



AS A MAN THINKETH

ORIGINAL TEXT
& MODERN ADAPTATION

JAMES ALLEN
& ALEX WIDDOWS

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

This simple yet profound idea lies at the heart of one of the most enduring works of personal development ever written. First published in 1903, James Allen's classic has inspired generations with its timeless message: that thought shapes character, circumstance, and destiny.

This unique edition pairs the original unaltered text side by side with a clear, modern-language adaptation. Each version can be read independently or explored together, offering clarity, contrast, and a deeper understanding of this cornerstone of self-development literature.

Whether you're discovering these ideas for the first time or returning for a fresh perspective, this book invites you to connect more deeply with Allen's teachings, grasp their meaning in today's terms and to master the power of your thoughts.

Skye Bear Media



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ISBN 978-1-7391885-3-5



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& MODERN ADAPTATION**

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ISBN: 978-1-7391885-3-5

A Note from the Author

This book began as some bedside notes I made while trying to fully understand James Allen's original text for myself. Although I'd read it more than a dozen times, I still found some of the older phrasing made certain parts harder to interpret and truly absorb.

I wanted to be sure I was understanding Allen's full meaning, not just skimming over the more challenging sections, so I began looking up some of the older English and rewriting passages in a way that felt more natural to me. Gradually, those private notes expanded to cover the entire text, and eventually they took shape as the version you're reading now.

Allen wrote from a perspective shaped over a century ago. While some readers may view aspects of his message differently today, my aim has been to preserve his original intent as faithfully as possible—not to offer my own opinion or commentary. While the language has been updated, the underlying ideas, interpretations, and worldview remain entirely his.

What follows is my interpretation, presented in side-by-side format with the original, to allow immediate comparison and “translation” from old to new. You may interpret the original text differently, and I'd genuinely love to hear your thoughts and feedback if they help broaden our collective understanding of this remarkable book.

I still return to *As a Man Thinketh* regularly, both the original and my adaptation, and I continue to learn from it every time I pick it up. I hope you find as much value in these pages as I have, and that this edition helps you connect with Allen's ideas in a way that feels both clear and meaningful to you.

Alex Widdows,
Hove, East Sussex, England



Think-eth.com

Introduction

James Allen published *As a Man Thinketh* in 1903. Though short in length, it has had a lasting impact, becoming one of the most enduring works in the self-development genre. His core message, that your thoughts shape your character, circumstances, and destiny, remains as powerful and relevant today as it was over a century ago.

Long before the modern self-help movement took shape, James Allen had already laid down many of its core principles and foundational ideas, that continue to influence personal development literature to this day.

To support a deeper understanding, this unique edition contains two versions, presented side by side: the original unmodified text, preserved as it was first published and a modern adaptation updated for clarity and ease of reading.

Written in a different era, the original work uses a style and vocabulary that can sometimes feel distant or difficult to navigate. This adaptation offers a bridge between two eras, presenting James Allen's ideas in a voice that is direct, relatable, and aligned with how we speak today. This is not a reinterpretation or commentary; although the language has been updated, the underlying ideas, interpretations, and worldview remain entirely Allen's.

Where Allen drew upon well-known passages from scripture, classic literature and other sources, these too have been gently updated to maintain clarity and flow. This

ensures that every part of the text reads smoothly and remains accessible to today's reader, without altering the original meaning or intent.

Each version can be read independently, or they can be explored together. This offers you the freedom to engage with the book in whichever way feels most natural—whether you are seeking clarity, contrast, or a complete experience of both.

If you are discovering these teachings for the first time, or a long-standing fan returning for a fresh perspective, this edition invites you to connect more deeply with Allen's original than ever before.

Original Edition – Even Pages, from page 8

James Allen, 1903

Contemporary Adaptation – Odd Pages, from page 9

Alex Widdows, 2025

As A Man Thinketh

Original Edition
James Allen, 1903

*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.*

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As A Man Thinketh

Contemporary Adaptation
Alex Widdows, 2025

*Mind is the master power that can mould and make,
And we are our mind, and with it we take
The tool of thought to build our fate each day
Causing joy or pain along the way
We think in secret; and it comes to pass:
Our environment is our looking-glass.*

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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.

BROAD PARK AVENUE, ILFRACOMBE, ENGLAND

Foreword

This small book (the result of meditation and experience) is not intended as an extensive guide on the power of thought (which is already a well-documented subject). Instead, it aims is to inspire, rather than explain in detail, its purpose being to encourage readers to realise that—

They are the creators of themselves,

through the thoughts which they choose and encourage. The mind acts as the master weaver creating both the inner fabric of a person's character and the outer fabric of their circumstances. Although they may have unknowingly woven in ignorance and pain in the past, they may now weave in wisdom and happiness.

JAMES ALLEN.

BROAD PARK AVENUE, ILFRACOMBE, ENGLAND

Chapter 1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. *"Thought in the mind hath made us, What we are
By thought was 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."*

5. 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

Chapter 1. Thought and Character

The saying "**As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,**" describes not only a person's true nature but also extends to every condition and circumstance of their life. A person is, quite literally, *what they think*, their character being the complete sum of all their thoughts.

2. Just as a plant grows from a seed, and cannot exist without it, every action a person takes comes from the hidden seeds of thought and would not happen without them. This is true not only for actions that seem spontaneous or unplanned but also for those that are planned and deliberate.

