

IN
PURSUIT
OF INNER
BALANCE



In Pursuit of Inner Balance

From the Library of
Rick and Terry Peterson

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INTRODUCTION

We grew up in a small, rust-belt town surrounded by farm country. Our family rarely traveled out of town, let alone out of state, or heaven forbid, out of the country. So, we had very little perspective on how the world worked and almost no access to relevant mentors.

As early as when we were in high school, I think we suspected we would be partners in business together. We both remember working out in the YMCA weight room one day, when we were talking about our future, between sets. We discussed that if we wanted to have the most rewarding and fulfilling life, we probably should commit to never being content. That's the phrase we used – to never allow ourselves to be content.

After we graduated, we did go into business together. And we set high goals for ourselves. Because of our lack of real-world experience or mentors, we were in a desperate race to read as much as we could to improve our chances for success. When all our friends were out boating in the summer or watching football in the winter, he or I were sequestered away in a den reading. Barb jokingly referred to it as Terry spending time with his old, dead friends. She was right. Lacking real life mentors, we became friends with Emerson, William James, Rudyard Kipling, Maslow, Epictetus, Lao Tzu and others.

When either of us came across a work that really spoke to us, we would type the essence of it into a document. The next time we were together we would discuss and debate the merits of the work. If we decided it was important enough for our emulation, we would put the document in a frame and hang it on a wall at home. This book is the compilation of those works. (Based on the number of pages included here you can imagine what the walls of the hallways, stairwells and reading

nooks look like.) The reason we did this is because we agreed with the guy who said, “It’s not so important that you read everything. It’s more valuable to read the really important stuff over and over.”

The way we think of it, the works in this book fit into two broad categories. One is about striving, making the most of yourself and living the “Strenuous Life” Teddy Roosevelt spoke of. The other group reminds us to keep perspective about what really matters, like kindness, treating people the way you would like to be treated, and how to, “Meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two imposters just the same.” To our thinking, if you behave in accordance with both ideals at the same time, you can achieve “Inner Balance.”

If you set high goals for yourself and take on big challenges, you frequently find yourself in situations you haven’t been in before; where you aren’t sure what your next step should be. During high-impact times of uncertainty or anxiety, grounded people look to their religion or philosophy for direction and guidance. When we find ourselves in these situations we turn to many of the documents in this book.

- Rick & Terry Peterson

A PSALM OF LIFE

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

Trust no Future, however pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

- Longfellow

ANXIETY AND FEAR COME FROM

1. Large scale consequences
2. Unfamiliarity
3. Lack of control
4. Sudden occurrences

If you understand where anxieties come from, you can eliminate them.

- Dennis Waitley

BE STRONG

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle – face it; ‘tis God’s gift.

Say not, “The days are evil. Who’s to blame?”
And fold the hands and acquiesce – oh shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God’s name.

It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
Faint not – fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.

- Maltbie Davenport Babcock

CADET PRAYER – WEST POINT

O God, our Father, Thou Searcher of Human hearts, help us to draw near to Thee in sincerity and truth. May our religion be filled with gladness and may our worship of Thee be natural.

Strengthen and increase our admiration for honest dealing and clean thinking and suffer not our hatred of hypocrisy and pretense ever to diminish. Encourage us in our endeavor to live above the common level of life.

Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half-truth when the whole can be won.

Endow us with courage that is born of loyalty to all that is noble and worthy, that scorns to compromise with vice and injustice and knows no fear when truth and right are in jeopardy.

Guard us against flippancy and irreverence in the sacred things of life. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service. Kindle our hearts in fellowship with those of a cheerful countenance and soften our hearts with sympathy for those who sorrow and suffer.

Help us to maintain the honor of the Corps untarnished and unsullied and to show forth in our lives the ideals of West Point in doing our duty to Thee and to our Country.

All of which we ask in the name of the Great Friend and Master of all.

AMEN

*Endow us with courage
that is born of loyalty
to all that is noble and worthy.*

CADET RESOLUTION – VALLEY FORGE

My goal in life is to achieve honorable success in my profession and to become a citizen of the highest integrity in my community. To this end, I RESOLVE THAT:

- ☐ Honesty and integrity in thought, word and deed shall characterize my relationship with others.
- ☐ Excellence shall be the hallmark of my endeavors.
- ☐ Respect and consideration for all persons and their property shall be my resolve.
- ☐ Strength of character shall be my objective as I strive to achieve greater self-discipline and the highest physical, mental, spiritual, and moral development at Valley Forge.
- ☐ Responsibility shall be my watchword, both in my obligations to others and in my commitment to my own objectives and ideals.

