimes have I heard you speak of one who commits a wrong as though he were not one of you, but a stranger unto you and an intruder upon your world.

But I say that even as the holy and the righteous cannot rise beyond the highest which is in each one of you,

So the wicked and the weak cannot fall lower than the lowest which is in you also.

And as a single leaf turns not yellow but with the silent knowledge of the whole tree,

So the wrong-doer cannot do wrong without the hidden will of you all.

Like a procession you walk together towards your god-self.

You are the way and the wayfarers.

And when one of you falls down he falls for those behind him, a caution against the stumbling stone.

Ay, and he falls for those ahead of him, who, though faster and surer of foot, yet removed not the stumbling stone.

And this also, though the word lie heavy upon your hearts:
The murdered is not unaccountable for his own murder,
And the robbed is not blameless in being robbed.
The righteous is not innocent of the deeds of the wicked,
And the white-handed is not clean in the doings of the felon.
Yea, the guilty is oftentimes the victim of the injured,
And still more often the condemned is the burden bearer for the guiltless and unblamed.

You cannot separate the just from the unjust and the good from the wicked;

For they stand together before the face of the sun even as the black thread and the white are woven together.

And when the black thread breaks, the weaver shall look into the whole cloth, and he shall examine the loom also.

If any of you would bring to judgment the unfaithful wife,
Let him also weigh the heart of her husband in scales, and measure his soul with measurements.

And let him who would lash the offender look unto the spirit of the offended.

And if any of you would punish in the name of righteousness and lay the axe unto the evil tree, let him see to its roots;

And verily he will find the roots of the good and the bad, the fruitful and the fruitless, all entwined together in the silent heart of the earth.

And you judges who would be just.

What judgment pronounce you upon him who though honest in the flesh yet is a thief in spirit?

What penalty lay you upon him who slays in the flesh yet is himself slain in the spirit?

And how prosecute you him who in action is a deceiver and an oppressor, Yet who also is aggrieved and outraged?

And how shall you punish those whose remorse is already greater than their misdeeds?

Is not remorse the justice which is administered by that very law which you would fain serve?

Yet you cannot lay remorse upon the innocent nor lift it from the heart of the guilty.

Unbidden shall it call in the night, that men may wake and gaze upon themselves.

And you who would understand justice, how shall you unless you look upon all deeds in the fullness of light?

Only then shall you know that the erect and the fallen are but one man standing in twilight between the night of his pigmy-self and the day of his god self,

And that the corner-stone of the temple is not higher than the lowest stone in its foundation.



Then a lawyer said, But what of our Laws, master?

And he answered:

You delight in laying down laws,

Yet you delight more in breaking them.

Like children playing by the ocean who build sand-towers with constancy and then destroy them with laughter.

But while you build your sand-towers the ocean brings more sand to the shore,

And when you destroy them the ocean laughs with you.

Verily the ocean laughs always with the innocent.

But what of those to whom life is not an ocean, and man-made laws are not sand-towers,

But to whom life is a rock, and the law a chisel with which they would carve it in their own likeness?

What of the cripple who hates dancers?

What of the ox who loves his yoke and deems the elk and deer of the forest stray and vagrant things?

What of the old serpent who cannot shed his skin, and calls all others naked and shameless?

And of him who comes early to the wedding feast, and when over-fed and tired goes his way saying that all feasts are violation and all feasters lawbreakers?

What shall I say of these save that they too stand in the sunlight, but with their backs to the sun?

They see only their shadows, and their shadows are their laws.

And what is the sun to them but a caster of shadows?

And what is it to acknowledge the laws but to stoop down and trace their shadows upon the earth?

But you who walk facing the sun, what images drawn on the earth can hold you?

You who travel with the wind, what weather vane shall direct your course?

What man's law shall bind you if you break your yoke but upon no man's prison door?

What laws shall you fear if you dance but stumble against no man's iron chains?

And who is he that shall bring you to judgment if you tear off your garment yet leave it in no man's path?



And the priestess spoke and said: Speak to us of Reason and Passion.

And he answered, saying:

Your soul is oftentimes a battlefield, upon which your reason and your judgment wage war against your passion and your appetite.

Would that I could be the peacemaker in your soul, that I might turn the discord and the rivalry of your elements into oneness and melody.

But how shall I, unless you yourselves be also the peacemakers, nay, the lovers of all your elements?

Your reason and your passion are the rudder and the sails of your seafaring soul. If either your sails or your rudder be broken, you can but

toss and drift, or else be held at a standstill in mid-seas.

For reason, ruling alone, is a force confining; and passion, unattended, is a flame that burns to its own destruction.

Therefore let your soul exalt your reason to the height of passion, that it may sing;

And let it direct your passion with reason, that your passion may live through its own daily resurrection, and like the phoenix rise above its own ashes.

I would have you consider your judgment and your appetite even as you would two loved guests in your house.

Surely you would not honour one guest above the other; for he who is more mindful of one loses the love and the faith of both.

Among the hills, when you sit in the cool shade of the white poplars, sharing the peace and serenity of distant fields and meadows—then let your heart say in silence, “God rests in reason.”

And when the storm comes, and the mighty wind shakes the forest, and thunder and lightning proclaim the majesty of the sky,—then let your heart say in awe, “God moves in passion.”

And since you are a breath in God’s sphere, and a leaf in God’s forest, you too should rest in reason and move in passion.



And a woman spoke, saying, Tell us of Pain.

And he said:

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.

Even as the stone of the fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so must you know pain.

And could you keep your heart in wonder at the daily miracles of your life, your pain would not seem less wondrous than your joy;

And you would accept the seasons of your heart, even as you have always accepted the seasons that pass over your fields.

And you would watch with serenity through the winters of your grief.

Much of your pain is self-chosen.

It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self.

Therefore trust the physician, and drink his remedy in silence and tranquillity: For his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen,

And the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of the clay which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears.



AND a man said, Speak to us of Self-Knowledge.

And he answered, saying:

Your hearts know in silence the secrets of the days and the nights.

But your ears thirst for the sound of your heart's knowledge.

You would know in words that which you have always known in thought.

You would touch with your fingers the naked body of your dreams.

And it is well you should.

The hidden well-spring of your soul must needs rise and run murmuring to the sea;

And the treasure of your infinite depths would be revealed to your eyes.

But let there be no scales to weigh your unknown treasure;

And seek not the depths of your knowledge with staff or sounding line.

For self is a sea boundless and measureless.

Say not, "I have found the truth," but rather, "I have found a truth."

Say not, "I have found the path of the soul." Say rather, "I have met the soul walking upon my path."

For the soul walks upon all paths.

The soul walks not upon a line, neither does it grow like a reed.

The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals.



Then said a teacher, Speak to us of Teaching.

And he said:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.

The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.

If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

The astronomer may speak to you of his understanding of space, but he cannot give you his understanding.

The musician may sing to you of the rhythm which is in all space, but he cannot give you the ear which arrests the rhythm, nor the voice that echoes it.

And he who is versed in the science of numbers can tell of the regions of weight and measure, but he cannot conduct you thither.

For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man.

And even as each one of you stands alone in God's knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God and in his understanding of the earth.



And a youth said, Speak to us of Friendship.

And he answered, saying:

Your friend is your needs answered.

He is your field which you sow with love and reap with thanksgiving.

And he is your board and your fireside.

For you come to him with your hunger, and you seek him for peace.

When your friend speaks his mind you fear not the "nay" in your own mind, nor do you withhold the "ay."

And when he is silent your heart ceases not to listen to his heart;

For without words, in friendship, all thoughts, all desires, all expectations are born and shared, with joy that is unclaimed.

When you part from your friend, you grieve not;

For that which you love most in him may be clearer in his absence, as the mountain to the climber is clearer from the plain.

And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit.

For love that seeks aught but the disclosure of its own mystery is not love but a net cast forth: and only the unprofitable is caught.

And let your best be for your friend.

If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its flood also.

For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill?

Seek him always with hours to live.

For it is his to fill your need, but not your emptiness.

And in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.

For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.



And then a scholar said, Speak of Talking.

And he answered, saying:

You talk when you cease to be at peace with your thoughts;

And when you can no longer dwell in the solitude of your heart you live in your lips, and sound is a diversion and a pastime.

And in much of your talking, thinking is half murdered.

For thought is a bird of space, that in a cage of words may indeed unfold its wings but cannot fly.

There are those among you who seek the talkative through fear of being alone.

The silence of aloneness reveals to their eyes their naked selves and they would escape.

And there are those who talk, and without knowledge or forethought reveal a truth which they themselves do not understand.

And there are those who have the truth within them, but they tell it not in words.

