



The Miracle of Right Thought

Abridged from 1910 Version

Orison Swett Marden

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Orison Swett Marden

Orison Swett Marden (1850-1924) founded ***Success Magazine*** in 1897 and built it to a circulation of nearly 500,000, a huge circulation for the day.

He was a prolific writer and is considered to be the founder of the modern success movement in America. He bridged the gap between the old, narrow notions of success and the new, more comprehensive models made popular by best-selling authors such as Napoleon Hill, Clement Stone, Dale Carnegie, Og Mandino, Earl Nightingale, Norman Vincent Peale, and today's authors Stephen R. Covey, Anthony Robbins, and Brian Tracy.

Chapter 1

The Divinity of Desire

Believe with all of your heart that you will do what you were made to do. When the mind has once formed the habit of holding cheerful, happy, prosperous pictures, it will not be easy to form the opposite habit.

It does not matter how improbable or how far away this realization may seem, or how dark the prospects may be, if we visualize them as best we can, as vividly as possible, hold tenaciously to them and vigorously struggle to attain them, they will gradually become actualized, realized in the life. But a desire, a longing without endeavor, a yearning abandoned or held indifferently will vanish without realization.

It is only when desire is crystallized into resolve, however, that it is effective.

Think and say only that which you wish to become true.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the outline of the image itself; the real substance, not merely a mental image. What we believe is coming to us is a tremendous creative motive. Your whole thought current must be set in the direction of your life purpose.

Whatever comes to us in life, we create first in our mentality.

Chapter 2

Success And Happiness Are For You

No man has a right, unless he cannot help himself, to remain where he will be constantly subjected to the cramping, ambition-blighting influences and great temptations of poverty. His self-respect demands that he should get out of such an environment. It is his duty to put himself in a position of dignity and independence where he will not be liable at any moment to be a burden to his friends in case of sickness or other emergencies, or where those depending on him may suffer.

Prosperity begins in the mind and is impossible with a mental attitude which is hostile to it. We cannot attract opulence mentally by a poverty-stricken attitude which is driving away what we long for. We must think prosperity before we can come to it.

Our circumstances in life, our financial condition, our poverty or our wealth, our friends or lack of them, our condition of harmony or discord, are all very largely the offspring of our thought.

Success comes through a perfectly scientific mental process. The man who becomes prosperous believes that he is going to be prosperous. He has faith in his ability to make money. He does not start out with his mind filled with doubts and fears, and all the time talk poverty and think poverty, walk like a pauper and dress like a pauper. He turns his face towards the thing he is trying for and is determined to be successful, and will not admit its opposite picture in his mind.

The man who expects prosperity is constantly creating money in his mind, building his financial structure mentally. There must be a mental picture of the prosperity first; the building around it is comparatively easy.

To be prosperous we must put ourselves in the prosperous attitude. We must think opulently, we must feel opulent in thought; we must exhale confidence and assurance in our very bearing and manner. Our mental attitude towards the thing we are striving for and the intelligent effort we put forth to realize it, will measure our attainment.

Chapter 3

Working For One Thing And Expecting Something Else

The man who would succeed must think success, must think upward. He must think progressively, creatively, constructively, inventively, and, above all, optimistically.

The mental attitude which we hold toward our work or our aim has everything to do with what we accomplish.

Many positive minds become negative by influences which destroy their self-confidence. They gradually lose faith in themselves.

The whole philosophy of efficiency and happiness consist in the vigorous, consistent affirmation of the thing we are trying to be, and trying to do.

Chapter 4

Expect Great Things Of Yourself

Faith is an optimist because it sees the way out. Doubt is a pessimist because it cannot see the way ahead and fears of not being able to cope with the uncertain.

Faith is the divine messenger sent to guide man, blinded by doubt and sin.

Your own estimate of yourself, of your ability, your standing, the weight you carry, and of the figure you cut in the world, will be out-pictured in your appearance and in your manner.

Confidence is the very basis of all achievement. There is a tremendous power in the conviction that we can do a thing. The man who has great faith in himself is relieved from a great many uncertainties as to whether he is in his right place, from doubts as to his ability, and from fears regarding his future.