3. Actions are the blossom of thoughts, and joy and suffering are their fruits. Therefore, a person will reap both the sweet and bitter results of their own choices and efforts.

4. *"Our thoughts make us who we are;
They create and build our lives.
If a person's mind is filled with negativity,
suffering will follow,
just as a cart follows the ox that pulls it...*

*But if a person endures
in pure thoughts, joy will follow just as surely as
they are followed by their own shadow."*

5. A person develops according to natural laws not through any artificial means, and the principle of cause-and-effect is just as constant in the unseen world of thought as it is in the physical world. A respectable and moral character

thing of favour 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 harbouring of grovelling thoughts.

6. Man is made or unmade by himself; in the armoury 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

is not a matter of luck or privilege but the natural outcome of consistently practicing positive and disciplined thinking, and the effect of a long-cherished association with higher thoughts. Likewise, a corrupt and unpleasant character is formed by continuously dwelling on low and negative thoughts.

6. A person shapes their own destiny either building themselves up or breaking themselves down. In the workshop of their mind, they create either the weapons that can destroy them, or the tools that can build a life of joy, strength, and peace. By the right choice and true application of thought, they can rise to a state of spiritual excellence. But, by misusing and corrupting their thoughts, they can sink to an unspeakably low level of existence. Between these two extremes are all the grades of character, and each person is the creator and master of their own.

7. Of all the amazing things we've come to learn or rediscover about the soul, none is more uplifting or filled with great promise and hope than this—a person is the master of their own thoughts, the shaper of their own character, and the creator of their own condition, environment, and destiny.

8. As a being of power, intelligence, and love, and the master of their own thoughts, a person holds the key to every situation. Within them they have the ability to transform and renew, shaping themselves into whoever they choose to be.

9. 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.

10. 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 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.

9. A person is always in control of their own life even in their weakest and most vulnerable state. However, in times of weakness and failure, they can act unwisely, mismanaging their own mind and choices. When they start to reflect on their situation, and seek to understand the principles that govern their existence, they become a wise master—making intelligent decisions and shaping their thoughts towards positive outcomes. This is what it means for a person to become a conscious master of their own life. They can only achieve this by discovering the laws of thought; this comes through effort, self-analysis, and experience.

10. In the same way gold and diamonds can only be found through deep searching and mining, a person can only discover every truth about themselves if they are willing to explore the depths of their own mind. By observing, controlling, and refining their thoughts, they can clearly prove that they are the creators of their character, the architects of their own life, and the builders of their destiny. By carefully studying how their thoughts shape their actions, influence others, and affect their circumstances, a person can connect cause-and-effect through patience and practice. Every experience, even the smallest everyday occurrence, can serve as a lesson in self-discovery, leading to understanding, wisdom, and power. In this pursuit, more than in any other, the law is absolute: "He who seeks shall find, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." Because only through patience, dedication, and relentless effort can a person gain access to this powerful knowledge.

Chapter 2. Effect of Thought on Circumstances

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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

Chapter 2. Effect of Thought on Circumstances

A person's mind is like a garden—it can be carefully tended or left to grow wild. But whether it is nurtured or ignored, it will always produce something. If no useful seeds are planted in it, then an abundance of weeds will take root and multiply.

2. Just as a gardener tends to their land, keeping it free from weeds and growing the flowers and fruits which they desire, a person can cultivate their mind. They can weed out negative, useless, and harmful thoughts while nurturing positive, pure, and productive ones. By pursuing this process, a person eventually discovers that they are the master-gardener of their own soul, the director of their own life. They also come to learn the laws of thought and begin to understand, with ever increasing accuracy, how the forces of thought and mind operate in the shaping of their character, circumstances, and destiny.

3. Thought and character are inseparable, and since character can only express and discover itself through a person's environment and circumstance, the outer conditions of their life will always be in harmony with their inner state. This does not mean that someone's current situation defines their entire character. Rather that their circumstances are intimately connected with a vital element of their thoughts, and for the time being their circumstances are indispensable to their personal development.

4. 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.

5. 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 which any circumstance contains for him, it passes away and gives place to other circumstances.

6. 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.

7. That circumstances grow out of thought every man knows who has for any length of time practised 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.

4. Every person is where they are in life because of the natural laws that govern them. The thoughts which have been built into their character have led them to their current situation. There is no element of luck or randomness in how their life is arranged, everything follows an unchanging law. This applies just as much to those who feel "out of harmony" with their surroundings, as it does to those who are entirely content with them.

5. As a growing and ever-evolving species, people can always learn and grow from their current situation. Once a person learns the specific lesson which any circumstances hold for them, then those circumstances can change and make way for the new.

6. A person is buffeted and controlled by their circumstances for as long as they believe they are at the mercy of their external conditions. But when they realise that they have the creative power to shape their own life, that they may command the hidden soil and seeds of their own mind, out of which circumstances grow, then they become the master of themselves.

7. Anyone who has practiced self-discipline and self-improvement for some time knows that circumstances arise from thought. They will have noticed that changes in their circumstances directly reflect changes in their mindset. This is so true that when someone works hard and makes significant progress to correct defects in their character, they will also rapidly pass through a succession of changes to their circumstances.