In the bosom of such as these the spirit dwells in rhythmic silence.

When you meet your friend on the roadside or in the market-place, let the spirit in you move your lips and direct your tongue.

Let the voice within your voice speak to the ear of his ear;

For his soul will keep the truth of your heart as the taste of the wine is remembered.

When the colour is forgotten and the vessel is no more.



And one of the elders of the city said, Speak to us of Good and Evil.

And he answered:

Of the good in you I can speak, but not of the evil.

For what is evil but good tortured by its own hunger and thirst?

Verily when good is hungry it seeks food even in dark caves, and when it thirsts it drinks even of dead waters.

You are good when you are one with yourself.

Yet when you are not one with yourself you are not evil.

For a divided house is not a den of thieves; it is only a divided house.

And a ship without rudder may wander aimlessly among perilous isles yet sink not to the bottom.

You are good when you strive to give of yourself.

Yet you are not evil when you seek gain for yourself.

For when you strive for gain you are but a root that clings to the earth and sucks at her breast.

Surely the fruit cannot say to the root, "Be like me, ripe and full and ever giving of your abundance."

For to the fruit giving is a need, as receiving is a need to the root.

You are good when you are fully awake in your speech.

Yet you are not evil when you sleep while your tongue staggers without purpose.

And even stumbling speech may strengthen a weak tongue.

You are good when you walk to your goal firmly and with bold steps.

Yet you are not evil when you go thither limping.
Even those who limp go not backward.
But you who are strong and swift, see that you do not limp before the
lame, deeming it kindness.

You are good in countless ways, and you are not evil when you are not
good, You are only loitering and sluggard.

Pity that the stags cannot teach swiftness to the turtles.

In your longing for your giant self lies your goodness: and that longing is
in all of you.

But in some of you that longing is a torrent rushing with might to the
sea, carrying the secrets of the hillsides and the songs of the forest.

And in others it is a flat stream that loses itself in angles and bends and
lingers before it reaches the shore.

But let not him who longs much say to him who longs little, “Wherefore
are you slow and halting?”

For the truly good ask not the naked, “Where is your garment?” nor the
houseless, “What has befallen your house?”



Then a priestess said, “Speak to us of Prayer.”

And he answered, saying:

You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray
also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance.

For what is prayer but the expansion of your self into the living ether?

And if it is for your comfort to pour your darkness into space, it is also
for your delight to pour forth the dawning of your heart.

And if you cannot but weep when your soul summons you to prayer, she
should spur you again and yet again, though weeping, until you shall come
laughing.

When you pray you rise to meet in the air those who are praying at that
very hour, and whom save in prayer you may not meet.

Therefore let your visit to that temple invisible be for naught but ecstasy
and sweet communion.

For if you should enter the temple for no other purpose than asking you shall not receive:

And if you should enter into it to humble yourself you shall not be lifted:
Or even if you should enter into it to beg for the good of others you shall not be heard.

It is enough that you enter the temple invisible.

I cannot teach you how to pray in words.

God listens not to your words save when He Himself utters them through your lips.

And I cannot teach you the prayer of the seas and the forests and the mountains.

But you who are born of the mountains and the forests and the seas can find their prayer in your heart,

And if you but listen in the stillness of the night you shall hear them saying in silence:

“Our God, who art our winged self, it is thy will in us that willeth.

It is thy desire in us that desireth.

It is thy urge in us that would turn our nights, which are thine, into days, which are thine also.

We cannot ask thee for aught, for thou knowest our needs before they are born in us:

Thou art our need; and in giving us more of thyself thou givest us all.”



Then a hermit came forth and said, Speak to us of Pleasure.

And he answered, saying:

Pleasure is a freedom-song,

But it is not freedom.

It is the blossoming of your desires,

But it is not their fruit.

It is a depth calling unto a height,

But it is not the deep nor the high.

It is the caged taking wing,

But it is not space encompassed.

Ay, in very truth, pleasure is a freedom-song.
And I fain would have you sing it with fullness of heart; yet I would not
have you lose your hearts in the singing.

Some of your youth seek pleasure as if it were all, and they are judged
and rebuked.

I would not judge nor rebuke them. I would have them seek.
For they shall find pleasure, but not her alone;
Seven are her sisters, and the least of them is more beautiful than
pleasure.

Have you not heard of the man who was digging in the earth for roots
and found a treasure?

And some of your elders remember pleasures with regret like wrongs
committed in drunkenness.

But regret is the beclouding of the mind and not its chastisement.
They should remember their pleasures with gratitude, as they would the
harvest of a summer.
Yet if it comforts them to regret, let them be comforted.

And there are among you those who are neither young to seek nor old to
remember;

And in their fear of seeking and remembering they shun all pleasures,
lest they neglect the spirit or offend against it.

But even in their foregoing is their pleasure.
And thus they too find a treasure though they dig for roots with
quivering hands.

But tell me, who is he that can offend the spirit?
Shall the nightingale offend the stillness of the night, or the firefly the
stars?

And shall your flame or your smoke burden the wind?
Think you the spirit is a still pool which you can trouble with a staff?

Oftentimes in denying yourself pleasure you do but store the desire in
the recesses of your being.

Who knows but that which seems omitted to day, waits for to-morrow?

Even your body knows its heritage and its rightful need and will not be deceived.

And your body is the harp of your soul,
And it is yours to bring forth sweet music from it or confused sounds.

And now you ask in your heart, "How shall we distinguish that which is good in pleasure from that which is not good?"

Go to your fields and your gardens, and you shall learn that it is the pleasure of the bee to gather honey of the flower,

But it is also the pleasure of the flower to yield its honey to the bee.

For to the bee a flower is a fountain of life,

And to the flower a bee is a messenger of love,

And to both, bee and flower, the giving and the receiving of pleasure is a need and an ecstasy.



And an old priest said, "Speak to us of Religion."

And he said:

Have I spoken this day of aught else?

Is not religion all deeds and all reflection,

And that which is neither deed nor reflection, but a wonder and a surprise ever springing in the soul, even while the hands hew the stone or tend the loom?

Who can separate his faith from his actions, or his belief from his occupations?

Who can spread his hours before him, saying, "This for God and this for myself;

This for my soul and this other for my body?"

All your hours are wings that beat through space from self to self.

He who wears his morality but as his best garment were better naked.

The wind and the sun will tear no holes in his skin.

And he who defines his conduct by ethics imprisons his song-bird in a cage.

The freest song comes not through bars and wires.

And he to whom worshipping is a window, to open but also to shut, has not yet visited the house of his soul whose windows are from dawn to dawn.

Your daily life is your temple and your religion.
Whenever you enter into it take with you your all.
Take the slough and the forge and the mallet and the lute,
The things you have fashioned in necessity or for delight.
For in reverie you cannot rise above your achievements nor fall lower than your failures.
And take with you all men:
For in adoration you cannot fly higher than their hopes nor humble yourself lower than their despair.

And if you would know God, be not therefore a solver of riddles.
Rather look about you and you shall see Him playing with your children.
And look into space; you shall see Him walking in the cloud, outstretching His arms in the lightning and descending in rain.
You shall see Him smiling in flowers, then rising and waving His hands in trees.



Than another spoke, saying, "We would ask now of Death."
And he said:
You would know the secret of death.
But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life?
The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil the mystery of light.
If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life.
For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.

In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond; And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring.

Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity.

Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd when he stands before the king whose hand is to be laid upon him in honour.

Is the shepherd not joyful beneath his trembling, that he shall wear the mark of the king?

Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?

For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun?

And what is it to cease breathing but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?

Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.

And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb.

And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.



And then the prophet declared, you called unto me, not in words and said,

“Stranger, stranger, lover of unreachable heights, why dwell you among the summits where eagles build their nests?

Why seek you the unattainable?

What storms would you trap in your net,

And what vaporous birds do you hunt in the sky?

Come and be one of us.

Descend and appease your hunger with our bread and quench your thirst with our wine.”

In the solitude of their souls they said these things;

But were their solitude deeper they would have known that I sought but the secret of your joy and your pain,

And I hunted only your larger selves that walk the sky.

But the hunter was also the hunted;

For many of my arrows left my bow only to seek my own breast.

And the flier was also the creeper;
For when my wings were spread in the sun their shadow upon the earth
was a turtle.

And I the believer was also the doubter;
For often have I put my finger in my own wound that I might have the
greater belief in you and the greater knowledge of you.

And it is with this belief and this knowledge that I say,
You are not enclosed within your bodies, nor confined to houses or
fields.

That which is you dwells above the mountain and roves with the wind.
It is not a thing that crawls into the sun for warmth or digs holes into
darkness for safety,
But a thing free, a spirit that envelops the earth and moves in the ether.

