

The Masters Series

As a Man Thinketh

James Allen

Roddy Galbraith & Paul Martinelli

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As A Man Thinketh

Companion Workbook

Stickman productions

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Welcome

Welcome to the Master's Series! The Master's Series is a collection of programs, each of which studies in detail the work of one of the greatest thinkers in history.

We start the series with a look at the classic book *As a Man Thinketh* by James Allen. The book was first published over one hundred years ago in 1902, but it remains in popular demand to this day. It has remained popular for one simple reason, it is great!

As a Man Thinketh is without doubt a masterpiece; a short but concise and highly insightful book that holds powerful secrets to the challenge of successful living – every bit as relevant today as it was when it was first written.

Every page of the great book is packed with timeless wisdom. The book has a whole contains a universal system for successful living.

E What is Empowerment Mentoring?

Complete stand alone
business in a box ..



.. or a component of your
existing business

E Empowerment Mentoring

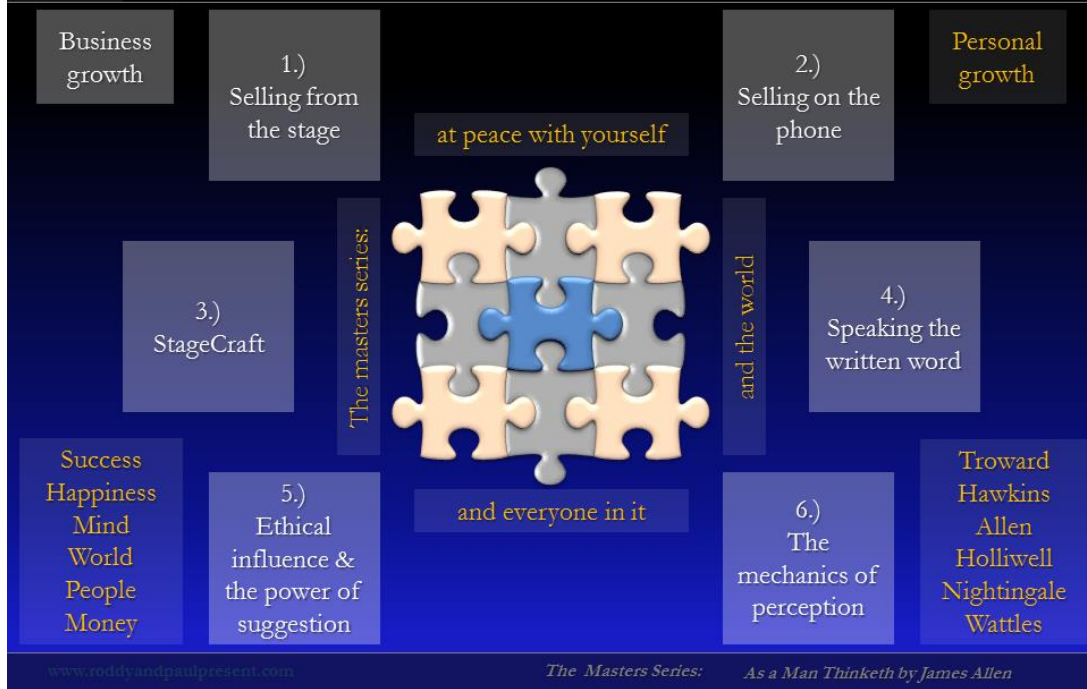


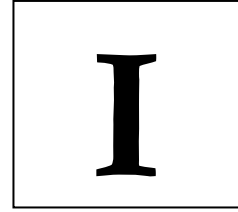
The centre piece of the 'Speaking for Influence' & 'Masters' series

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The Masters Series: As a Man Thinketh by James Allen

S The Speaking for Influence & Masters Series





The 'As a Man Thinketh System'

The more times you read this wonderful little book, the more great wisdom you will find packed within its short pages. As you continue to study that wisdom, a formula for successful living will gradually become apparent to you. One component at a time it will emerge until you can piece all the different bits together into a formula that anyone can follow.

The rich insights in the book apply to every person in every situation. There are no exceptions.

We have distilled down the many steps, spread across every page of every chapter of the book and put them into a simple system. We have then worked from the system back to reference the text from which it was drawn out.

Once you have given the system some thought, that simple awareness will change the way you read the book from now on. You will see the steps of the system spread across the book.

If you systematically apply the formula to one or many areas of your life you will find that you move inexorably closer to what Allen describes as a '**charmed**' life!

- | | |
|--------|------------------------------------|
| Step 1 | Where are you now and why? |
| Step 2 | What do you want .. I mean really? |
| Step 3 | Who's responsibility is it? |
| Step 4 | What is the creative process? |
| Step 5 | What are the Common pitfalls? |
| Step 6 | Can you see it? |
| Step 7 | Letting go in peace |

The labels for the different steps themselves is not where the power in the system lies. The understanding behind each step is what truly makes the difference. James Allen's ability to communicate what the steps are and why they are so important is why this book has been studied by so many people for so many years and why the principles in this book appear in practically every self help or personal development book written since.