Freedom is essential to achievement. No one can do his greatest work when his mind is cramped with worry, anxiety, fear, or uncertainty, any more than he can do his best physical work with his body in a cramped position. Absolute freedom is imperative for the best brain work. Uncertainty and doubt are great enemies of that concentration which is the secret of all effectiveness.

We are told that it is faith that doubles one's power and multiples one's ability, and that without it we can do nothing. How quickly a strong man is stripped of his power the moment he loses confidence in himself or his ability!

The habit of dwelling on difficulties and magnifying them weakens the character and paralyzes the initiative in such a way as to hinder one from ever daring to undertake great things. The man who does things is the man who sees the end and defies the obstacles.

Many people never seem to come in to themselves until they have received a great humiliating defeat. This seems to touch a spring deep in their nature, setting free dynamic forces which enable them to do marvels. When a man who has got the right stuff in him has made a slip and feels that he is down and out, when he sees those that know him regard him as a failure, calling him a "has

been", he makes a resolve to redeem himself from the disgrace and every red blood corpuscle in him helps him to make good.

Chapter 5

Self Encouragement By Self Suggestion

He only is beaten who admits it.

How can you expect to get the maximum of efficiency when worry, fear, anxiety, discouragement, or melancholy are sapping twenty-five, fifty, or seventy-five per cent of your mental energy? You must clear the mind of its enemies; otherwise you pay the penalty in exhausted vitality, in wasted energy.

Every time you feel fear coming into your mind, shut it out as quickly as possible and apply the antidote - fearlessness, assurance. Picture yourself as absolutely fearless. Say to yourself, "I am no coward. Cowards fear and cringe and crawl but I am a man. Fear is a child's frailty. It is not for grown-ups. I positively refuse to stoop to such a degrading thing. Fear is an abnormal mental process and I am normal. Fear cannot influence me, for I will not harbor it. I will not allow it to cripple my career."

The man who has acquired the power of keeping his mind filled with the thoughts which uplift and encourage, the optimistic thought, the cheerful, hopeful thought, has solved one of the great riddles of life.

Chapter 6

The Crime Of The "Blues"

A troubled brain cannot think clearly, vigorously, logically. Worry clogs the brain and paralyzes the thought.

Faith is the great antidote for worry. We fear because we cannot see the way. Faith sees the way.

The man who can smile when everything seems to go against him shows that he is made of winning material, for no ordinary man can do this.

There is no place in civilization for the morose, gloomy, or despondent man. Nobody wants to live with him. Everybody is dejected and depressed in his presence, and tries to get away from him. There is nothing more contagious than mental depression and the "blues."

A man who is at the mercy of his disposition can never be a leader, a power among men.

You are not capable of correct judgment, of using good sense, where there is fear or doubt or despondence in your mind. Sound judgment comes from a perfectly working brain, unclouded, untroubled faculties. Never act upon that which is suggested when you are in a state of fear and anxiety. When fear is in the mind, the mental forces are scattered and we are not capable of vigorous concentration. Calmness, poise, balance, mental serenity are absolutely essential to the most effective thinking.

The art of arts is to learn how to clear the mind of its enemies, - enemies of our comfort, happiness, and success. It is a great thing to learn to focus the mind upon the beautiful instead of the ugly, the true instead of the false, upon harmony instead of discord, life instead of death, health instead of disease, and is not always easy, but it is possible to everybody. It requires only a little skillful thinking, the forming of the right thought habits.

The best way to keep out darkness is to keep the life filled with light; to keep out discord, keep it filled with harmony; to shut out error, keep the mind filled with truth, to shut out ugliness, contemplate beauty and loveliness; to get rid of all that is sour and unwholesome, contemplate all that is sweet and wholesome. Opposite thoughts cannot occupy the mind at the same time.

The world has little use for the man who has not sand enough in him to brace up and be a man when he meets with failure.

Chapter 7

Change the Thought, Change The Man

If you are vacillating, if you lack decision, just assume a decisive mental attitude. Constantly affirm that you are able to decide wisely, firmly, finally. Do not allow yourself to think that you are weak.

One of the cruelest things one can do to another is to reproach him for his deficiencies, peculiarities, or weaknesses. What such a person wants is encouragement and help, not additional handicap.

No one can help another very much when he sees in him a hopeless picture. On the other hand, you can make a person do almost anything when you show him his possibilities and make him believe in himself.