If these be vague words, then seek not to clear them.
Vague and nebulous is the beginning of all things, but not their end, And
I fain would have you remember me as a beginning.
Life, and all that lives, is conceived in the mist and not in the crystal.
And who knows but a crystal is mist in decay?

This would I have you remember in remembering me:
That which seems most feeble and bewildered in you is the strongest and
most determined.

Is it not your breath that has erected and hardened the structure of your
bones?

And is it not a dream which none of you remember having dreamt, that
built your city and fashioned all there is in it?

Could you but see the tides of that breath you would cease to see all else,
And if you could hear the whispering of the dream you would hear no other
sound.



But you do not see, nor do you hear, and it is well.
The veil that clouds your eyes shall be lifted by the hands that wove it,

And the clay that fills your ears shall be pierced by those fingers that kneaded it.

And you shall see.

And you shall hear.

Yet you shall not deplore having known blindness, nor regret having been deaf.

For in that day you shall know the hidden purposes in all things,

And you shall bless darkness as you would bless light.

After saying these things he looked about him, and he saw the pilot of his ship standing by the helm and gazing now at the full sails and now at the distance.

And he said:

Patient, over patient, is the captain of my ship.

The wind blows, and restless are the sails;

Even the rudder begs direction;

Yet quietly my captain awaits my silence.

And these my mariners, who have heard the choir of the greater sea, they too have heard me patiently.

Now they shall wait no longer.

I am ready.

The stream has reached the sea, and once more the great mother holds her son against her breast.

Fare you well.

This day has ended.

It is closing upon us even as the waterlily upon its own to-morrow.

What was given us here we shall keep,

And if it suffices not, then again must we come together and together stretch our hands unto the giver.

Forget not that I shall come back to you.

A little while, and my longing shall gather dust and foam for another body.

A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me.

“A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in Lebanon in 1883, KHALIL GIBRAN migrated with his family to Boston in 1895. As a youth and into adulthood, Gibran excelled in painting, poetry, and philosophy. He is best known for his 1923 work *The Prophet*, which has been translated into more than twenty languages and is one of the most widely read works of verse in history, ranking in readership and influence with Shakespeare, Lao Tzu, and Rumi. Gibran died in New York City in 1931.

WALDEN

*The Landmark Classic of Simple Living—Now in a
Special Abridgment*

by Henry David Thoreau

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Why Read *Walden*?

By Mitch Horowitz

As I lay down these words to a new introduction to *Walden*, I am sitting under the gaze of the Great Sphinx at Giza—and I am deeply struck by something. As incredible a monument as the Sphinx is, and as deeply affected as I am by its antiquity and mystery, I had a more emotional response about twenty years ago when I visited the all-but-barren spot where Thoreau built his tiny cabin on the shores of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts.

I will never forget my first visit. It was a snowy day near Christmas and I arrived at the spot to find that the only original remains were of Thoreau's hearthstone. I knelt down in the snow and cleared away the mounting flurries from the stone. I kissed it—and began to cry. I was so deeply struck that this was the place to which one man came to experience life in its fullness. I later wrote that what was there was a kind of Sphinx of air. When writing that I forgot that Thoreau himself had written: “If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost.”

A woman who had been walking in the woods nearby later approached me and said that she saw me kneeling in the snow and wondered what, if anything, was wrong? No, I smiled, I had just dropped my car keys. How can you explain an emotional reaction at such a moment? It's not part of casual talk.

In the years since, a few literary critics have questioned Thoreau's sincerity and have accused him of pursuing hype by living two years on the shores of the Concord town pond in what they considered make-believe hermitage. I believe that that kind of hero-toppling is overblown and, at times, shallow. You can still find in Thoreau's book observations that could not arise from any but the person who yearns to peer into life at its core.

Here is one of them: “The best works of art are the expression of man’s struggle to free himself.”

For all of Thoreau’s personal enterprise, why should anyone still read his 1854 memoir, a classic that can seem overly familiar or event a remnant of grade-school assignments?

Because *Walden* created a culture of rebellion and independent thought that reflects the best of American life, especially at the current moment when coarseness, unlearned opinion, and groupthink threaten to overrun us.

The philosophy called Transcendentalism, as shaped by Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and their collaborators, reflected America’s sharpest break with the religious dogma and intellectual conformities of the Old World. Transcendentalism embraced inner experiment, personal experience, and the individual search for meaning.

The New England Transcendentalists rejected the idea of rewards in the afterlife as the aim of religious practice. Instead, they believed in living out your highest potential in the present, deriving power and purpose from a palpably felt relationship to the Higher. The Transcendentalists also embraced mystical ideas from the East to which they gave a practical and can-do tone, familiarizing Americans with concepts of meditation, karma, and nonattachment. Thoreau and Emerson further drew upon esoteric ideas from Hermeticism—the Greek-Egyptian philosophy that flourished in the decades following Christ—to suggest the creative and causative powers of the human mind, and how to apply them in the here and now.

Thanks in part to Thoreau, the idea of the individual spiritual search now seems like a national birthright. In polls, most Americans agree that spiritual truth can be found outside of allegiance to any one faith or tradition. “Unaffiliated” is the fastest-growing category of religious identity. In recovery groups, twelve-step programs, and other nontraditional forms of spiritual search, we are encouraged to seek our own conception of a Higher Power. Even those Americans who affiliate with the traditional faiths are taught to believe that their own paths to the Divine are many—that the gates of prayer and forgiveness are always open; that the house of God, the seat of the ineffable, exists all around us. A spark of divinity, many believe, exists within. Such concepts were foreign, if not heretical, in the hierarchical religiosity of the Old World.

Consider, for example, the physical structure of the fourteenth-century Pope's Palace in Avignon, France. In the enormous church that dominates the palace's ground floor, the front pews were, naturally, reserved for aristocracy. A few rows back, space was reserved for those who served the powerful, such as merchants and teachers. And the remainder of the enormous cathedral was designated for everybody else. Here was a structure built in the name of a man who taught, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," resembling nothing so much as an emperor's court.

Thoreau and Transcendentalism upended that. Today one can visit Walden Pond, as I did, and walk to the spot where Thoreau built his tiny cabin. As noted, nothing remains of the physical structure, aside from the hearthstone. There is just open air where the cabin stood. But that empty space is, in a sense, Transcendentalism's greatest monument, and perhaps America's, as well. One can stand in this space and *feel* that this is a place in which one individual lived, determined to learn what it means to be a real human being, to look inside life and discover what really penetrates the human psyche. It is an invisible monument to the quest to know oneself. It is America's sphinx. And that is Transcendentalism.

Read *Walden* not because it is old and venerated—that is the last thing Thoreau would want. Read it because it summons you to all that is new within yourself. To ask, to seek, and to experiment—these are the most radical acts a person can undertake. These are the Thoreau's tools.

This condensed edition of *Walden* brings you some of the most valuable ideas in the book. I hope that you will return to it several times, and read the original itself. Ask yourself: What in Thoreau's memoir calls to you? Your response will point the way toward your most authentic direction in life.

I. Economy

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months.

Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like.

I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives.

I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen with clearer eyes what field they were called to labor in.

Men labor under a mistake. The better part of the man is soon plowed into the soil for compost. By a seeming fate, commonly called necessity, they are employed, as it says in an old book, laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal.

Most men, even in this comparatively free country, through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with the factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them. Their fingers, from excessive toil, are too clumsy and tremble too much for that. He has no time to be anything but a machine. How can he remember well his ignorance—which his growth requires—who has so often to use his knowledge?

The masses of men lead lives of quiet desperation.

When we consider what, to use the words of the catechism, is the chief end of man, and what are the true necessities and means of life, it appears as if men had deliberately chosen the common mode of living because they preferred it to any other. Yet they honestly think there is no choice left.

One farmer says to me, "You cannot live on vegetable food solely, for it furnishes nothing to make bones with;" and so he religiously devotes a part of his day to supplying his system with the raw material of bones; walking all the while he talks behind his oxen, which, with vegetable-made bones, jerk him and his lumbering plough along in spite of every obstacle. Some things are really necessities of life in some circles, the most helpless and diseased, which in others are luxuries merely, and in others still are entirely unknown.

We might try our lives by a thousand simple tests.

The greater part of what my neighbors call good I believe in my soul to be bad, and if I repent of anything, it is very likely to be my good behavior. What demon possessed me that I behaved so well? You may say the wisest thing you can, old man,—you who have lived seventy years, not without honor of a kind,—I hear an irresistible voice which invites me away from all that. One generation abandons the enterprises of another like stranded vessels.