1

Step 1 – Where are you now?

“Circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own

These days most of us would be lost without a GPS system wouldn't we? It's true, they are incredibly useful devices, but there are two key pieces of information that the GPS needs in order to function .. without them it is absolutely useless. The first of these is an understanding of where it is starting from.

If we want to move forward in any area of our lives it is absolutely essential that we know where we are.

But unlike a GPS, if we want to move forward in our lives, we need to investigate our reasoning for why we are where we are. Because there is a part of us that is always well intentioned, always purposeful .. but often working in opposition to where we really would like to go if we stopped and thought about it.

Of course there are many different aspects of our lives and our current circumstances and our level of contentedness will probably vary greatly in each area. But the starting point of any journey is to be very clear on where you are starting from .. and why.

Step 1 – Where are you now?

1 *As a man thinketh in his heart so is he*

2 *Circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own*

3 *The soul attracts that which it secretly harbours; that which it loves, and also that which it fears*

4 *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*

5 *All his past experiences, good and bad, were the equitable outworking of his evolving, yet unevolved self*

6 *The circumstances which a man encounters with suffering are the result of his own mental inharmony*

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

8 *Man is a growth by law*

9 *Mind is the master-weaver, both of the inner garment of character and the outer garment of circumstance*

10 *Act is the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruits*

11 *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*

12 *A man is literally what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts*

13 *Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results*

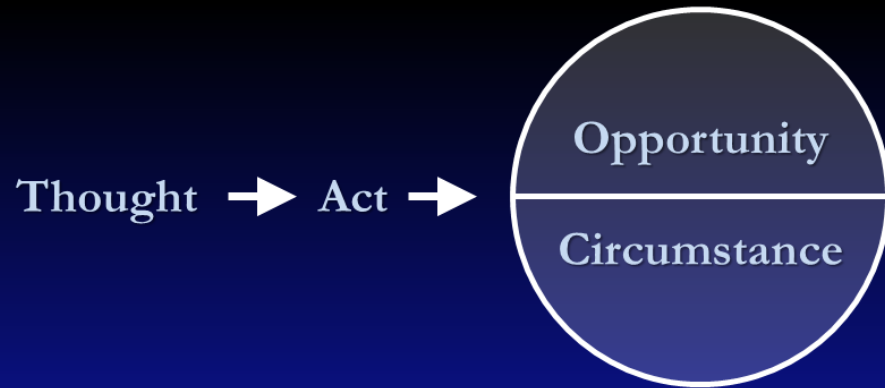
14 *A strong body and a bright, happy, or serene countenance can only result from the free admittance into the mind of thoughts of joy and good will and serenity*

15 *Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; they therefore remain bound.*

1

Act is the blossom of thought ..

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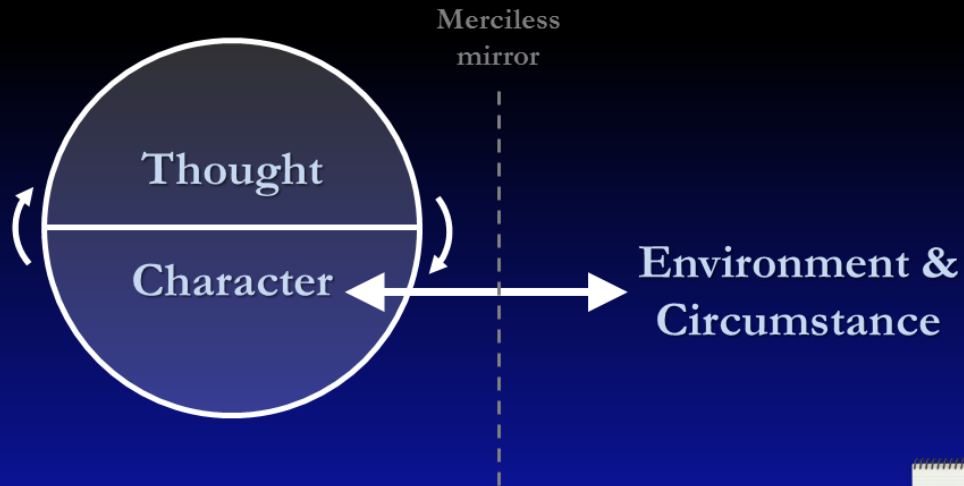
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Act is the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruits

1 Thought and Character are one ..



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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