8. The soul attracts that which it secretly harbours; 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Following the inmost desires, aspirations, thoughts, by which he allows himself to be dominated, (pursuing the will-o'-the-wisps of impure imaginings or steadfastly walking the highway of strong and high endeavour), a man at last arrives at their fruition and fulfilment in the outer conditions of his life. The laws of growth and adjustment everywhere obtains.

12. A man does not come to the almshouse or the jail by the tyranny of fate or circumstance, but by the pathway of grovelling 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;

8. The soul attracts what it secretly focusses on, both what it loves and what it fears. It rises to the level of its highest aspirations or falls to the depth of its unchecked base desires. Circumstances are simply the means through which the soul experiences the results of its inner state.

9. Every thought planted or allowed to fall in the mind and take root, will blossom as action and bear its own fruit of opportunity and circumstance. Good thoughts bear good fruit, and bad thoughts bear bad fruit.

10. A person's outer world of circumstance shapes itself to their inner world of thought, and both pleasant and unpleasant experiences are factors which contribute to their growth as an individual. As a person harvests what they sow, they learn by both suffering and joy.

11. A person's deepest desires, aspirations, and thoughts (whether they lead them astray through fleeting, impure fantasies, or guide them steadily along the path of determination and purpose) eventually shape the reality of their life. The laws of growth and balance apply in every aspect of existence.

12. A person does not end up in poverty or prison because of fate or external circumstances but as a result of self-defeating thoughts and immoral desires. Likewise, a person with a pure mind does not suddenly commit a crime due to external pressure. The criminal behaviour begins as a thought long nurtured in secret, and when the opportunity arises, it manifests into action. Circumstances do not

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.

13. 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. Only himself manacles man: thought and action are the gaolers 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.

14. 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.

create the person; they reveal to them who they truly are. No one falls into vice and suffering without first having inclinations towards it. Just as no one rises to virtue and its rewards without the continued development of honourable ambitions. Therefore, as the master of their own thoughts, a person is the maker of their own character and the shaper and designer of their environment. Even from birth, the soul gravitates towards conditions that reflect its nature, both its purity and flaws, its strengths and weaknesses, shaping the path of a person's journey through life.

13. People do not attract what they want, but what they are. Their whims, fancies, and ambitions are blocked at every step, but their deepest thoughts and desires are fuelled by their true character, be it negative or positive. The "higher power that shapes our destiny" exists within us — it is who we are. A person is bound only by themselves. Thought and action are the wardens of fate. If negative, they imprison us; if noble, they set us free. A person does not receive what they merely wish or pray for, but what they rightfully earn. Their hopes and desires are only fulfilled when they align with their thoughts and actions.

14. In the light of this reality, what does it mean to "fight against circumstances"? It means that a person is constantly resisting the consequences of their situation while unknowingly holding onto the very cause within themselves. That cause may be a conscious vice or an unrecognised weakness but, whatever it is, it persistently holds them back and makes it clear that change is needed.

15. 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?

16. 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.

17. 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.

15. People want to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves, so they remain stuck. A person who is willing to make deep personal sacrifices will never fail to achieve their true goals. This applies not only to spiritual growth but also to worldly success. Even someone focused solely on gaining wealth, must be prepared to make significant sacrifices before reaching their goal. How much more then, must someone be willing to sacrifice in order to build a strong, balanced, and fulfilling life?

16. Take, for example, a woman who lives in extreme poverty. She desperately wants better living conditions and home comforts, yet she avoids hard work and justifies deceiving her employer because she believes her wages are too low. Such a person fails to understand even the most basic principles of true prosperity. Not only is she unprepared to rise above her struggles, but by embracing laziness, dishonesty, and irresponsibility, she is actually drawing even greater hardship upon herself.

17. Consider a wealthy man suffering from a painful, chronic illness caused by overeating. He is willing to spend substantial amounts of money to cure it, but he refuses to give up his excessive gluttonous habits. He wants to indulge in rich, unhealthy foods and have his health as well. Such a person is not ready to be healthy because he has still to learn the first principles of a healthy life.

18. Here is an employer of labour who adopts crooked measures to avoid paying the regulation wage, and, in the hope of making larger profits, reduces the wages of his workpeople. 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.

19. I have introduced these three cases merely as illustrative of the truth that man is the causer (though nearly always is 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.

20. 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

18. Consider an employer who uses dishonest methods to avoid paying fair wages and, to increase her profits, she reduces the wages of her workers. Such a person is completely unfit for lasting success and, when she finds herself bankrupt and her reputation damaged, she blames external circumstances without considering that she alone is responsible for her situation.

19. I have introduced these three cases to illustrate the fact that a person is the cause (though almost always unconsciously) of their own circumstances. And that while striving for a good outcome, they continually sabotage their own success by retaining thoughts and desires that cannot possibly align with their goals. Countless similar examples could be given, but this is unnecessary. The reader can, if they choose, observe the laws of thought at work in their own mind and life. Real insight comes from self-examination and personal realisation. True understanding cannot come from external examples alone.

20. However, life's circumstances are so complex, thoughts so deeply rooted, and the conditions for happiness so different from person to person, that an individual's inner state (though it may be known to them) cannot be accurately judged by others based on outward appearance alone. For example, a person may be honest in some areas of life yet still experience hardship; while another may be dishonest in some ways yet accumulate wealth. However, the common assumption that the honest person suffers because of their honesty, and the dishonest person prospers because of their dishonesty, is a shallow judgment.