I think that we may safely trust a good deal more than we do. We may waive just so much care of ourselves as we honestly bestow elsewhere. Nature is as well adapted to our weakness as to our strength. The incessant anxiety and strain of some is a well nigh incurable form of disease. We are made to exaggerate the importance of what work we do; and yet how much is not done by us! or, what if we had been taken sick?

Let us consider for a moment what most of the trouble and anxiety which I have referred to is about, and how much it is necessary that we be troubled, or, at least, careful. It would be some advantage to live a primitive and frontier life, though in the midst of an outward civilization, if only to learn what are the gross necessities of life and what methods have been taken to obtain them.

The improvements of ages have had but little influence on the essential laws of man's existence; as our skeletons, probably, are not to be distinguished from those of our ancestors.

The necessities of life for man in this climate may, accurately enough, be distributed under the several heads of Food, Shelter, Clothing, and Fuel; for not till we have secured these are we prepared to entertain the true problems of life with freedom and a prospect of success.

Most of the luxuries, and many of the so called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. With respect to luxuries and comforts, the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meagre life. None can be an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage ground of what we should call voluntary poverty.

There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically. The success of great scholars and thinkers is commonly a courtier-like success, not kingly, not manly. They make shift to live merely by conformity, practically as their fathers did, and are in no sense the progenitors of a nobler race of men.

A man who has at length found something to do will not need to get a new suit to do it in; for him the old will do, that has lain dusty in the garret for an indeterminate period. Old shoes will serve a hero longer than they have served his valet,—if a hero ever has a valet,—bare feet are older than shoes, and he can make them do. Only they who go to soirées and legislative halls must have new coats, coats to change as often as the man changes in them. But if my jacket and trousers, my hat and shoes, are fit to worship God in, they will do; will they not?

When the farmer has got his house, he may not be the richer but the poorer for it, and it be the house that has got him.

Most men appear never to have considered what a house is, and are actually though needlessly poor all their lives because they think that they must have such a one as their neighbors have. It is possible to invent a house still more convenient and luxurious than we have, which yet all would admit that man could not afford to pay for. Shall we always study to obtain more of these things, and not sometimes to be content with less? Shall the respectable citizen thus gravely teach, by precept and example, the necessity of the young man's providing a certain number of superfluous

glow-shoes, and umbrellas, and empty guest chambers for empty guests, before he dies? Why should not our furniture be as simple as the Arab's or the Indian's? When I think of the benefactors of the race, whom we have apotheosized as messengers from heaven, bearers of divine gifts to man, I do not see in my mind any retinue at their heels, any car-load of fashionable furniture.

The best works of art are the expression of man's struggle to free himself.

When I consider how our houses are built and paid for, or not paid for, and their internal economy managed and sustained, I wonder that the floor does not give way under the visitor while he is admiring the gewgaws upon the mantel-piece, and let him through into the cellar, to some solid and honest though earthy foundation. I cannot but perceive that this so called rich and refined life is a thing jumped at, and I do not get on in the enjoyment of the fine arts which adorn it. The first question which I am tempted to put to the proprietor of such great impropriety is, Who bolsters you? Are you one of the ninety-seven who fail, or of the three who succeed? Answer me these questions, and then perhaps I may look at your bawbles and find them ornamental. The cart before the horse is neither beautiful nor useful. Before we can adorn our houses with beautiful objects the walls must be stripped, and our lives must be stripped, and beautiful housekeeping and beautiful living be laid for a foundation: now, a taste for the beautiful is most cultivated out of doors, where there is no house and no housekeeper.

Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond, nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall, arrowy white pines, still in their youth, for timber. It is difficult to begin without borrowing, but perhaps it is the most generous course thus to permit your fellow-men to have an interest in your enterprise. The owner of the axe, as he released his hold on it, said that it was the apple of his eye; but I returned it sharper than I received it. It was a pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with pine woods, through which I looked out on the pond.

My days in the woods were not very long ones; yet I usually carried my dinner of bread and butter, and read the newspaper in which it was wrapped, at noon, sitting amid the green pine boughs which I had cut off, and to my

bread was imparted some of their fragrance, for my hands were covered with a thick coat of pitch. Before I had done I was more the friend than the foe of the pine tree, though I had cut down some of them, having become better acquainted with it. Sometimes a rambler in the wood was attracted by the sound of my axe, and we chatted pleasantly over the chips which I had made.

By the middle of April, for I made no haste in my work, but rather made the most of it, my house was framed and ready for the raising. The roof was the soundest part, though a good deal warped and made brittle by the sun. There was a stove, a bed, and a space to sit, an infant in the house where it was born, a silk parasol, giltframed looking-glass, and a patent new coffee-mill bailed to an oak sapling, all told.

I dug my cellar in the side of a hill sloping to the south, where a woodchuck had formerly dug his burrow, down through sumach and blackberry roots, and the lowest stain of vegetation, six feet square by seven deep, to a fine sand where potatoes would not freeze in any winter. The sides were left shelving, and not stoned.

In those days, when my hands were much employed, I read but little, but the least scraps of paper which lay on the ground, my holder, or tablecloth, afforded me as much entertainment, in fact answered the same purpose as the Iliad.

Before I finished my house, wishing to earn ten or twelve dollars by some honest and agreeable method, in order to meet my unusual expenses, I planted about two acres and a half of light and sandy soil near it chiefly with beans, but also a small part with potatoes, corn, peas, and turnips. The whole lot contains eleven acres, mostly growing up to pines and hickories, and was sold the preceding season for eight dollars and eight cents an acre. I put no manure whatever on this land, not being the owner, but merely a squatter, and not expecting to cultivate so much again, and I did not quite hoe it all once. I got out several cords of stumps in ploughing, which supplied me with fuel for a long time, and left small circles of virgin mould, easily distinguishable through the summer by the greater luxuriance of the beans there. The dead and for the most part unmerchantable wood behind my house, and the driftwood from the pond, have supplied the remainder of my fuel. I was obliged to hire a team and a man for the ploughing, though I held the plough myself.

I was more independent than any farmer in Concord, for I was not anchored to a house or farm, but could follow the bent of my genius, which is a very crooked one, every moment. Beside being better off than they already, if my house had been burned or my crops had failed, I should have been nearly as well off as before.

I am wont to think that men are not so much the keepers of herds as herds are the keepers of men, the former are so much the freer. Men and oxen exchange work; but if we consider necessary work only, the oxen will be seen to have greatly the advantage, their farm is so much the larger. Man does some of his part of the exchange work in his six weeks of haying, and it is no boy's play. Certainly no nation that lived simply in all respects, that is, no nation of philosophers, would commit so great a blunder as to use the labor of animals. True, there never was and is not likely soon to be a nation of philosophers, nor am I certain it is desirable that there should be. However, I should never have broken a horse or bull and taken him to board for any work he might do for me, for fear I should become a horse-man or a herds-man merely.

I learned from my two years' experience that it would cost incredibly little trouble to obtain one's necessary food, even in this latitude; that a man may use as simple a diet as the animals, and yet retain health and strength. I have made a satisfactory dinner, satisfactory on several accounts, simply off a dish of purslane which I gathered in my cornfield, boiled and salted.

Bread I at first made of pure Indian meal and salt, genuine hoe-cakes, which I baked before my fire out of doors on a shingle or the end of a stick of timber sawed off in building my house; but it was wont to get smoked and to have a piny flavor. I tried flour also; but have at last found a mixture of rye and Indian meal most convenient and agreeable. In cold weather it was no little amusement to bake several small loaves of this in succession, tending and turning them as carefully as an Egyptian his hatching eggs. They were a real cereal fruit which I ripened, and they had to my senses a fragrance like that of other noble fruits, which I kept in as long as possible by wrapping them in cloths. I made a study of the ancient and indispensable art of bread-making, consulting such authorities as offered, going back to the primitive days and first invention of the unleavened kind, when from the wildness of nuts and meats men first reached the mildness and refinement of this diet, and travelling gradually down in my studies through that

accidental souring of the dough which, it is supposed, taught the leavening process, and through the various fermentations thereafter, till I came to “good, sweet, wholesome bread,” the staff of life.

There is a certain class of unbelievers who sometimes ask me such questions as, if I think that I can live on vegetable food alone; and to strike at the root of the matter at once,—for the root is faith,—I am accustomed to answer such, that I can live on board nails. If they cannot understand that, they cannot understand much that I have to say. For my part, I am glad to hear of experiments of this kind being tried; as that a young man tried for a fortnight to live on hard, raw corn on the ear, using his teeth for all mortar. The squirrel tribe tried the same and succeeded. The human race is interested in these experiments, though a few old women who are incapacitated for them, or who own their thirds in mills, may be alarmed.