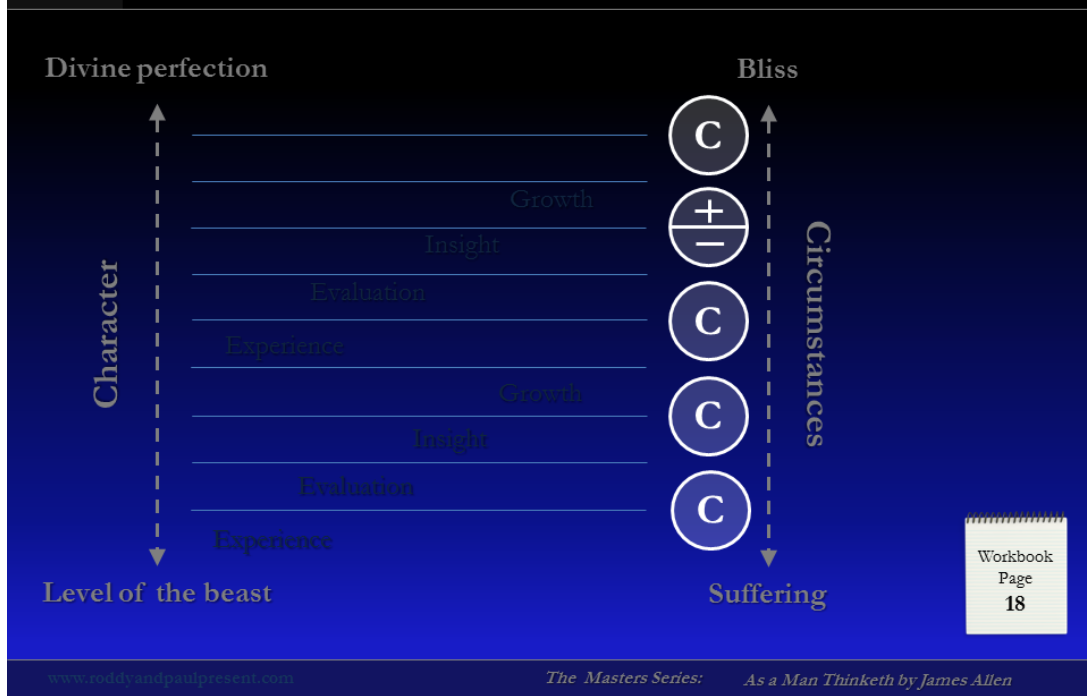
1 Who am I?



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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

1 Grades of character ..



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



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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

Where are you now in the key areas of your life?

Spiritual	Health	Family
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Relationships	Financial	Overall
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

2

Step 2 – What do you want .. I mean really?

“Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment

As we saw in the first step of the system, a GPS cannot function if it does not know where you are starting from. A realistic appraisal of where you are is therefore an essential first step. Even more important though is where do you want to end up? This is the second key piece of information, without which, the GPS is unable to function.

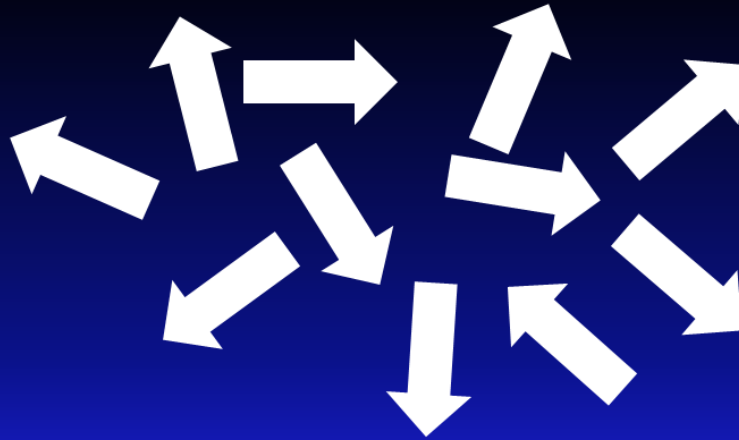
As ridiculous as it at first sounds, most people cannot answer this simple question. How about you? What do you want? Because if you know, there is a very good chance that the As a Man Thinketh system for successful living will be able to show you how to get it. If you do not know though, your chances of getting it are frankly zero. And even if you did stumble across it by accident, your chances of retaining it are also slim to none.

Take time often to think about where you want to be in relation to the key areas of your life. When we are clear on where we want to go, not only does the world appear different to us, but it also seems to act differently towards us. People who know what they want seem to get it!

Purpose introduces order. The more thought you give to this, the more ordered your life will become.

Step 2 – What do you want?