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.

21. 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, yet long before he has reached, that supreme perfection, he will have found, working in his mind and life, the Great Law which is absolutely just, and which cannot, therefore, 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.

This view wrongly assumes that the dishonest person is almost totally corrupt, and that the honest person is almost entirely virtuous. With greater understanding and life experience, it becomes clear that this way of thinking is flawed. A dishonest person might still have some admirable traits that an honest person lacks, and an honest person might have unpleasant habits that the dishonest one does not. The honest person enjoys the positive outcomes of their honest thoughts and actions, but they also face the consequences and suffering of their faults and vices. In the same way, the dishonest person experiences both the pain and the rewards that come from theirs.

21. People like to believe that living in hardship is evidence of a virtuous life. However, a person cannot truly claim that their suffering is the result of their good qualities, rather than their faults, until they have completely removed every weak, bitter, and impure thought from their mind, and cleansed every trace of wrongdoing from their soul. Yet long before reaching that highest state of perfection, they will come to recognise the Great Law at work in their mind and in their life. A law that is perfectly fair and so cannot reward evil with good or good with evil. With this understanding, they will look back on their past ignorance and confusion and see that their life has always been governed by this law. They will see that every past experience, good or bad, was simply the rightful outcome of their decisions and that they have evolved, and continue to evolve, because of them.

22. 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 co-operate with it.

23. 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.

24. 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.

22. Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results. This is simply the same as saying that nothing can come from corn but corn, nothing from nettles but nettles. People understand this law in the natural world and work with it. But few understand it in the mental and moral world, and so they fail to follow its principles in their own lives. Though its effect is just as simple and consistent.

23. Suffering is always the result of misguided thinking in some way. It is an indication that a person is out of harmony with themselves and the natural laws that govern them. The primary purpose of suffering is to cleanse, and to remove everything that is useless and impure. Just as there would be no purpose in continuing to smelt gold after all its impurities have been removed, so suffering ceases for a person who is pure.

24. The circumstances a person experiences with suffering are the result of inner conflict or imbalance. While the circumstances that a person experiences with joy and contentment are the result of mental harmony. Happiness and well-being, not wealth, are the true measure of positive thinking. Likewise, unhappiness, not lack of material possessions, is the measure of misguided thinking. A person can be wealthy and miserable, or happy and poor. Happiness and wealth are only joined together when riches are used wisely and with purpose. A poor person only falls into true misery when they believe their circumstances are a burden which has been unfairly imposed on them.

25. 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.

26. 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.

27. 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.

28. 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

25. Poverty and overindulgence are the two extremes of misery. Both are equally unnatural, and arise from a lack of mental balance. A person is not truly in the right state until they are a happy, healthy, and prosperous being. And happiness, health, and prosperity come from a harmonious adjustment of a person's inner self with their outer world, from a balance with their surroundings.

26. A person only begins to master their own destiny when they stop complaining and blaming others, and instead start seeking to understand the deeper laws that regulate their life. As they align their mind with these principles, they no longer see others as responsible for their situation, but instead strengthen themselves with strong and noble thoughts. Rather than resisting their circumstances, they begin to use them as opportunities for faster growth and as a way to uncover their hidden powers and possibilities.

27. Law, not chaos, is the dominating principle of the universe. Justice, not injustice, is the soul and substance of life. Integrity, not corruption, is the creative and moving force behind the deeper workings of the world. Because of this, a person only needs to correct themselves to see that the law of the universe is right. During this process of correction, they will find that as they alter their thoughts towards things and other people, things and other people will alter towards them.

28. The proof of this law can be found in every person, making it easy to examine through self-reflection and self-analysis. If a person radically changes their thoughts, they

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 destitution 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.

29. On the other hand, beautiful thoughts of all kinds crystallize into habits of grace and kindness, 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:

will be astonished at how quickly their external circumstances transform. People believe that thoughts can remain secret, but they cannot; they quickly shape habits, and habits solidify into circumstance.

- Base and immoral thoughts crystalise into habits of drunkenness and debauchery, which solidify into poverty, illness, and disease.
- Impure thoughts of every kind crystalise into draining and disorganised habits, which solidify into distracting and chaotic circumstances.
- Thoughts of fear, doubt, and indecision crystalise into weak, immature, and hesitant habits, which solidify into failure, poverty, and dependence on others.
- Lazy thoughts crystalise into habits of self-neglect and dishonesty, which solidify into squalor and destitution.
- Hateful and judgmental thoughts crystalise into habits of blame and violence, which solidify into circumstances of injury and discrimination.
- Selfish thoughts crystalise into self-centred habits, which solidify into various circumstances of distress.

29. On the other hand,

- Beautiful thoughts of all kinds crystalise into habits of dignity and kindness, which solidify into welcoming and happy circumstances.
- Pure thoughts crystalise into habits of moderation and self-control, which solidify into circumstances of tranquillity and peace.
- Thoughts of courage, confidence, and decisiveness crystalise into habits of strong-will, which solidify into circumstances of success, abundance, 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.

30. 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.

31. 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.

32. 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 colours, which at every succeeding moment it presents to you are the exquisitely adjusted pictures of your ever-moving thoughts.