Chapter 8

The Paralysis Of Fear

Fear and worry make us attract the very things we dread.

Fear in all its different phases of expression, such as worry, anxiety, anger, jealousy, timidity, is the greatest enemy of the human race. It has robbed men of more happiness and efficiency, has made more men cowards, more people failures or forced them into mediocrity, than anything else.

Fear is a great robber of power. It paralyzes the thinking faculties, ruins spontaneity, enthusiasm, and self confidence. It has a blighting effect upon all one's thoughts, moods, and efforts. It destroys ambition and efficiency.

No matter what your need is, put it into the hands of faith. Do not ask how or why or when. Just do your level best, and have faith, which is the great miracle worker of the ages.

Chronic worriers are always deficient in faith.

The secret of achievement is concentration. Worry or fear of any kind is fatal to mental concentration and kills creative ability. When the whole mental organism is vibrating with conflicting emotions, efficiency is impossible. The things which make us prematurely old, which wrinkle our faces, take the elasticity out of our step, the bloom from the cheek, and which rob us of joy are not those which actually happen.

Fear benumbs initiative. It kills confidence and causes indecision, makes us waver, afraid to begin things, suspect and doubt. Fear is a great leak in power. There are plenty of people who waste more than half of their precious energy in useless worry and anxiety.

Our sense of fear or terror is always in proportion to our sense of weakness or inability. When conscious of being stronger than that which terrorizes weaker persons, we have no sense of fear.

Chapter 9

One With The Divine

The secret of all health, prosperity, and happiness is being in conscious union with the Divine.

The closer we are to Divinity, the nearer we are to the limitless source of things. When we feel strongest, when we feel conscious of the power which is back of the flesh, but not of it, when we feel that we are in touch with Divinity, our power is greater and our supply larger.

Every time a man does wrong he weakens himself by so much. Every time we do wrong, every time we depart from the truth, every time we commit a dishonest, unworthy act, do a mean, contemptible thing, we lessen the Omnipotent grip upon us, and then we become a party to all sorts of fears, apprehensions, dreads, and doubts.

The moment we feel conscious that our union with the Great Source of things is broken, we are filled with uncertainty and apprehension; we feel a sense of helplessness, which makes us weak, timid, apprehensive. Fear, anxiety, worry, are positive evidence that we have lost our divine connection and strayed from home, that we are out of tune with the Infinite, and in discord with principle.

The very idea of persistently holding the thought that one is divinely upheld, the thought that no harm can possibly come to him while he is thus ensconced in the Divine Presence destroys all fear and worry; restores confidence, and multiples power.

Chapter 10

Getting In Tune

If we could only learn the art of always keeping ourselves in harmony we could multiply our effectiveness immeasurably.

Mental discord is fatal to quality in work. The destructive emotions - worry, anxiety, hatred, jealousy, anger, greed, selfishness - are all deadly enemies of efficiency.

Harmony is the secret of all effectiveness, beauty and happiness. We are harmonious simply by keeping ourselves in tune with the Infinite. This means absolute health of all the mental and moral faculties. Poise, serenity, amiability, sweetness of temper tend to keep the whole mental and physical economy in harmony with the perpetual renewal processes constantly going on within us, which are destroyed by friction.

Chapter 11

The Great Within

True prayer repairs the broken wires of our Divine connection, reassures us, brings us into harmony with the Infinite. This is the secret of all mental healing.

We all have moments when we get glimpses of the great possibilities within ourselves. It may sometimes be an experience which takes away a loved one, which opens up a rift in our nature and gives us a glimpse of power we never before knew we possessed.

Chapter 12

A New Way Of Bringing up Children

Keep the child's mind full of harmony, of truth, and there will be no room for discord, for error.

Now, what advantage is it to send a youth out into the world with a head full of knowledge but without the confidence or assurance to use it effectively, or the ability to grapple with life's problems with that vigor and efficiency which alone can bring success?

The time will come when no child will be allowed to grow up without being taught to believe in himself, to have great confidence in his ability. This will be a most important part of his education, for if he believes in himself enough, he will not be likely to allow a single deficient faculty or weakness to wreck his career.