- 16 *Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment*
 Thought allied fearlessly to purpose becomes creative force; he who knows this is ready to become
17 *something higher and stronger than a mere bundle of wavering thoughts and fluctuating*
 sensations
 To put away aimlessness and weakness, and to begin to think with purpose, is to enter the
18 *ranks of those strong ones who only recognize failure as one of the pathways to attainment; who*
 make all conditions serve them
- 19 *A man should conceive of a legitimate purpose in his heart, and set out to accomplish it*
 Those who are not prepared for the apprehension of a great purpose, should fix their thoughts
20 *upon the faultless performance of their duty, no matter how insignificant their task may appear*
 He should make this purpose his supreme duty, and should devote himself to its attainment,
21 *not allowing his thoughts to wander away into ephemeral fancies, longings, and imaginings*
 Even if he fails again and again to accomplish his purpose (as he necessarily must until
22 *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.
 A man is not rightly conditioned until he is a happy, healthy, and prosperous being; and
23 *happiness, health, and prosperity are the result of a harmonious adjustment of the inner with*
 the outer, of the man with his surroundings
 Blessedness and riches are only joined together when the riches are rightly and wisely used; and
24 *the poor man only descends into wretchedness when he regards his lot as a burden unjustly*
 imposed
- 25 *How insignificant mere money-seeking looks in comparison with a serene life*



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Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment



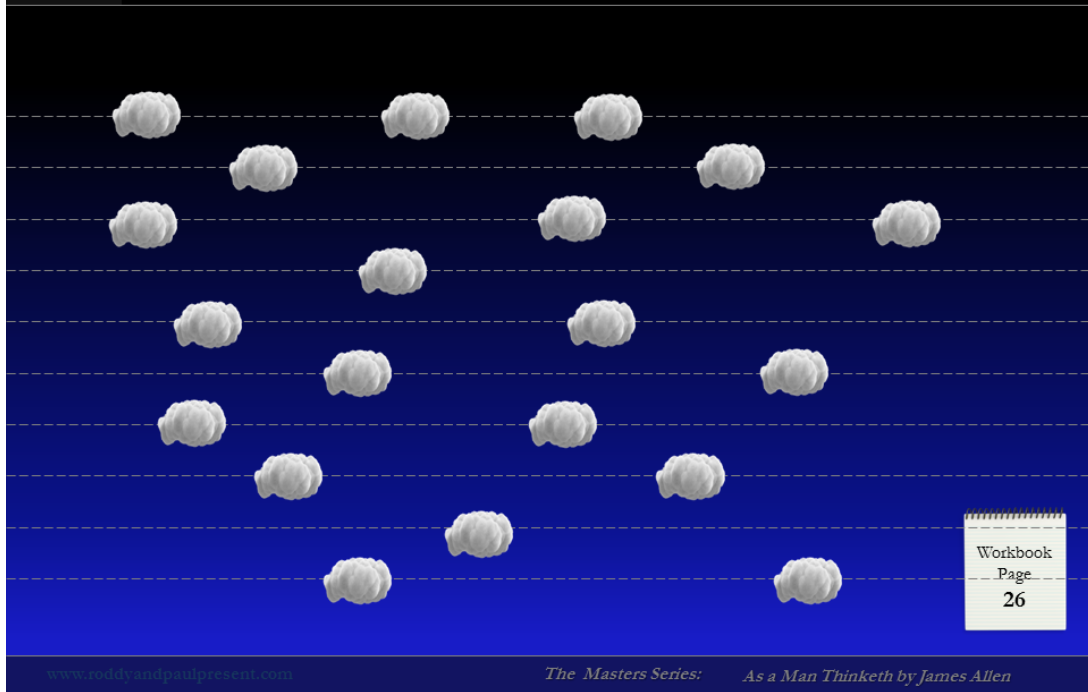
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Thought allied fearlessly to purpose becomes creative force; he who knows this is ready to become something higher and stronger than a mere bundle of wavering thoughts and fluctuating sensations

2

Infinite power of thought

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A man should conceive of a legitimate purpose in his heart, and set out to accomplish it

What do you want in the key areas of your life?

Spiritual	Health	Family
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Relationships	Financial	Overall
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

3

Step 3 – Who’s responsibility is it?

“Man is the master of thought, the moulder of character, and maker and shaper of condition, environment, and destiny

As long as we believe that someone else is responsible for giving us the things we want in life, we will remain stifled in growth; we will not grow into the person that would have them; and if we should be given them by someone else, we will be unable to hold on to them.

We simply must take responsibility for our own growth. Everyone else has some kind of hidden agenda, however well meaning.

If we want something, we must earn it. It is as simple as that.

Earning it can take many different forms, but we must put forth some effort, we must experience life and learn from that experience. The

learning is the growth. The person we become through the process is the person in harmony with the good that is desired.

This match results in the obtaining and retaining of the objective of our desires. There is no force beyond striving to be more and then allowing our being to radiate out into the world.

No one can do our homework for us. This we must do for ourselves.

3 – Who's responsibility is it?