- Energetic thoughts crystalise into habits of cleanliness and industry, which solidify into circumstances of order and satisfaction.
- Gentle and forgiving thoughts crystalise into habits of gentleness, which solidify into caring and secure circumstances.
- Loving and selfless thoughts crystalise into habits of generosity and kindness, which solidify into sure and enduring prosperity and true riches.

30. A persistent train of thought, whether positive or negative, will inevitably shape a person's character and circumstances. While a person cannot directly choose their circumstances, they can choose their thoughts, and so indirectly, but inevitably, shape their surroundings.

31. Nature helps every person in realising the thoughts they focus on most. It provides opportunities that quickly bring both their positive and negative thoughts into reality.

32. If a person stops their sinful thoughts, the world will become more welcoming and ready to help them. If they discard weak and unhealthy thoughts, opportunities will appear everywhere to assist them in achieving their goals. If they nurture good thoughts, there is no hardship which can keep them trapped in unhappiness and shame. The world is your kaleidoscope and the ever-changing combinations of colours it reveals to you each moment, are pictures, exquisitely derived from your ever-changing thoughts.

33. *"So 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 cowers 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 delays
But wait as one who understands;
When spirit rises and commands
The gods are ready to obey."*

33. *"So you will be what you will to be;
but failure is often content
to falsely blame 'environment,'
But your spirit rejects this, and is free.*
- It masters time, it conquers space;
It tames that boastful trickster Chance,
And tells the bully Circumstance
Now serve, not rule, and know your place.*
- The human will, that hidden force,
Born from a soul that never dies,
Can carve a path to any prize,
Though granite walls may block its course.*
- Don't grow impatient with delay
Hold firm, because you understand
Your spirit rises, takes command
The world stands ready to obey."*

Chapter 3. 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.

2. 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.

3. Strong, pure, and happy thoughts build up the body in vigour 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.

4. 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 a corrupt body. Thought is the fount of action, life, and manifestation; make the fountain pure, and all will be pure.

Chapter 3. Effect of Thought on Health and the Body

The body serves the mind. All bodily actions and functions, whether consciously or unconsciously chosen, are directed by the mind. When filled with negative or harmful thoughts, the body quickly declines into illness and weakness. But when guided by positive and beautiful thoughts, it results in vitality and beauty.

2. Illness and health, just like a person's circumstances, are also rooted in thought. Sickly thoughts will express themselves through a sickly body. Fearful thoughts have been known to kill a person just as quickly as a bullet, and they continue to claim the lives of thousands of people just in slower, more subtle ways. The people who live in fear of disease are the people who most often get it; as anxiety weakens the entire body, making it more vulnerable. Impure thoughts, even if not acted upon, will instead affect a person's mental state and nervous system.

3. Strong, pure, and happy thoughts strengthen the body, filling it with vitality and confidence. The body is delicate and mouldable and quickly responds to the thoughts that shape it. Good or bad habits of thought will directly produce good or bad effects upon the body.

4. People will continue to suffer poor health as long as they hold on to negative and toxic thoughts. A pure heart leads to a clean and healthy life and body. Whereas a corrupt mind results in a troubled life and an unhealthy body. Thought is the source of all action, experience, and outcomes; make the source pure and all will be pure.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. If you would protect 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, and pride.

8. 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.

9. 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 goodwill and serenity.

10. On the faces of the aged there are wrinkles made by sympathy, others by strong and pure thought, and others are carved by passion: who cannot distinguish them? With those who have lived righteously, age is calm, peaceful,

5. A change of diet will not help a person who refuses to change their thoughts. When someone makes their thoughts pure, they no longer desire unhealthy food.

6. Clean thoughts lead to clean habits. A so-called saint who does not wash his body is not a saint. Someone who has strengthened and purified their thoughts does not need to fear harmful germs.

7. If you want to protect your body, take care of your mind. If you want to renew your body, enhance your mind. Thoughts of hatred, envy, disappointment, and despair drain the body of its health and vitality. A sour-face is not gained by chance; it is shaped by sour thoughts. Wrinkles that spoil are caused by foolishness, uncontrolled emotions, and arrogance.

8. I know a woman of ninety-six who has the bright, innocent face of a girl. I know a man who is well under middle age, who's face is a permanent scowl. The one is the result of a sweet and sunny disposition; the other is the outcome of uncontrolled emotions and resentment.

9. Just as you cannot have a fresh and healthy home without letting air and sunlight into your rooms, you cannot have a strong body and a bright, happy, or calm nature without allowing thoughts of joy, goodwill, and calmness into your mind.

10. On the faces of the elderly there are wrinkles, some formed by compassion, others by strong and pure thought, and some by uncontrolled emotions. Everyone can see the difference. For those who have lived righteously, age is

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.

11. 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, 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.

calm, peaceful, and softly mellowed, like the setting sun. Recently, I saw a philosopher on his deathbed; though he had lived many years, he was not old in spirit. He passed away as sweetly and peacefully as he had lived.

11. There is no better medicine for healing the body than cheerful thoughts and no greater source of comfort than goodwill for easing grief and sorrow. Living with constant hostility, cynicism, suspicion, and envy, will confine a person to a self-imposed prison. But choosing to see the good in everyone, to be cheerful with others, and to patiently seek the best in people, these unselfish thoughts open the door to a life of true happiness. When a person fills their mind each day with thoughts of peace and goodwill towards all, they will experience deep and lasting inner peace in return.