Chapter 13

Training For Longevity

A man is like a fine clock, which, if properly cared for, will keep splendid time and run for a century, but which, if neglected or abused, will very soon get out of order, and wear out or give out long before it should.

The mental ideal determines what shall be built into the life, whether it shall be youthful or aging conditions. Every person has the inherent capacity for prolonging his life, increasing his potential longevity; but he must first understand the mental principle.

Perfect health, vigor, and robustness are impossible to one whose mind is a slave to the conviction that he is on the decline, that he is going downhill physically, that his powers are gradually lessening through age.

Most people do not realize that their mental attitude is a positive energy which is constantly creating results. Every time we focus the mind, we are producing, creating something.

No one is old until the interest in life is gone out of him, until his spirit becomes aged, until his heart becomes cold and unresponsive; as long as he touches life at many points he cannot grow old in spirit.

A man is old, no matter what his years, when he is out of touch with youth, with its ideals, its points of view, out of touch with the spirit of his times; when he has ceased to be progressive and up-to-date.

The minds of many people have become unbalanced because they did not break the habit of night picturing, visualizing their troubles and trails, which are always so much exaggerated and appear in such fearful vividness during the night.

Before falling into unconsciousness, we should fill the mind with bright, encouraging, inspiring thoughts. We should never go to sleep until we have restored our lost balance, gained perfect mental poise, until we have put into operation the forces which would tend to harmonize and bring peace and joy into our lives.

We age rapidly because we do not keep our mental instruments in tune. Discord, grating and jarring whittle life away very quickly. We suffer when we are discordant because we have

violated the fundamental law of divine harmony. Poise, mental serenity, is a friend of youth and tends to refresh, renew, and rejuvenate the body.

Look as though you were young. Dress as youthful as is consistent with the dignity and good sense of your years. Do not stoop over, or shuffle your feet. Throw your shoulders back, walk erect, and youthful; do not drag your steps.

Do not let romance die out of your heart. It is a great youth preserver. Love, unselfishness, a spirit of kindness and helpfulness, keep the heart warm and young.

Whenever you think of yourself, always hold the image of yourself as you would like to be. Do not dwell upon your imperfections or weaknesses, because that will mar your image, but hold tenaciously to the ideal of yourself in your perfection, as the personality the Creator intended you to be.

Lots of play and innocent fun tend to erase the marks of age and to bring us back to youth. Fun is a twin of youth. To be normally healthy, we require a great deal of amusement and recreation and all of the innocent fun we can get, for these are great stimulators, life promoters.

Humor is a care-killer, a worry destroyer. It tends to quicken the circulation, to promote digestion. Cheerful people sleep better, are better company, and have more friends, and people who have many friends are less likely to be morose and depressed. Sociability is a promoter of good will, kindly feelings, and harmony; and all these things induce health and prolong life.

Growth is an enemy of old age. The man who is mentally expanding, who is constantly growing larger and becoming broader, fuller, complete, does not age nearly as rapidly as the man who has ceased to grow.

Age begins when growth stops. When the mind ceases to expand, to reach out and up, when the ideals begin to grow dim, when aspiration halts, then old age steps in.

The man who feels the spirit of youth surging through his body all the time, who holds the bright, cheerful, youthful, hopeful thought, retains his youthful appearance.

Chapter 14

As A Man Thinketh

When you are suffering from fear or worry, you may be sure you have endowed something with this power over you, otherwise it could not have gained such a hold. The very fact that you fear it shows that you have established between it and yourself a relation which you could break if you only knew how to apply your mental chemistry. Whenever you are unhappy, distressed, "blue", worried, it is due to some mental poison, which ought to be as easy to antidote as it is to destroy fire with water.

What you allow to live in your heart, harbor in your mind, dwell upon in your thoughts, are seeds which will develop in your life and produce things like themselves. Hate seed in the heart cannot produce a love flower in the life.

Discord of every kind, whether it is expressed in suffering, in disease, in poverty, in failure, in happiness, simply means that one is out of harmony with his better self, that he does not harmonize with his divinity.

All thoughts which suggest weakness, failure, unhappiness, or poverty, are destructive, negative, tearing-down thoughts. They are our enemies. Brand them whenever they try to gain an entrance into your mind. Avoid them as you would thieves for they are thieves, thieves of our comfort, thieves of harmony, of power, of happiness, of success.