26 *Every man is where he is by the law of his being*

27 *Man is made or unmade by himself*

29 *Man is always the master*

30 *Individual responsibility must be absolute*

31 *In the arrangement of his life there is no element of chance*

32 *Man holds the key to every situation*

33 *All that a man achieves and all that he fails to achieve is the direct result of his own thoughts*

35 *As the lord and master of thought, is the maker of himself, the shaper and author of environment*

36 *All achievements, whether in the business, intellectual, or spiritual world, are the result of definitely directed thought*

37 *He must, by his own efforts, develop the strength which he admires in another*

38 *Achievement, of whatever kind, is the crown of effort*

39 *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*

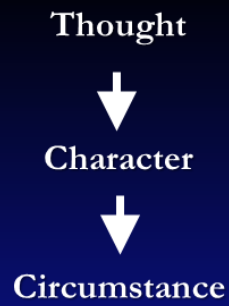
40 *Strength can only be developed by effort and practice*

41 *Into your hands will be placed the exact results of your own thoughts; you will receive that which you earn; no more, no less*

42 *Man is the master of thought, the moulder of character, and maker and shaper of condition, environment, and destiny*

43 *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*

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



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As the lord and master of thought, is the maker of himself, the shaper and author of environment

3

Three planes

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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



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Strength can only be developed by effort and practice

How could someone else achieve your goals for you?

Spiritual	Health	Family
Relationships	Financial	Overall

How can you retain complete control for achieving your goals?

Spiritual	Health	Family
Relationships	Financial	Overall

4

Step 4—The Creative Process

“Men imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot; it rapidly crystallizes into habit, and habit solidifies into circumstance

Man is an adaptive being. And man is a creative being. We are capable of learning how to adapt to our environment in order to harmonize with it and to feel content within it.

We are also capable of creating a new environment. Our adaptive and creative natures can operate in concert to gradually bring about a completely new life experience. And this process can be ongoing throughout our entire lives.

Always learning; always growing.

The starting point of the creative process from an intellectual perspective is our conscious minds. We are capable of creative thought. We can think anything we choose. The problem is we tend to think habitually.

The thoughts that we think tend to influence the way we feel. Our feelings of either frustration or contentedness tend to move us into action (or keep us in inaction) and our actions produce results. Our results over time become our circumstances of life – our environment.

In order to create a new reality we need to be able to think independently of our current reality – both our internal and external worlds. This takes understanding, effort and patience.

4 – The creative process

- 45 *A man cannot directly choose his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts, and so indirectly,
yet surely, shape his circumstances*
- 46 *Act is the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruits*
- 47 *A man is literally what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts*
Thought and character are one, and as character can only manifest and discover itself through
48 *environment and circumstance, the outer conditions of a person's life will always be found to be
harmoniously related to his inner state*
- 49 *Men do not attract that which they want, but that which they are*
- 50 *Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; they
therefore remain bound*
- 51 *Circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own*
- 52 *The "divinity that shapes our ends" is in ourselves; it is our very Self*
- 53 *The soul attracts that which it secretly harbours; that which it loves, and also that which it fears*
Men imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot; it rapidly crystallizes into habit, and
54 *habit solidifies into circumstance*
- 55 *As he alters his thoughts toward things and other people, things and other people will alter
toward him*
- 56 *Let a man cease from his sinful thoughts, and all the world will soften toward him*
- 57 *All achievements, whether in the business, intellectual, or spiritual world, are the result of
definitely directed thought*
- 58 *The human Will, that force unseen, the offspring of a deathless Soul, can hew a way to any goal*
The honest man reaps the good results of his honest thoughts and acts; he also brings upon
59 *himself the sufferings which his vices produce*
- 60 *There are efforts, and there are results, and the strength of the effort is the measure of the result.
Chance is not*

2

Make a committed decision

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Environment



Paradigm

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A man cannot directly choose his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances

4 What is character?

Character is the ability to follow through with a goal long after the emotion with which it was originally set has faded

Character is the ability to go from one failure to the next with no loss of enthusiasm

Character is the accumulation of evaluated experience

Character is a particular 'tone' of conditioning

Character is ultimately a collection of beliefs

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Men do not attract that which they want, but that which they are

4

Levels of cognition

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Description

Interpretation

Inference

Evaluation

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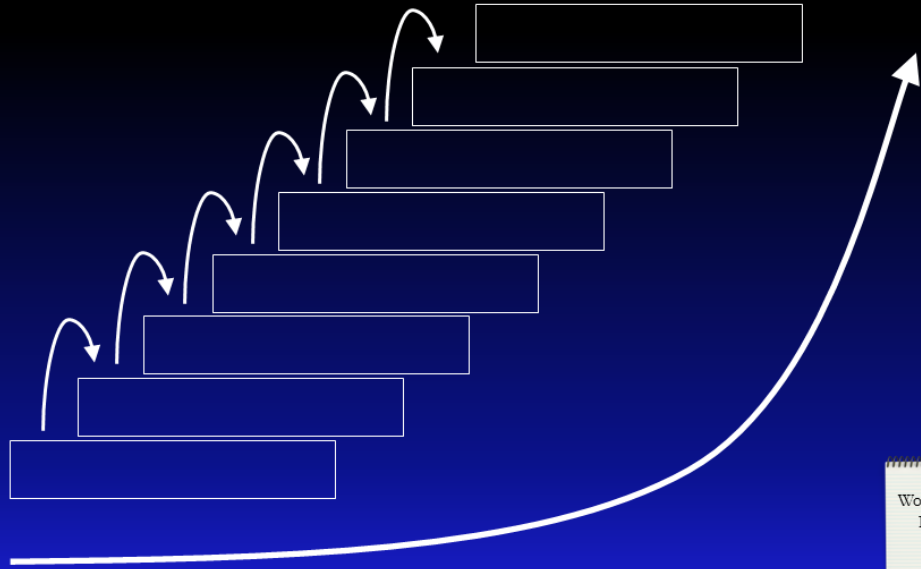
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The "divinity that shapes our ends" is in ourselves; it is our very Self