Chapter 4. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

Chapter 4. Thought and Purpose

Until thought is linked with purpose there can be no meaningful accomplishments. Most people's thoughts are allowed to drift aimlessly, floating on the ocean of life. Having no aim in life is a vice, and to avoid disaster and destruction this drifting must stop.

2. Those who lack a clear purpose in life easily fall victim to trivial worries, fears, troubles, and self-pity, all are signs of weakness. Just as surely as deliberate sin, (though in a different way) this weakness inevitably leads to failure, unhappiness, and loss, because weakness cannot survive in a universe which is evolving through growth and strength.

3. A person should define a clear and meaningful purpose in their heart and set out to accomplish it. They should make this purpose the central focus of their thoughts. It may be a spiritual ideal or a material goal, depending on the nature of the individual. Whatever it is, they must consistently direct their mental energy toward it. They should make this purpose their greatest commitment and devote themselves fully to its achievement, not allowing their thoughts to drift into fleeting desires, fantasies, or distractions. This is the key to self-control and true concentration of thought. Even if they fail repeatedly to accomplish their purpose (which will definitely happen until weakness is overcome) the strength of character they develop in the process will be the true measure of their success. This will form a new starting point for future power and success.

4. 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 focussed, and resolution and energy be developed, which being done, there is nothing which may not be accomplished.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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,

4. Those who are not prepared for the responsibility of a great purpose, should focus their thoughts on the faultless performance of their daily chores no matter how small or unimportant their tasks may seem. Only in this way can they train their mind to be disciplined and focused, and can determination and energy be developed. Once these qualities are cultivated, there is no goal that cannot be accomplished.

5. Even the weakest person, once they realise their own weaknesses and understand the natural law – that strength can only be developed through effort and practice – will immediately begin to apply themselves. They will add effort to effort, patience to patience, and strength to strength. They will never stop developing and will eventually grow supremely strong.

6. Just as a physically weak person can become strong through careful and consistent training, someone with weak or negative thoughts can strengthen their mind by exercising positive and disciplined thinking.

7. To remove aimlessness and weakness and begin thinking with purpose, is to join the ranks of the strong – those who see failure as just another step toward success. These individuals turn every circumstance to their advantage, think with confidence, act with courage, and accomplish their goals with authority.

8. Once a person has determined their purpose, they should mentally map out a clear and direct path toward achieving it, staying focused without distraction. Doubt and fear must be completely shut out, as they weaken determination

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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

and disrupt progress, turning a straight path into a scattered and ineffective effort. Thoughts of doubt and fear never accomplished anything and never can. They always lead to failure. Purpose, energy, drive, and all strong thoughts come to an end when doubt and fear creep in.

9. The motivation *to do* comes from the knowledge that we *can do*. Doubt and fear are the greatest suppressors of knowledge; anyone who feeds them instead of overcoming them will hold themselves back at every step.

10. A person who has conquered doubt and fear has also conquered failure. Every thought they have now has more power, and all challenges are faced with courage and overcome with wisdom. Like well-planted seeds, their goals blossom and bear fruit that does not wither or fall before its time.

11. Thought allied fearlessly to purpose becomes 'creative force'. Anyone who knows this is ready to become something higher and stronger than just a collection of scattered thoughts and shifting emotions. Those who put this into practice take full and intelligent control of the powers of their mind.

Chapter 5. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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."

Chapter 5. The Thought-Factor in Achievement

All a person achieves, or fails to achieve, is the direct result of their own thoughts. In a precisely balanced universe, where any loss of equilibrium would lead to total collapse, responsibility must rest entirely with the individual. A person's weakness and strength, purity and impurity, are their own and not those of anyone else. They are brought about by them and not by anyone else. They can only be changed by them and never by someone else. Their circumstances are their own, not someone else's. Their suffering and happiness come completely from within. What a person thinks is what they become; what they continue thinking, is how they will remain.

2. A strong person cannot help someone weaker unless that person is willing to be helped. Even then, the weaker person must become strong themselves. They must work to develop the qualities they admire in others. The power to transform their lives lies with them alone.

3. It has traditionally been said that: "Many people are enslaved because another person is an oppressor; we should hate the oppressor." However, a growing number of people are reversing this assessment, saying: "A person is an oppressor because many allow themselves to be enslaved; therefore, we should blame the slaves."

4. 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.

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

6. 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.

7. 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.

4. The truth is that oppressor and slave are co-operators in ignorance, and, while seeming to afflict each other, are in reality, afflicting themselves. Absolute knowledge recognises the law of balance in the weakness of the oppressed and the misuse of power by the oppressor. Absolute love, seeing the suffering that both roles bring, condemns neither. Absolute compassion embraces both the oppressor and the oppressed.

5. A person who has overcome weakness and let go of all selfish thoughts belongs to neither the oppressor nor the oppressed. They are free.

6. A person can only rise, conquer, and achieve by elevating their thoughts. Likewise, they can only remain weak, defeated, and miserable by refusing to do so.

7. Before a person can achieve anything, even in everyday life, they must lift their thoughts above the trap of self-indulgence. They may not have to give up all selfish tendencies, but must sacrifice at least some of their base desires if they are to succeed. Someone whose first thought is indulgence, cannot think clearly or plan methodically. They cannot discover and develop their inner potential and will fail in any venture. Without first learning to discipline their own thoughts, they are not capable of managing responsibilities or making important decisions. They are not fit to act independently and be self-reliant. But they are limited only by the thoughts which they choose.