My furniture, part of which I made myself, and the rest cost me nothing of which I have not rendered an account, consisted of a bed, a table, a desk, three chairs, a looking-glass three inches in diameter, a pair of tongs and andirons, a kettle, a skillet, and a frying-pan, a dipper, a wash-bowl, two knives and forks, three plates, one cup, one spoon, a jug for oil, a jug for molasses, and a japanned lamp.

I would observe, by the way, that it costs me nothing for curtains, for I have no gazers to shut out but the sun and moon, and I am willing that they should look in. The moon will not sour milk nor taint meat of mine, nor will the sun injure my furniture or fade my carpet, and if he is sometimes too warm a friend, I find it still better economy to retreat behind some curtain which nature has provided, than to add a single item to the details of housekeeping. A lady once offered me a mat, but as I had no room to spare within the house, nor time to spare within or without to shake it, I declined it, preferring to wipe my feet on the sod before my door. It is best to avoid the beginnings of evil.

For more than five years I maintained myself thus solely by the labor of my hands, and I found, that by working about six weeks in a year, I could meet all the expenses of living. The whole of my winters, as well as most of my summers, I had free and clear for study.

As I preferred some things to others, and especially valued my freedom, as I could fare hard and yet succeed well, I did not wish to spend my time in

earning rich carpets or other fine furniture, or delicate cookery, or a house in the Grecian or the Gothic style just yet.

In short, I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely.

One young man of my acquaintance, who has inherited some acres, told me that he thought he should live as I did, *if he had the means*. I would not have any one adopt *my* mode of living on any account; for, beside that before he has fairly learned it I may have found out another for myself, I desire that there may be as many different persons in the world as possible; but I would have each one be very careful to find out and pursue *his own* way, and not his father's or his mother's or his neighbor's instead. The youth may build or plant or sail, only let him not be hindered from doing that which he tells me he would like to do.

Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me, to save the universe from annihilation; and I believe that a like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere is all that now preserves it. But I would not stand between any man and his genius; and to him who does this work, which I decline, with his whole heart and soul and life, I would say, Persevere, even if the world call it doing evil, as it is most likely they will.

II. Where I Lived, and What I Lived For

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on IndependenceDay, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited the year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth every where.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal

conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the north-west, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of interverting water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but dry land.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub-oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose, stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara, when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of king Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The Vedas said, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in time. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry, —determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream?

III. Reading

The heroic books, even if printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times; and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and valor and generosity we have. The modern cheap and fertile press, with all its translations, has done little to bring us nearer to the heroic writers of antiquity. They seem as solitary, and the letter in which they are printed as rare and curious, as ever. It is worth the expense of youthful days and costly hours, if you learn only some words of an ancient language, which are raised out of the trivialness of the street, to be perpetual suggestions and provocations. It is not in vain that the farmer remembers and repeats the few Latin words which he has heard. Men sometimes speak as if the study of the classics would at length make way for more modern and practical studies; but the adventurous student will always study classics, in whatever language they may be written and however ancient they may be. For what are the classics but the noblest recorded thoughts of man? They are the only oracles which are not decayed, and there are such answers to the most modern inquiry in them as Delphi and Dodona never gave. We might as well omit to study Nature because she is old. To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem.

No wonder that Alexander carried the Iliad with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. A written word is the choicest of relics. It is something at once more intimate with us and more universal than any other work of art. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. It may be translated into every language, and not only be read but actually breathed from all human lips;—not be represented on canvas or in marble only, but be carved out of the breath of life itself. The symbol of an ancient man's thought becomes a modern man's speech.

IV. Sounds

I did not read books the first summer; I hoed beans. Nay, I often did better than this. There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hands. I love a broad margin to my life. Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a revery, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sing around or flitted noiseless through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller's wagon on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time.

The Fitchburg Railroad touches the pond about a hundred rods south of where I dwell. I usually go to the village along its causeway, and am, as it were, related to society by this link. The men on the freight trains, who go over the whole length of the road, bow to me as to an old acquaintance, they pass me so often, and apparently they take me for an employee; and so I am. I too would fain be a track-repairer somewhere in the orbit of the earth.

I watch the passage of the morning cars with the same feeling that I do the rising of the sun, which is hardly more regular. Their train of clouds stretching far behind and rising higher and higher, going to heaven while the cars are going to Boston, conceals the sun for a minute and casts my distant field into the shade, a celestial train beside which the petty train of cars which hugs the earth is but the barb of the spear.

What recommends commerce to me is its enterprise and bravery. It does not clasp its hands and pray to Jupiter. I see these men every day go about their business with more or less courage and content, doing more even than they suspect, and perchance better employed than they could have consciously devised. I am less affected by their heroism who stood up for half an hour in the front line at Buena Vista, than by the steady and cheerful valor of the men who inhabit the snow-plough for their winter quarters;

who have not merely the three-o'clock in the morning courage, which Bonaparte thought was the rarest, but whose courage does not go to rest so early, who go to sleep only when the storm sleeps or the sinews of their iron steed are frozen.

Commerce is unexpectedly confident and serene, alert, adventurous, and unwearied. It is very natural in its methods withal, far more so than many fantastic enterprises and sentimental experiments, and hence its singular success. I am refreshed and expanded when the freight train rattles past me, and I smell the stores which go dispensing their odors all the way from Long Wharf to Lake Champlain, reminding me of foreign parts, of coral reefs, and Indian oceans, and tropical climes, and the extent of the globe. I feel more like a citizen of the world at the sight of the palm-leaf which will cover so many flaxen New England heads the next summer, the Manilla hemp and cocoa-nut husks, the old junk, gunny bags, scrap iron, and rusty nails.

Now that the cars are gone by and all the restless world with them, and the fishes in the pond no longer feel their rumbling, I am more alone than ever. For the rest of the long afternoon, perhaps, my meditations are interrupted only by the faint rattle of a carriage or team along the distant highway.

V. Solitude

This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing special to attract me, all the elements are unusually congenial to me. The bullfrogs trump to usher in the night, and the note of the whippoorwill is borne on the rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy with the fluttering alder and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled. These small waves raised by the evening wind are as remote from storm as the smooth reflecting surface. Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and roars in the wood, the waves still dash, and some creatures lull the rest with their notes. The repose is never complete. The wildest animals do not repose, but seek their prey now; the fox, and skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and woods without fear. They are Nature's watchmen,—links which connect the days of animated life.

When I return to my house I find that visitors have been there and left their cards, either a bunch of flowers, or a wreath of evergreen, or a name in pencil on a yellow walnut leaf or a chip. They who come rarely to the woods take some little piece of the forest into their hands to play with by the way, which they leave, either intentionally or accidentally. One has peeled a willow wand, woven it into a ring, and dropped it on my table. I could always tell if visitors had called in my absence, either by the bended twigs or grass, or the print of their shoes, and generally of what sex or age or quality they were by some slight trace left, as a flower dropped, or a bunch of grass plucked and thrown away, even as far off as the railroad, half a mile distant, or by the lingering odor of a cigar or pipe. Nay, I was frequently notified of the passage of a traveller along the highway sixty rods off by the scent of his pipe.

Yet I experienced sometimes that the most sweet and tender, the most innocent and encouraging society may be found in any natural object, even for the poor misanthrope and most melancholy man. There can be no very black melancholy to him who lives in the midst of Nature and has his senses still. There was never yet such a storm but it was Æolian music to a healthy and innocent ear. Nothing can rightly compel a simple and brave man to a vulgar sadness. While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons I trust that nothing can make life a burden to me. The gentle rain which waters my beans and keeps me in the house to-day is not drear and melancholy, but good for me too. Though it prevents my hoeing them, it is of far more worth than my hoeing. If it should continue so long as to cause the seeds to rot in the ground and destroy the potatoes in the low lands, it would still be good for the grass on the uplands, and, being good for the grass, it would be good for me. Sometimes, when I compare myself with other men, it seems as if I were more favored by the gods than they, beyond any deserts that I am conscious of; as if I had a warrant and surety at their hands which my fellows have not, and were especially guided and guarded. I do not flatter myself, but if it be possible they flatter me. I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed by a sense of solitude, but once, and that was a few weeks after I came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted if the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed, I was suddenly sensible of such sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighborhood insignificant, and I have never thought of them since.