4

Baby steps from where you are now

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

4

ABCDE model

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Belief		Dispute		
Activating Event		Consequence		Integration
A	B	C	D	E
Real		Thought	Realistic	
Imagined		Feeling	Logical	
		Action	Helpful	
		Symptom		

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Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; they therefore remain bound

What simple behaviors will you need to adopt in each area to achieve your goals? How will your thinking need to change?

Spiritual	Health	Family
Relationships	Financial	Overall

5

Step 5 – What are the common pitfalls?

“Man is continually revolting against an effect without, while all the time he is nourishing and preserving its cause in his heart

Really thinking about what we allow ourselves to think is much easier to do if we are aware of the most common hazards or obstacles to independent thought.

Our current environment is a significant influence on our thinking.

Our internalized belief systems are also an enormous part of our thinking patterns.

The animal side of our nature also influences our thinking to a significant degree if we are not constantly watchful.

If we are able to become the observer of our thinking, we can watch all of these different energies at work. We can then become more alert to their self-interest and misgovernment of our resources.

5 – Common pitfalls?

61 *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*

62 *Man is the cause (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*

63 *Man is continually revolting against an effect without, while all the time he is nourishing and
preserving its cause in his heart*

64 *They do not see the trials and failures and struggles which these men have voluntarily encountered
in order to gain their experience. They do not know the darkness and the heartaches; they only
see the light and joy, and call it "luck"*

65 *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.*

66 *Before a man can achieve anything, even in worldly things, he must lift his thoughts above slavish
animal indulgence*

67 *Aimlessness is a vice*

68 *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*

69 *They who have no central purpose in their life fall an easy prey to petty worries, fears, troubles,
and self-pitying*

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

Habits are actions we take without conscious thought

Automatic behaviours can save us a lot of time and energy

Automatic responses have no IQ .. vulnerable to change

Automatic responses can leave us open to manipulation

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Before a man can achieve anything, even in worldly things, he must lift his thoughts above slavish animal indulgence



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Circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own



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Man is continually revolting against an effect without, while all the time he is nourishing and preserving its cause in his heart

Critical conscious & conditioned minds



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Man is the cause (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

Identify where common pitfalls have held you back .. for example:

Thinking in reverse?

Paradigm thinking?

Sacrifice reluctance?

Scattered thinking?

Animal thinking?

It's not me?

Aren't they lucky?

Poor me?

Enjoying aimlessness?

Spiritual	Health	Family
Relationships	Financial	Overall

6

Step 6 – Can you see it?

“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

We tend to think in pictures. Those pictures have the potential to liberate enormous amounts of energy. Being human necessitates expending energy. Some activities require more energy than others. We tend to conserve energy unless there is a good reason to expend it.

Thinking can be very hard work. It can be exhausting. It requires a great deal of energy.

Activities likewise can require a lot of energy. Thinking and acting independently of our current environment on a consistent basis takes more energy than most people can stand.

The source of the energy to move forward comes from the visions you enthrone in your heart. If you can see it, touch it, taste it .. if it consumes you .. if you build your image to the point that it literally pulls you forward,

it will provide the energy necessary to get you through. But you must invest in the dream. You must nurture it.

The only thing that can grow is the thing you give energy to.

6 - Can you see it?

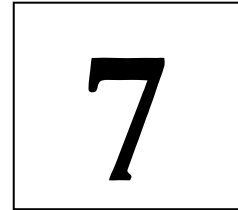
- 71 *Your circumstances may be uncongenial, but they shall not long remain so if you but perceive
an Ideal and strive to reach it. You cannot travel within and stand still without*
- 72 *The greatest achievement was at first and for a time a dream*
- 73 *Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become*
- 74 *Dreams are the seedlings of realities*
- 75 *You will always gravitate toward that which you secretly most love*
- 76 *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*
- 77 *He who cherishes a beautiful vision, a lofty ideal in his heart, will one day realize it*

An image of success?

What does success look like .. feel like .. sound like to you? Take some time to put much more detail around each of your key goals. Start with the most important .. draw illustrations, collect pictures .. bring it to life:

Spiritual	Health	Family
Relationships	Financial	Overall

Take as much time as you need to expand upon your dreams .. tap into the feeling tone of living your dreams:



Step 7 – Letting go in peace

“He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered failure

There is a season for striving. And there is a season for allowing. The more we understand the creative process and our role in it; the more we think about the way circumstances enter and leave our lives; the more we can let go and allow it to happen.