8. 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.

9. The universe does not favour 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

8. There can be no progress or achievement without sacrifice. A person's achievements in life will depend on how much they sacrifice instinct-driven thoughts and instead focus on developing their plans and strengthening their determination and self-reliance. The more they elevate their thinking and strive to be strong, honourable, and principled, the greater their success will be and the more meaningful and enduring their accomplishments will become.

9. The universe does not favour the greedy, the dishonest, or the vicious, even though on the surface it may sometimes seem to do so. It helps those who are honest, generous, and decent. All the great teachers throughout history have stated this in different ways and to prove and experience it a person has only to persevere in making themselves more virtuous by elevating their own thoughts.

10. Intellectual achievements come from dedicated thought, focussed on the pursuit of knowledge, or of the appreciation of beauty and form in life and nature. Such achievements may sometimes be linked to vanity and ego, but they are not caused by those characteristics. They are the natural result of persistent effort and of pure and unselfish thoughts.

11. Spiritual achievements come from the fulfilment of pure and noble aspirations. A person who consistently nurtures virtuous and elevated thoughts, focusing on what is pure and selfless, will become wise and noble in character and rise to a position of influence and fulfilment, just as surely as the sun rises and the moon becomes full.

12. 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.

13. 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.

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

15. 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.

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

12. Achievement, of whatever kind, is the ultimate crown of great effort and of focused thought. Through self-discipline, determination, integrity, and well directed thought, a person rises and progresses. Whereas, through self-indulgence, laziness, impurity, corruption, and disordered thinking, a person falls and declines.

13. A person may achieve great success in the world and high levels of personal development. But they may then fall back into weakness and misery if they allow arrogant, selfish, and corrupt thoughts to take control of them.

14. Success achieved through right thinking can only be maintained with vigilance. Many people become complacent once they achieve success and rapidly fall back into failure.

15. All achievements, whether in business, intellectual pursuits, or spiritual growth are the result of focused and intentional thought. They all follow the same laws and methods. The only difference is in the goal being pursued.

16. Those who aim to accomplish little need make only small sacrifices. Those who seek great success must be willing to sacrifice a lot. Those who strive for the highest accomplishments must be prepared to make great sacrifices.

Chapter 6. Visions and Ideals

The dreamers are the saviours 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 they realities which it shall one day see and know.

2. 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, labouring humanity would perish.

3. 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.

4. 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.

Chapter 6. Visions and Ideals

The dreamers are the saviours of the world. Just as the visible world is sustained by unseen forces, people (despite their struggles, sins, and self-serving pursuits) find hope and strength in the beautiful visions of those few among them who are dreamers. Humanity cannot forget its dreamers; it cannot let their ideals fade and die. Society depends on them, for their dreams represent the future realities that will one day be created.

2. Composers, sculptors, painters, poets, visionaries, and scholars, these are the creators of the future, the architects of a higher vision. The world is beautiful because they have lived. Without them, humanity, burdened by labour and struggle, would perish.

3. Those who cherish a beautiful vision, or a grand ideal in their heart, will one day bring it to life. Columbus pursued the vision of a new world, and he discovered it. Copernicus envisioned a vast universe filled with many worlds, and he revealed it. Buddha maintained the vision of a spiritual world of perfect beauty and peace, and he entered into it.

4. Cherish your visions; cherish your ideals; cherish the music that stirs in your heart, the beauty that forms in your mind, and the loveliness that accompanies your purest thoughts. Because out of them will grow delightful conditions and beautiful surroundings. If you stay true to these, your future world will be built in their form.

5. 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."

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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 labour; 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.

5. When you truly desire or aspire to something, you draw it toward you. So why would a person's immoral desires be fully satisfied but not their highest aspirations? That is not how the world works and never will be: "Ask, and you shall receive."

6. Dream ambitious dreams, and what you continue to dream, you will become. Your vision is a glimpse of what you are destined to be, and your ideal is a prophecy of what you will one day achieve.

7. Every great achievement begins as a dream and remains so for a time. The oak sleeps in the acorn, the bird waits in the egg, and within a person's highest vision, their greater self is awakening. Dreams are the seedlings of realities.

8. Your circumstances may be difficult and unfavourable, but they will not stay that way for long if you envision an ideal life and work hard towards it. You cannot evolve internally and remain unchanged externally. Take, for example, a young man struggling with poverty and an exhausting job. He spends long hours in an unhealthy workshop, lacking education and opportunity for development. But he dreams of better things; he thinks of intelligence, knowledge, culture, and beauty. He imagines and mentally constructs an ideal condition of life. A vision of freedom and greater opportunities takes hold of him, and this restlessness drives him to action. Though his time and resources are limited, he dedicates every spare moment to developing his suppressed abilities and talents. Before

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 worldwide influence and almost unequalled 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 remould their characters, and, sunlike, he becomes the fixed and luminous centre round which innumerable destinies revolve. He has realized the Vision of his youth. He has become one with his Ideal.