Some of my pleasantest hours were during the long rain storms in the spring or fall, which confined me to the house for the afternoon as well as the forenoon, soothed by their ceaseless roar and pelting; when an early twilight ushered in a long evening in which many thoughts had time to take root and unfold themselves. In those driving north-east rains which tried the village houses so, when the maids stood ready with mop and pail in front entries to keep the deluge out, I sat behind my door in my little house,

which was all entry, and thoroughly enjoyed its protection. In one heavy thunder shower the lightning struck a large pitch-pine across the pond, making a very conspicuous and perfectly regular spiral groove from top to bottom, an inch or more deep, and four or five inches wide, as you would groove a walking-stick. I passed it again the other day, and was struck with awe on looking up and beholding that mark, now more distinct than ever, where a terrific and resistless bolt came down out of the harmless sky eight years ago. Men frequently say to me, "I should think you would feel lonesome down there, and want to be nearer to folks, rainy and snowy days and nights especially." I am tempted to reply to such,—This whole earth which we inhabit is but a point in space. How far apart, think you, dwell the two most distant inhabitants of yonder star, the breadth of whose disk cannot be appreciated by our instruments? Why should I feel lonely? is not our planet in the Milky Way? This which you put seems to me not to be the most important question. What sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellows and makes him solitary? I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another.

I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows.

Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other.

VI. Visitors

I think that I love society as much as most, and am ready enough to fasten myself like a bloodsucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way. I am naturally no hermit, but might possibly sit out the sturdiest frequenter of the bar-room, if my business called me thither.

I had three chairs in my house; one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the third chair for them all, but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is surprising how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had twenty-five or thirty souls, with their bodies, at once under my roof, and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one another. Many of our houses, both public and private, with their almost innumerable apartments, their huge halls and their cellars for the storage of wines and other munitions of peace, appear to me extravagantly large for their inhabitants. They are so vast and magnificent that the latter seem to be only vermin which infest them.

Many a traveller came out of his way to see me and the inside of my house, and, as an excuse for calling, asked for a glass of water. I told them that I drank at the pond, and pointed thither, offering to lend them a dipper. Far off as I lived, I was not exempted from the annual visitation which occurs, methinks, about the first of April, when every body is on the move; and I had my share of good luck, though there were some curious specimens among my visitors. Half-witted men from the almshouse and elsewhere came to see me; but I endeavored to make them exercise all the wit they had, and make their confessions to me; in such cases making wit the theme of our conversation; and so was compensated. Indeed, I found some of them to be wiser than the so called overseers of the poor and selectmen of the town, and thought it was time that the tables were turned. With respect to wit, I learned that there was not much difference between the half and the whole. One day, in particular, an inoffensive, simple-

minded pauper, whom with others I had often seen used as fencing stuff, standing or sitting on a bushel in the fields to keep cattle and himself from straying, visited me, and expressed a wish to live as I did. He told me, with the utmost simplicity and truth, quite superior, or rather inferior, to any thing that is called humility, that he was “deficient in intellect.” These were his words. The Lord had made him so, yet he supposed the Lord cared as much for him as for another. “I have always been so,” said he, “from my childhood; I never had much mind; I was not like other children; I am weak in the head. It was the Lord’s will, I suppose.” And there he was to prove the truth of his words. He was a metaphysical puzzle to me. I have rarely met a fellow-man on such promising ground,—it was so simple and sincere and so true all that he said. And, true enough, in proportion as he appeared to humble himself was he exalted. I did not know at first but it was the result of a wise policy. It seemed that from such a basis of truth and frankness as the poor weak-headed pauper had laid, our intercourse might go forward to something better than the intercourse of sages.

Objects of charity are not guests. Men who did not know when their visit had terminated, though I went about my business again, answering them from greater and greater remoteness.

VII. The Bean-Field

Meanwhile my beans, the length of whose rows, added together, was seven miles already planted, were impatient to be hoed, for the earliest had grown considerably before the latest were in the ground; indeed they were not easily to be put off. What was the meaning of this so steady and self-respecting, this small Herculean labor, I knew not. I came to love my rows, my beans, though so many more than I wanted. They attached me to the earth.

Early in the morning I worked barefooted, dabbling like a plastic artist in the dewy and crumbling sand, but later in the day the sun blistered my feet. There the sun lighted me to hoe beans, pacing slowly backward and forward over that yellow gravelly upland, between the long green rows, fifteen rods, the one end terminating in a shrub oak copse where I could rest in the shade, the other in a blackberry field where the green berries deepened their tints by the time I had made another bout. Removing the weeds, putting fresh soil about the bean stems, and encouraging this weed which I had sown, making the yellow soil express its summer thought in bean leaves and blossoms rather than in wormwood and piper and millet grass, making the earth say beans instead of grass,—this was my daily work.

VIII. The Village

Every day or two I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on there, circulating either from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper, and which, taken in homœopathic doses, was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds and squirrels, so I walked in the village to see the men and boys; instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle. In one direction from my house there was a colony of muskrats in the river meadows; under the grove of elms and buttonwoods in the other horizon was a village of busy men, as curious to me as if they had been prairie dogs, each sitting at the mouth of its burrow, or running over to a neighbor's to gossip. I went there frequently to observe their habits. The village appeared to me a great news room; and on one side, to support it, as once at Redding & Company's on State Street, they kept nuts and raisins, or salt and meal and other groceries. Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity, that is, the news, and such sound digestive organs, that they can sit forever in public avenues without stirring, and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds, or as if inhaling ether, it only producing numbness and insensibility to pain,—otherwise it would often be painful to hear,—without affecting the consciousness.

It was very pleasant, when I stayed late in town, to launch myself into the night, especially if it was dark and tempestuous, and set sail from some bright village parlor or lecture room, with a bag of rye or Indian meal upon my shoulder, for my snug harbor in the woods, having made all tight without and withdrawn under hatches with a merry crew of thoughts, leaving only my outer man at the helm, or even tying up the helm when it was plain sailing. I had many a genial thought by the cabin fire "as I sailed." I was never cast away nor distressed in any weather, though I

encountered some severe storms. It is darker in the woods, even in common nights, than most suppose.

One afternoon, near the end of the first summer, when I went to the village to get a shoe from the cobbler's, I was seized and put into jail, because, as I have elsewhere related, I did not pay a tax to, or recognize the authority of, the state which buys and sells men, women, and children, like cattle at the door of its senate-house. I had gone down to the woods for other purposes. But, wherever a man goes, men will pursue and paw him with their dirty institutions, and, if they can, constrain him to belong to their desperate odd-fellow society. It is true, I might have resisted forcibly with more or less effect, might have run "amok" against society; but I preferred that society should run "amok" against me, it being the desperate party. However, I was released the next day, obtained my mended shoe, and returned to the woods in season to get my dinner of huckleberries on Fair-Haven Hill. I was never molested by any person but those who represented the state. I had no lock nor bolt but for the desk which held my papers, not even a nail to put over my latch or windows. I never fastened my door night or day, though I was to be absent several days; not even when the next fall I spent a fortnight in the woods of Maine. And yet my house was more respected than if it had been surrounded by a file of soldiers. The tired rambler could rest and warm himself by my fire, the literary amuse himself with the few books on my table, or the curious, by opening my closet door, see what was left of my dinner, and what prospect I had of a supper. Yet, though many people of every class came this way to the pond, I suffered no serious inconvenience from these sources, and I never missed anything but one small book, a volume of Homer, which perhaps was improperly gilded, and this I trust a soldier of our camp has found by this time. I am convinced, that if all men were to live as simply as I then did, thieving and robbery would be unknown. These take place only in communities where some have got more than is sufficient while others have not enough.

IX. The Ponds

Sometimes, after staying in a village parlor till the family had all retired, I have returned to the woods, and, partly with a view to the next day's dinner, spent the hours of midnight fishing from a boat by moonlight, serenaded by owls and foxes, and hearing, from time to time, the creaking note of some unknown bird close at hand.

The scenery of Walden is on a humble scale, and, though very beautiful, does not approach to grandeur, nor can it much concern one who has not long frequented it or lived by its shore; yet this pond is so remarkable for its depth and purity as to merit a particular description. It is a clear and deep green well, half a mile long and a mile and three quarters in circumference, and contains about sixty-one and a half acres; a perennial spring in the midst of pine and oak woods, without any visible inlet or outlet except by the clouds and evaporation. The surrounding hills rise abruptly from the water to the height of forty to eighty feet, though on the south-east and east they attain to about one hundred and one hundred and fifty feet respectively, within a quarter and a third of a mile. They are exclusively woodland. All our Concord waters have two colors at least; one when viewed at a distance, and another, more proper, close at hand.