Someone once said luck is a word we have invented to describe the known effects of unknown causes. (If they didn't say it exactly like that then something like it!) The more we accept that there is an order to things, a meaning to things, and a purpose to things, even if we don't understand it, the more we can stop rushing to be lucky and sit back and allow things to take their course.

Our responsibility is to be all we can be .. anything else is beyond our responsibility and control.

7 – Letting go in peace

78 *A man becomes calm in the measure that he understands himself as a thought-evolved being*

79 *Calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom*

80 *There is no physician like cheerful thought for dissipating the ills of the body*

81 *To dwell day by day in thoughts of peace toward every creature will bring abounding peace to their possessor*

82 *With those who have lived righteously, age is calm, peaceful, and softly mellowed, like the setting sun*

83 *He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened*

84 *He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered failure*

8

As a Man Thinketh by James Allen

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 which 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.

Thought in the mind hath made us. What we are

By thought we wrought and built. If a man's mind

Hath evil thoughts, pain comes on him as comes

The wheel the ox behind . . . If one endure

In purity of thought, joy follows him

As his own shadow - sure.

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 molder of character, and 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 weakest 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 molder 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 Circumstance

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 the progressive and evolving being, man is where he is that he may learn that he may grow; and as he learns the spiritual lesson which 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.

That circumstances *grow* out of thought every man knows who has for any length of time practiced self-control and self-purification, for he will have noticed that the alteration in his circumstances has been in exact ratio with his altered mental condition. So true is this that when a man earnestly applies himself to remedy the defects in his character, and makes swift and marked progress, he passes rapidly through a succession of vicissitudes.

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 circumstances. 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 (pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of impure imagining or steadfastly walking the highway of strong and high endeavor), a man at last arrives at their fruition and fulfillment in the outer condition of his life. The laws of growth and adjustment everywhere obtain.

A man does not come to the almshouse or the jail by the tyranny of fate or circumstance, but by the pathway of groveling thoughts and base desires. Nor does a pure-minded man fall suddenly into crime by stress of any mere external force; the criminal thought had long been secretly fostered in the heart, and the hour of opportunity revealed its gathered power. 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 cause (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 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.

It is pleasing to human vanity to believe that one suffers because of one's virtue; but not until a man has extirpated every sickly, bitter, and impure thought from his mind, and washed every sinful stain from his soul, can he be in a position to know and declare that his sufferings are the result of his good, and not of his bad qualities; and on the way to that supreme perfection, he will have found working in his mind and life, the Great Law which is absolutely just, and which cannot give good for evil, evil for good. Possessed of such knowledge, he will then know, looking back upon his past ignorance and blindness, that his life is, and always was, justly ordered, and that all his past experiences, good and bad, were the equitable outworking of his evolving, yet unevolved self.

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 not object in burning gold after the dross had been removed, and a perfectly pure and enlightened being could not suffer.

The circumstances which a man encounters with suffering are the result of his own mental inharmony. The circumstances which 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 which 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 molding 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 toward things and other people, things and other people will alter toward him.

The proof of this truth is in every person, and it therefore admits of easy investigation by systematic introspection and self-analysis. 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. Bestial thoughts crystallize into habits of drunkenness and sensuality, which solidify into circumstances of destruction and disease: impure thoughts of every kind crystallize into enervating and confusing habits, which solidify into distracting and adverse circumstances: thoughts of fear, doubt, and indecision crystallize into weak, unmanly, and irresolute habits, which solidify into circumstances of failure, indigence, and slavish dependence: lazy thoughts crystallize into habits of uncleanness and dishonesty, which solidify into circumstances of foulness and beggary: hateful and condemnatory thoughts crystallize into habits of accusation and violence, which solidify into circumstances of injury and persecution: selfish thoughts of all kinds crystallize into habits of self-seeking, which solidify into circumstances more or less distressing. On the other hand, beautiful

thoughts of all kinds crystallize into habits of grace and kindliness, which solidify into genial and sunny circumstances: pure thoughts crystallize into habits of temperance and self-control, which solidify into circumstances of repose and peace: thoughts of courage, self-reliance, and decision crystallize into manly habits, which solidify into circumstances of success, plenty, and freedom: energetic thoughts crystallize into habits of cleanliness and industry, which solidify into circumstances of pleasantness: gentle and forgiving thoughts crystallize into habits of gentleness, which solidify into protective and preservative circumstances: loving and unselfish thoughts crystallize into habits of self-forgetfulness for others, which solidify into circumstances of sure and abiding prosperity and true riches.

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 toward 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.