The mind must be kept free from bitterness, jealousy, hatred, envy, and uncharitable thoughts; from everything which trammels it, or there must be a penalty paid in impaired efficiency and inferior work as well as loss of peace of mind.

There must be goodwill in the heart or we cannot do good work with head or hand. No one can carry secret hatreds and grudges, jealousies, and revengeful feelings, without seriously impairing his own reputation. Many people wonder why they are not popular, why they are disliked generally, why they stand for so little in their community, when it is really because of their bitter, revengeful, discordant radiations which keep away personal magnetism.

On the other hand, those who send out kindly, loving, helpful, sympathetic thoughts, those who feel friendly toward everybody,

and who carry no bitterness, hatred, or jealousy in their hearts, are attractive, helpful and sunny.

Man will reach the millennium when he has learned to hold the right attitude of mind towards his fellow men. The time will come when it will be found infinitely easier to do right than to do wrong, when people will eagerly follow the Golden Rule, because it will produce harmony and universal well-being.

Chapter 15

Mental Self-Thought Poisoning

Every thought or emotion vibrates through every cell in the body and leaves an influence like itself.

To be healthy, happy, and successful, we must be good. There is no other road to true happiness and real prosperity.

Did you realize that it is possible to read in your face and manner the record of your thoughts; that your face is a bulletin board upon which is advertised what has been going on in your mind for years?

A healthy body is composed of healthy thought externalized, outpictured. And, too, it follows the ideals, and as long as one holds the youthful, vigorous, progressive, energetic, creative ideal in his mind his body responds to the thought.

Just try the experiment of thinking of yourself as an absolutely perfect being, possessing superb health, a magnificent body, a vigorous constitution, a sublime mind, and capable of standing any amount of strain.

Never allow yourself to have a defective, crippled, dwarfed ideal of yourself; never entertain such an imperfect health model for an instant, for these mental patterns of yourself will gradually begin to be reproduced in your physical condition.

Our ideas, thoughts, emotions, moods, our mental attitude, send a constant succession of vibrations through every cell, every organ, and through all the functions of the body. There is a perpetual succession of these impulses through the entire mass of the millions of cells.

It is now well established that vicious mental states, violent emotions and explosive passions, make chemical changes in the brain and poison the cell life through the whole body.

We are much more susceptible to disease when suffering from any sort of mental discord, discouragement, or the "blues," because of the cell damage due to the presence of chemical changes, the impairment of nutrition, imperfect digestion, and mental self-poisoning.

When discordant from worry, anxiety, anger, revenge, or jealousy, you may know that these things drain away your energy,

waste your vitality at a fearful rate, and not only do no good, but also grind away the delicate mental machinery, inducing premature age and shortening the life. Worry thoughts, fear thoughts, selfish thoughts are so many malignant forces within us, destroying harmony and ruining efficiency, while the opposite thoughts produce just the opposite result. They soothe instead of irritate, and increase efficiency, multiply mental power. Five minutes of hot temper may wreak such a havoc in the delicate cell life of the nervous system that it will take weeks or months to repair the injury, or it may never be repaired.

Many people keep themselves in a state of chronic self-poisoning by their embittered, revengeful, hatred, jealous thoughts, selfishness or by their violent tempers and fits of raging passion. These self-prisoners not only destroy their present happiness and success, but also many years of their lives.

Whatever improves the health of the mind improves the health of the body. The uplifting, inspiring, cheerful and optimistic thought is not only a great mental tonic, but a physical tonic also.

Never allow yourself to be convinced that you are not complete master of yourself. Stoutly affirm your own superiority over bodily ills, and do not acknowledge yourself the slave of an inferior power.

Love is the normal law of our being, and any departure from the love thought must result in anarchy of the physical economy, because the law of our being has been violated.

It is not difficult to shut out poisonous thoughts from the mind. All one need do is to substitute the opposite thought to that which produces the fatal poison, for it will always furnish the antidote. Discord cannot exist in the presence of harmony. The charitable thought, the love thought, will very quickly kill the jealousy, the hate, and the revenge thought. If we force pleasant, cheerful pictures into the mind, the gloomy, "blue" thoughts will have to get out.

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