The water is so transparent that the bottom can easily be discerned at the depth of twenty-five or thirty feet. Paddling over it, you may see, many feet beneath the surface the schools of perch and shiners, perhaps only an inch long, yet the former easily distinguished by their transverse bars, and you think that they must be ascetic fish that find a subsistence there. Once, in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I tossed my axe back on to the ice, but, as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid four or five rods directly into one of the holes, where the water was twenty-five feet deep. Out of curiosity, I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, until I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head, with its helve erect and

gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond; and there it might have stood erect and swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off, if I had not disturbed it. Making another hole directly over it with an ice chisel which I had, and cutting down the longest birch which I could find in the neighborhood with my knife, I made a slip-noose, which I attached to its end, and, letting it down carefully, passed it over the knob of the handle, and drew it by a line along the birch, and so pulled the axe out again.

X. Baker Farm

I set out one afternoon to go a-fishing to Fair-Haven, through the woods, to eke out my scanty fare of vegetables. My way led through Pleasant Meadow, an adjunct of the Baker Farm.

I thought of living there before I went to Walden. I “hooked” the apples, leaped the brook, and scared the musquash and the trout. It was one of those afternoons which seem indefinitely long before one, in which many events may happen, a large portion of our natural life, though it was already half spent when I started. By the way there came up a shower, which compelled me to stand half an hour under a pine, piling boughs over my head, and wearing my handkerchief for a shed; and when at length I had made one cast over the pickerel-weed, standing up to my middle in water, I found myself suddenly in the shadow of a cloud, and the thunder began to rumble with such emphasis that I could do no more than listen to it. The gods must be proud, thought I, with such forked flashes to rout a poor unarmed fisherman. So I made haste for shelter to the nearest hut, which stood half a mile from any road, but so much the nearer to the pond, and had long been uninhabited.

My Good Genius seemed to say,—Go fish and hunt far and wide day by day,—farther and wider,—and rest thee by many brooks and hearth-sides without misgiving. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Rise free from care before the dawn, and seek adventures. Let the noon find thee by other lakes, and the night overtake thee everywhere at home. There are no larger fields than these, no worthier games than may here be played. Grow wild according to thy nature, like these sedges and brakes, which will never become English hay. Let the thunder rumble; what if it threaten ruin to farmers’ crops? that is not its errand to thee. Take shelter under the cloud, while they flee to carts and sheds. Let not to get a living be thy trade, but thy sport. Enjoy the land, but own it not. Through want of enterprise and

faith men are where they are, buying and selling, and spending their lives like serfs.

XI. Higher Laws

As I came home through the woods with my string of fish, trailing my pole, it being now quite dark, I caught a glimpse of a woodchuck stealing across my path, and felt a strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly tempted to seize and devour him raw; not that I was hungry then, except for that wildness which he represented. Once or twice, however, while I lived at the pond, I found myself ranging the woods, like a half-starved hound, with a strange abandonment, seeking some kind of venison which I might devour, and no morsel could have been too savage for me. The wildest scenes had become unaccountably familiar. I found in myself, and still find, an instinct toward a higher, or, as it is named, spiritual life, as do most men, and another toward a primitive rank and savage one, and I reverence them both. I love the wild not less than the good. The wildness and adventure that are in fishing still recommended it to me. I like sometimes to take rank hold on life and spend my day more as the animals do. Perhaps I have owed to this employment and to hunting, when quite young, my closest acquaintance with Nature. They early introduce us to and detain us in scenery with which otherwise, at that age, we should have little acquaintance. Fishermen, hunters, woodchoppers, and others, spending their lives in the fields and woods, in a peculiar sense a part of Nature themselves, are often in a more favorable mood for observing her, in the intervals of their pursuits, than philosophers or poets even, who approach her with expectation. She is not afraid to exhibit herself to them. The traveller on the prairie is naturally a hunter, on the head waters of the Missouri and Columbia a trapper, and at the Falls of St. Mary a fisherman. He who is only a traveller learns things at second-hand and by the halves, and is poor authority. We are most interested when science reports what those men already know practically or instinctively, for that alone is a true humanity, or account of human experience.

I have found repeatedly, of late years, that I cannot fish without falling a little in self-respect. I have tried it again and again. I have skill at it, and, like many of my fellows, a certain instinct for it, which revives from time to time, but always when I have done I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. I think that I do not mistake. It is a faint intimation, yet so are the first streaks of morning. There is unquestionably this instinct in me which belongs to the lower orders of creation; yet with every year I am less a fisherman, though without more humanity or even wisdom; at present I am no fisherman at all. But I see that if I were to live in a wilderness I should again be tempted to become a fisher and hunter in earnest. Beside, there is something essentially unclean about this diet and all flesh, and I began to see where housework commences, and whence the endeavor, which costs so much, to wear a tidy and respectable appearance each day, to keep the house sweet and free from all ill odors and sights. Having been my own butcher and scullion and cook, as well as the gentleman for whom the dishes were served up, I can speak from an unusually complete experience. The practical objection to animal food in my case was its uncleanness; and, besides, when I had caught and cleaned and cooked and eaten my fish, they seemed not to have fed me essentially. It was insignificant and unnecessary, and cost more than it came to. A little bread or a few potatoes would have done as well, with less trouble and filth. Like many of my contemporaries, I had rarely for many years used animal food, or tea, or coffee, &c.; not so much because of any ill effects which I had traced to them, as because they were not agreeable to my imagination. The repugnance to animal food is not the effect of experience, but is an instinct. It appeared more beautiful to live low and fare hard in many respects; and though I never did so, I went far enough to please my imagination. I believe that every man who has ever been earnest to preserve his higher or poetic faculties in the best condition has been particularly inclined to abstain from animal food, and from much food of any kind.

It is hard to provide and cook so simple and clean a diet as will not offend the imagination; but this, I think, is to be fed when we feed the body; they should both sit down at the same table. Yet perhaps this may be done. The fruits eaten temperately need not make us ashamed of our appetites, nor interrupt the worthiest pursuits. But put an extra condiment into your dish, and it will poison you. It is not worth the while to live by rich cookery.

Most men would feel shame if caught preparing with their own hands precisely such a dinner, whether of animal or vegetable food, as is every day prepared for them by others. Yet till this is otherwise we are not civilized, and, if gentlemen and ladies, are not true men and women. This certainly suggests what change is to be made. It may be vain to ask why the imagination will not be reconciled to flesh and fat. I am satisfied that it is not. Is it not a reproach that man is a carnivorous animal? True, he can and does live, in a great measure, by preying on other animals; but this is a miserable way,—as any one who will go to snaring rabbits, or slaughtering lambs, may learn,—and he will be regarded as a benefactor of his race who shall teach man to confine himself to a more innocent and wholesome diet. Whatever my own practice may be, I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized.

XII. House-Warming

When I came to build my chimney I studied masonry. My bricks being second-hand ones required to be cleaned with a trowel, so that I learned more than usual of the qualities of bricks and trowels. The mortar on them was fifty years old, and was said to be still growing harder; but this is one of those sayings which men love to repeat whether they are true or not. Such sayings themselves grow harder and adhere more firmly with age, and it would take many blows with a trowel to clean an old wiseacre of them. Many of the villages of Mesopotamia are built of second-hand bricks of a very good quality, obtained from the ruins of Babylon, and the cement on them is older and probably harder still. However that may be, I was struck by the peculiar toughness of the steel which bore so many violent blows without being worn out. As my bricks had been in a chimney before, though I did not read the name of Nebuchadnezzar on them, I picked out as many fire-place bricks as I could find, to save work and waste, and I filled the spaces between the bricks about the fire-place with stones from the pond shore, and also made my mortar with the white sand from the same place. I lingered most about the fireplace, as the most vital part of the house.

The north wind had already begun to cool the pond, though it took many weeks of steady blowing to accomplish it, it is so deep. When I began to have a fire at evening, before I plastered my house, the chimney carried smoke particularly well, because of the numerous chinks between the boards. Yet I passed some cheerful evenings in that cool and airy apartment, surrounded by the rough brown boards full of knots, and rafters with the bark on high overhead. My house never pleased my eye so much after it was plastered, though I was obliged to confess that it was more comfortable.

The pond had in the mean while skimmed over in the shadiest and shallowest coves, some days or even weeks before the general freezing. The first ice is especially interesting and perfect, being hard, dark, and

transparent, and affords the best opportunity that ever offers for examining the bottom where it is shallow; for you can lie at your length on ice only an inch thick, like a skater insect on the surface of the water, and study the bottom at your leisure, only two or three inches distant, like a picture behind a glass.

At length the winter set in in good earnest, just as I had finished plastering, and the wind began to howl around the house as if it had not had permission to do so till then. Night after night the geese came lumbering in in the dark with a clangor and a whistling of wings, even after the ground was covered with snow, some to alight in Walden, and some flying low over the woods toward Fair Haven, bound for Mexico. Several times, when returning from the village at ten or eleven o'clock at night, I heard the tread of a flock of geese, or else ducks, on the dry leaves in the woods by a pond-hole behind my dwelling, where they had come up to feed, and the faint honk or quack of their leader as they hurried off. In 1845 Walden froze entirely over for the first time on the night of the 22d of December.