9. 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:

long, his mindset has transformed so completely that he can no longer be constrained by his circumstances. The workshop, once his reality, no longer aligns with the person he has become. And just as a person sheds old, ill-fitting clothes, he leaves it behind. With his growing abilities, new opportunities emerge, and he moves beyond that life forever. Years later, we see that same young man, now fully grown. He has mastered powerful mental forces, wielding them with global influence and extraordinary ability. He holds immense responsibilities, his words inspire transformation, and people look to him for guidance, reshaping their lives based on his wisdom. Like the sun, he has become a shining and central force in the lives of a countless number of people. He has turned the vision of his youth into reality. He has become one with his ideal.

9. And you too, no matter your age, will one day bring to life the vision in your heart (not the passing wishes), whether it is noble or selfish, or a mix of both, because you will always gravitate toward what you secretly love most. Into your hands will be placed the exact results of your own thoughts — you will receive what you have earned, no more and no less. Whatever your current situation may be, your life will rise, stay the same, or fall depending on your thoughts, your vision, and your ideals. You become as small as your most controlling desire or as great as your highest aspirations.

10. 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."

11. 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 favoured 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

10. in the beautiful (reimagined) words of
Stanton Kirkham Davis,

"You may be working in an office when, one day, you walk out of the door that has long felt like the barrier to your dreams. Suddenly, you find yourself standing before an audience—still looking like you don't quite belong—but, in that moment, a torrent of inspiration pours out of you.

You may be a shepherd who ventures into the city, still carrying the innocence of country life, but with intuition and spirit as your guide, you find your way into the studio of a great master. And after a time, he will say, "I have nothing more to teach you." Then you will have become the master, the one who, not long ago, dared to dream of great things while watching over sheep. You will now lay down the tools of your humble beginnings and take upon yourself the regeneration of the world."

11. Those who are thoughtless, ignorant, or lazy see only the outcomes of great achievements and ignore the effort and sacrifice behind them. So, they speak of luck, fortune, and chance. When they see someone become wealthy, they say, "He's so lucky." When they notice someone gaining wisdom or education, they say, "How blessed she is." And when they see someone with strong character and positive influence, they say, "Everything just seems to go their way." They do not see the challenges, failures, and struggles those people have voluntarily undertaken in

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.

12. 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.

13. 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.

order to gain their experience. They are unaware of the sacrifices they have made, the relentless effort they have put in, and the faith it took to keep going, to overcome what seemed impossible, and to turn their vision into reality. They do not see the darkness and the heartaches, only the resulting light and joy and call it "luck." They do not see the long, difficult journey, only the final goal, and call it "good fortune." They do not understand the process, only the result, and call it "chance."

12. In all human achievements, effort leads to results and the greater the effort, the greater the measure of the result. It is not chance. Talents, abilities, and the things we possess, whether material, intellectual, or spiritual, are the results of effort. They are thoughts turned into action, goals achieved, and visions brought to life.

13. The visions you foster in your mind and the ideals you cherish in your heart— these will shape your life; this is what you will become.

Chapter 7. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 demeanour is strongly equable.

4. 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

Chapter 7. Serenity

Calmness is one of the greatest rewards of wisdom. It is the result of long and patient effort in learning self-control. When someone is calm, it shows they have gained maturity and experience and a deep knowledge of the laws and operations of thought.

2. The more a person understands their mind as the source of who they are, the calmer they become. This leads to a deeper understanding of other people as they realise that they too, are shaped by their thoughts. As this understanding develops, and they begin to clearly see how everything is connected through cause and effect, they stop reacting with frustration, anger, anxiety, and grief, and become self-controlled, self-confident, and serene.

3. A calm person, having learned self-control, also knows how to adapt themselves to work well with other people. In return, people respect their inner strength and feel they can learn from and rely on them. The more composed someone becomes, the more they grow in success, influence, and positive impact. Even someone running an everyday business will see greater prosperity as they develop self-control and steady composure. This is because people naturally prefer to deal with someone who conducts themselves in a calm and confident way.

4. A strong, calm person is always loved and admired. They are like a tree offering shade in a desert, or a rock which provides shelter in a storm. Who does not love a peaceful heart, a kind nature and steady composure? It

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, 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!

5. "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!

6. 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.

7. 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

does not matter whether it rains or shines, or what challenges come to those who possess these qualities, as they always remain steady, kind, and calm. That rare and beautiful balance of character, which we call serenity, is the final lesson of true growth and the fruit of the soul. It is as valuable as wisdom itself, and more desired than even the finest gold. How insignificant the pursuit of wealth seems when compared to a serene life, a life rooted in the ocean of natural law, beneath the waves, beyond the reach of life's storms, in eternal calm.

5. How many people do we see sour their lives? Who ruin all that is sweet and beautiful with explosive tempers, losing their composure and creating conflict and stress? You may question if most people do not ruin their lives and bring unhappiness on themselves simply by lacking self-control. It is rare to meet someone who is truly well-balanced, who has that calm, steady presence that demonstrates true depth of character.

6. Yes, people are often swept up with uncontrolled emotions, overwhelmed by ungoverned grief, and blown in all directions by anxiety and doubt. Only the wise, those whose thoughts are controlled and clear, can make the winds and the storms of their emotions obey them.

7. Those who feel at the mercy of the storms, no matter your situation, know this: In the vast ocean of life, there are islands of peace and happiness, and the sunny shore of your dreams awaits you. Stay firm in steering your

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!"

thoughts. Within your soul lies your commanding master; they are sleeping, wake them. Self-control is strength. Disciplined thought is mastery. Calmness is power. Speak to your heart, say: "Peace, be still!"

