

## As a Man Thinketh – James Allen

*Notes and Takeaways (Written in 1903 so all masculine – applies equally to women)*

### Thought and Character

- o As a man thinks in his heart so he is
  - “They themselves are the makers of themselves”
- o A man is literally what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts
- o A noble or godlike character is not a thing of chance, but is the natural result of continued effort in the right thinking
- o **Man is made or unmade by himself; in the armory of thought he forges the weapons by which he destroys himself; he also fashions the tools with which he builds for himself heavenly mansions of joy and strength and peace**
- o Man is the master of thought, the molder of character, and the maker and shaper of condition, environment and destiny
- o Man is always the master, even in his weaker and most abandoned state
  - In weakness and degradation he is the foolish master who misgoverns his “household”
- o Only by patience, practice, and ceaseless importunity can a man enter the Door of the Temple of Knowledge

### Effect of Thought on Character

- o **A man’s mind may be likened to a garden, which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild**
  - If no useful seeds are put into it, then an abundance of useless weed-seeds will rise up
- o Thought and character are one - character can only manifest and discover itself through environment, circumstance and experience
  - The outer conditions of a person’s life will always be found to be harmoniously related to his inner state
- o Man is buffeted by circumstance – despite this when he realizes that he is a creative power and commands his mind, he then becomes the rightful master of himself and his little universe
- o Circumstances become self-fulfilling events often in the exact ratio of one’s mental condition and spiritual progress
  - When a man earnestly applies himself to remedy the defects in his character, and makes swift and marked progress he passes rapidly and upwardly through a succession of change and fortune

- o The soul attracts that which it secretly harbors; that which it loves and which it fears
  - Seek what you love and the soul will flourish
- o **Good thoughts bear good fruit, bad thoughts bear bad fruits**
- o As the reaper of his own harvest, man can impact both suffering and bliss in his life
- o Man does not attract that which he wants, but that which he is entitled to based on his personal improvement
  - Whims, fancies, and ambitions can be thwarted at every step, but innermost thoughts and desires are lasting
- o Simply because a man prays does not mean that he gets what he wants, man tends to only achieve what is justly earned
  - Wishes and prayers are only gratified and answered when they harmonize with thoughts and actions
- o **Men are always anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves**
  - The man who shrinks from self-sacrifice can never accomplish the object of his heart
    - Grow and learn every day
  - The man whose sole objective is to acquire wealth must be prepared to make great personal sacrifices before he can accomplish his vision
- o It is impossible to judge another fully with respect to only the external aspects of his life
- o **Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; on the other hand, bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results**
- o **Suffering is always the effect of wrong thought in some direction**
  - It is an indication that the individual is out of harmony with himself and with the universe, the law of his being
- o A man is not rightly conditioned until he is a happy, healthy, and prosperous being; happiness, health, and prosperity are the result of a harmonious alignment of the inner with the outer self, of the internal man with his external surroundings
- o Let a man radically alter his thoughts, and he will be astonished at the rapid transformation it will effect in the material conditions of his life
  - **Thought rapidly crystallizes into habit, and habit solidifies in circumstance**
    - Beautiful thoughts of all kinds crystallize into habits of grace and kindness, which solidifies into genial and sunny circumstances
    - **Pure thoughts crystallize into habits of temperance and self-control**
    - Thoughts of courage, self-resilience, and decision crystallize into many habits which often solidify into circumstances of success, plenty, and freedom

### Effect of Thought on Health and Body

- o The body is the servant of the mind
  - It obeys the operation of the mind, whether they be deliberately chosen or automatically expressed
- o Disease and health, like circumstances, are rooted in thought
- o **Thoughts of fear have been known to kill a man as speedily as a bullet**
  - They are continually killing thousands of people just as surely although less rapidly
- o Out of a clean heart comes a clean life and a clean body
- o Change of diet will not help a man who will not change his thoughts
- o Clean thoughts make clean habits

### Thought and Purpose

- o A man should conceive of a legitimate purpose in his heart and set out to accomplish it
- o He should steadily focus his thought-force on the object at hand, which he has set before him
- o Having conceived his ultimate purpose, a man should mentally mark out a straight pathway to its achievement, looking neither to the right nor the left
  - Doubts and fears should be rigorously excluded; they are disintegrating elements which break up the straight line of effort, rendering it crooked, ineffectual, useless
- o **Strength can only be developed by effort and practice**
- o He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered failure
  - Every thought is allied with power, and all difficulties are bravely met and wisely overcome

### The Thought Factor in Achievement

- o **All that a man achieves and all that he fails to achieve is the direct result of his own thoughts**
  - Individual responsibility must be absolute
- o A strong man cannot help a weaker man unless the weaker man is willing to accept the help
- o A man whose first thought is bestial indulgence could neither think clearly nor plan methodically
- o By the aid of self-control, resolution, righteousness, and well-directed thought a man ascends
- o **He who must accomplish little must sacrifice little; he who would achieve much must sacrifice much**

### Vision and Ideals

o **The dreamers are the saviors of the world**(Atlas Shrugged)

o Dreamers know their dreams as realities which they shall one day see and know  
(Napoleon Hill)

▪ Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become

▪ Dreams are the seedlings of reality

o He who cherishes a beautiful vision, a lofty ideal in his heart will one day realize it

o Cherish your visions; cherish your ideals; cherish the music that stirs in your heart,  
the beauty that forms in your mind

▪ Embrace what makes yourself, you

#### Serenity

o Calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom

▪ It is the result of long and patient effort in self-control

o The strong and calm man is always loved and revered

o Humanity surges with uncontrolled passion, is tumultuous with ungoverned grief, is  
blown about by anxiety and doubt - only the wise man whose thoughts are  
controlled and purified, makes the winds and the storms of life obey him and his  
soul is at peace