XIII. Former Inhabitants; and Winter Visitors

I weathered some merry snow storms, and spent some cheerful winter evenings by my fire-side, while the snow whirled wildly without, and even the hooting of the owl was hushed. For many weeks I met no one in my walks but those who came occasionally to cut wood and sled it to the village. The elements, however, abetted me in making a path through the deepest snow in the woods, for when I had once gone through the wind blew the oak leaves into my tracks, where they lodged, and by absorbing the rays of the sun melted the snow, and so not only made a dry bed for my feet, but in the night their dark line was my guide. For human society I was obliged to conjure up the former occupants of these woods. Within the memory of many of my townsmen the road near which my house stands resounded with the laugh and gossip of inhabitants, and the woods which border it were notched and dotted here and there with their little gardens and dwellings, though it was then much more shut in by the forest than now.

At this season I seldom had a visitor. When the snow lay deepest no wanderer ventured near my house for a week or fortnight at a time, but there I lived as snug as a meadow mouse, or as cattle and poultry which are said to have survived for a long time buried in drifts, even without food; or like that early settler's family in the town of Sutton, in this state, whose cottage was completely covered by the great snow of 1717 when he was absent, and an Indian found it only by the hole which the chimney's breath made in the drift, and so relieved the family. But no friendly Indian concerned himself about me; nor needed he, for the master of the house was at home.

XIV. Spring

One attraction in coming to the woods to live was that I should have leisure and opportunity to see the spring come in. The ice in the pond at length begins to be honey-combed, and I can set my heel in it as I walk. Fogs and rains and warmer suns are gradually melting the snow; the days have grown sensibly longer; and I see how I shall get through the winter without adding to my wood-pile, for large fires are no longer necessary. I am on the alert for the first signs of spring, to hear the chance note of some arriving bird, or the striped squirrel's chirp, for his stores must be now nearly exhausted, or see the woodchuck venture out of his winter quarters. On the 13th of March, after I had heard the bluebird, song-sparrow, and red-wing, the ice was still nearly a foot thick.

Every incident connected with the breaking up of the rivers and ponds and the settling of the weather is particularly interesting to us who live in a climate of so great extremes. When the warmer days come, they who dwell near the river hear the ice crack at night with a startling whoop as loud as artillery, as if its icy fetters were rent from end to end, and within a few days see it rapidly going out.

At the approach of spring the red-squirrels got under my house, two at a time, directly under my feet as I sat reading or writing, and kept up the queerest chuckling and chirruping and vocal pirouetting and gurgling sounds that ever were heard; and when I stamped they only chirruped the louder, as if past all fear and respect in their mad pranks, defying humanity to stop them. No you don't—chickaree—chickaree. They were wholly deaf to my arguments, or failed to perceive their force, and fell into a strain of invective that was irresistible.

The first sparrow of spring! The year beginning with younger hope than ever! The faint silvery warblings heard over the partially bare and moist fields from the blue-bird, the song-sparrow, and the red-wing, as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell!

The change from storm and winter to serene and mild weather, from dark and sluggish hours to bright and elastic ones, is a memorable crisis which all things proclaim. It is seemingly instantaneous at last. Suddenly an influx of light filled my house, though the evening was at hand, and the clouds of winter still overhung it, and the eaves were dripping with sleety rain. I looked out the window, and lo! where yesterday was cold gray ice there lay the transparent pond already calm and full of hope as in a summer evening.

A single gentle rain makes the grass many shades greener. So our prospects brighten on the influx of better thoughts. We should be blessed if we lived in the present always, and took advantage of every accident that befell us, like the grass which confesses the influence of the slightest dew that falls on it; and did not spend our time in atoning for the neglect of past opportunities, which we call doing our duty. We loiter in winter while it is already spring. In a pleasant spring morning all men's sins are forgiven. Such a day is a truce to vice. While such a sun holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return. Through our own recovered innocence we discern the innocence of our neighbors.

On the 29th of April, as I was fishing from the bank of the river near the NineAcre-Corner bridge, standing on the quaking grass and willow roots, where the muskrats lurk, I heard a singular rattling sound, somewhat like that of the sticks which boys play with their fingers, when, looking up, I observed a very slight and graceful hawk, like a night-hawk, alternately soaring like a ripple and tumbling a rod or two over and over, showing the underside of its wings, which gleamed like a satin ribbon in the sun, or like the pearly inside of a shell.

Early in May, the oaks, hickories, maples, and other trees, just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond, imparted a brightness like sunshine to the landscape, especially in cloudy days, as if the sun were breaking through mists and shining faintly on the hill-sides here and there.

Thus was my first year's life in the woods completed; and the second year was similar to it. I finally left Walden September 6th, 1847.

CONCLUSION

I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity!

I learned this, at least, by my experiment; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

It is a ridiculous demand which England and America make, that you shall speak so that they can understand you.

Why level downward to our dullest perception always, and praise that as common sense? The commonest sense is the sense of men asleep, which they express by snoring. Sometimes we are inclined to class those who are once-and-a-half-witted with the half-witted, because we appreciate only a third part of their wit. Some would find fault with the morning-red, if they ever got up early enough.

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. It is not important that he should mature as soon as an apple-tree or an oak. Shall he turn his spring into summer?

However mean your life is, meet it and live it; do not shun it and call it hard names. It is not so bad as you are. It looks poorest when you are richest. The faultfinder will find faults even in paradise. Love your life, poor as it is. You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling, glorious hours, even in a poor-house. The setting sun is reflected from the windows of the alms-house as brightly as from the rich man's abode; the snow melts before its door as early in the spring. I do not see but a quiet mind may live as contentedly there, and have as cheering thoughts, as in a palace. Do not trouble yourself much to get new things, whether clothes or friends. Turn the old; return to them. Things do not change; we change. Sell your clothes and keep your thoughts. God will see that you do not want society.

There is an incessant influx of novelty into the world, and yet we tolerate incredible dulness. I need only suggest what kind of sermons are still listened to in the most enlightened countries. There are such words as joy and sorrow, but they are only the burden of a psalm, sung with a nasal twang, while we believe in the ordinary and mean. We think that we can change our clothes only. It is said that the British Empire is very large and respectable, and that the United States are a first-rate power. We do not believe that a tide rises and falls behind every man which can float the British Empire like a chip, if he should ever harbor it in his mind. The government of the world I live in was not framed, like that of Britain, in after-dinner conversations over the wine.

The life in us is like the water in the river. It may rise this year higher than man has ever known it, and flood the parched uplands; even this may be the eventful year, which will drown out all our muskrats.

Who knows what beautiful and winged life, whose egg has been buried for ages under many concentric layers of woodenness in the dead dry life of society, deposited at first in the alburnum of the green and living tree, which has been gradually converted into the semblance of its well-seasoned tomb,—heard perchance gnawing out now for years by the astonished family of man, as they sat round the festive board,—may unexpectedly come forth

from amidst society's most trivial and handselled furniture, to enjoy its perfect summer life at last!

I do not say that John or Jonathan will realize all this; but such is the character of that morrow which mere lapse of time can never make to dawn. The light which puts out our eyes is darkness to us. Only that day dawns to which we are awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in 1817 in Concord, Massachusetts, HENRY DAVID THOREAU was one of America's preeminent naturalists, essayists, critics, memoirists, poets, and philosophers. His 1854 book *Walden* is a classic the world over. By turns considered an anarchist, tax-resister, and mystic, Thoreau was one of the founding voices of Transcendentalism and is also seen as the father of the simple-living movement. He died in 1862 at age 44.

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Mitch Horowitz

MITCH HOROWITZ is a historian of alternative spirituality and one of today's most literate voices of esoterica, mysticism, and the occult. He is among the few occult writers whose work touches the bases of academic scholarship, national journalism, and subculture cred. Mitch is a writer-in-residence at the New York Public Library, lecturer-in-residence at the Philosophical Research Society in Los Angeles, and a PEN Award-winning historian whose books include *Occult America*; *One Simple Idea*; *The Miracle Club*; and *Uncertain Places*. *The Washington Post* says Mitch "treats esoteric ideas and movements with an even-handed intellectual studiousness that is too often lost in today's raised-voice discussions." He has discussed alternative spirituality across the national media and collaborated with Emmy-nominated director Ronni Thomas on the feature documentary *The Kybalion*, shot on location in Egypt. Mitch's books have appeared in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish. China's government has censored his work. Visit him at MitchHorowitz.com