You will be what you will to be;
Let failure find its false content
In that poor word, "environment,"
But spirit scorns it, and is free.
It masters time, it conquers space;
It cows that boastful trickster, Chance,
And bids the tyrant Circumstance
Uncrown, and fill a servant's place.
The human Will, that force unseen,
The offspring of a deathless Soul,
Can hew a way to any goal,
Though walls of granite intervene.
Be not impatient in delay,
But wait as one who understands;
When spirit rises and commands,
The gods are ready to obey.

Effect of Thought on Health and the Body

The body is the servant of the mind. It obeys the operations of the mind, whether they be deliberately chosen or automatically expressed. At the bidding of unlawful thoughts the body sinks rapidly into disease and decay; at the command of glad and beautiful thoughts it becomes clothed with youthfulness and beauty.

Disease and health, like circumstances, are rooted in thought. Sickly thoughts will express themselves through a sickly body. Thoughts of fear have been known to kill a man as speedily as a bullet, and they are continually killing thousands of people just as surely though less rapidly. The people who live in fear of disease are the people who get it. Anxiety quickly demoralizes the whole body, and lays it open to the entrance of disease; while impure thoughts, even if not physically indulged, will soon shatter the nervous system.

Strong, pure, and happy thoughts build up the body in vigor and grace. The body is a delicate and plastic instrument, which responds readily to the thoughts by which it is impressed, and habits of thought will produce their own effects, good or bad, upon it.

Men will continue to have impure and poisoned blood so long as they propagate unclean thoughts. Out of a clean heart comes a clean life and a clean body. Out of a defiled mind proceeds a defiled life and corrupt body. Thought is the fount of action, life and manifestation; make the fountain pure, and all will be pure.

Change of diet will not help a man who will not change his thoughts.
When a man makes his thoughts pure, he no longer desires impure food.

Clean thoughts make clean habits. The so called saint who does not wash his body is not a saint. He who has strengthened and purified his thoughts does not need to consider the malevolent microbe.

If you would perfect your body, guard your mind. If you would renew your body, beautify your mind. Thoughts of malice, envy, disappointment, despondency, rob the body of its health and grace. A sour face does not come by chance; it is made by sour thoughts. Wrinkles that mar are drawn by folly, passion, pride.

I know a woman of ninety-six who has the bright, innocent face of a girl. I know a man well under middle age whose face is drawn into inharmonious contours. The one is the result of a sweet and sunny disposition; the other is the outcome of passion and discontent.

As you cannot have a sweet and wholesome abode unless you admit the air and sunshine freely into your rooms, so **a strong body and a bright, happy, or serene countenance can only result from the free admittance into the mind of thoughts of joy and good will and serenity.**

On the faces of the aged there are wrinkles made by sympathy; others by strong and pure thoughts; and others are carved by passion: who cannot distinguish them? **With those who have lived righteously, age is calm, peaceful, and softly mellowed, like the setting sun.** I have recently seen a

philosopher on his deathbed. He was not old except in years. He died as sweetly and peacefully as he had lived.

There is no physician like cheerful thought for dissipating the ills of the body; there is no comforter to compare with goodwill for dispersing the shadows of grief and sorrow. To live continually in thoughts of ill-will, cynicism, suspicion, and envy, is to be confined in a self-made prison-hole. But to think well of all, to be cheerful with all, and to patiently learn to find the good in all - such unselfish thoughts are the very portals of heaven; and to dwell day by day in thoughts of peace toward every creature will bring abounding peace to their possessor.

Thought and Purpose

Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment. With the majority the barque 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-pitying, all of 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 their 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 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 to 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 accomplish 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 sufferings 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 the 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 among 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 co-operators 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 manfully to 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.

Vision 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 in 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. Columbus cherished a vision of another world, and he discovered it; Copernicus fostered the vision of a multiplicity of worlds and a wider universe, and he revealed it; Buddha beheld the vision of a spiritual world of stainless beauty and perfect peace, and he entered into 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. Years later we see this youth as a full-grown man. We find him a master of certain forces of the mind which he wields with world-wide influence and almost

unequaled power. In his hands he holds the cords of gigantic responsibilities; he speaks, and lo! lives are changed; men and women hang upon his words and remold their characters, and, sunlike, he becomes the fixed and luminous center around which innumerable destinies revolve. He has realized the Vision of his youth. He has become one with his Ideal.

And you, too, youthful reader, 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: in the beautiful words of Stanton Kirkham Davis, "You may be keeping accounts, and presently you shall walk out of the door that for so long has seemed to you the barrier of your ideals, and shall find yourself before an audience - the pen still behind your ear, the ink stains on your fingers - and then and there shall pour out the torrent of your inspiration. You may be driving sheep, and you shall wander to the city - bucolic and open mouthed; shall wander under the intrepid guidance of the spirit into the studio of the master, and after a time he shall say, 'I have nothing more to teach you.' And now you have become the master, who did so recently dream of great things while driving sheep. You shall lay down the saw and the plane to take upon yourself the regeneration of the world."

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, the 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"; 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.

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 barque 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!"