Remembering that noble thoughts inspire noble deeds,
I shall aspire to a life of honorable service.

CHARACTER IS DESTINY

Character is Destiny

Heraclitus (500 B.C.)

Tests for whether a behavior displays high or low character –
it is high character if:

- it contributes to the betterment of both society and the individual.
- the action will bring honor to your name.

So, what are the behaviors that define character?

(The four cardinal virtues)

1. Prudence

Don't make reckless choices. Use good judgement.

Analyze, compare, calculate & project.

Accurate critical thinking (what's true, what's false, what's relevant).

Open-minded. Flexible. Lack of prejudice or bias.

Keep things in perspective – don't make mountains out of molehills.

2. Justice

Don't advantage yourself, your family or friends at the expense of others.

Seek first to understand before seeking to be understood.

See the other person's viewpoint.

The "something for nothing" attitude is wrong.

3. Fortitude

Moral courage. Do the hard thing.

Have the hard conversation, in a diffident manner.

Face your harsh realities. Encounter adversity or bear pain
with a pleasant disposition.

Gallantry in life's struggles. To Dare. "There is safety in valor." – *Emerson*

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage. – *Anais Nin*

4. Temperance

Appetites and passions in balance. No vices.

Self-control in communication as well as actions. Self-discipline.

Rule your emotions. Don't raise voice and display anger.

Stay detached from other's disharmony. Poise.

Self-denial. Thrift. Save some percent of every paycheck.

"Utter valiant 'no's' instead of ruinous 'yes's'." – *Emerson*

The personality traits which produce our strengths can become our weaknesses, if not kept in balance (all things in moderation). Vigilantly strive to uncover, examine, admit and battle your shortcomings, in the ongoing struggle to improve how you behave. "I don't excuse my failings, I confront them."

5. Ambition

Dreams. Worthwhile goals. The "Will" to improve yourself,
your organization & or society.

Strong desire. Devotion to a great cause.

Drive to achieve one's potential – To make the most of life.

Aspiration – longing for something better.

There are no successes without aspirations.

"Ordinary goals keep people ordinary.

Life's successes result from a lofty aim." – *Brownlow*

6. Work Ethic

Action toward a definite purpose. In earnest. Diligent effort. Industrious.

A hard thinker as much as a hard worker.

Initiative. Determination to succeed. Orderly. Quality workmanship.

7. Perseverance

Single-minded Persistence in spite of obstacles.

Don't allow yourself an "exit strategy".

Focus. Endurance. Take the long-term view.

"The virtue lies in the struggle." – *A. A. Milne*

Most great endeavors require a "perseverance" stage.

Resolute determination can change the outcome.

Character is Destiny continued

Providence comes to the aid of the person who fights on
even after the battle seems lost.

8. Honesty

Doing what's right when nobody's looking – *J.C. Watts*.

Truthful. Full disclosure. Sincere.

Pure of heart. Candor. Forthright. Fidelity.

Don't equivocate or exaggerate. Pay debts on time.

"I don't lie, cheat, steal or tolerate those who do." – *West Point honor code*.

Afraid of no truth – *Thom. Jefferson* Honest self-assessment.

Don't lie to yourself. What harms us is to persist in self-deceit – *Marcus Aurelius*

9. Kindness

Uphold the Golden Rule: treat others the way you'd like to be treated.

Friendly. Mild. Gentle.

Regard for the other person's feelings. Take a genuine interest in people.

Compassion. Tolerance. Forgiveness. Forbearance. Mercy.

10. Responsibility

"You can depend on me." Take the blame for your failures.

Trustworthy. Decisive & Self-reliant.

Careful observance of duty, as a: grown child,

sibling, spouse, parent, employee or employer.

Instead of seeing yourself as a victim, search for the role

"you played" in your negative outcomes.

Nature requires that we earn what we get, and that we get what we earn.

11. Service

Be a good servant – to your spouse, your family, your customers,
your co-workers & your subordinates.

Constructive. Helpful. Promote harmony.

Be a peacemaker. Encourage others. Altruism.

"You can have everything in life you want if you
help enough other people get what they want." – *Zig Ziglar*

“Extraordinary success is achieved by making those around you successful.” – *Citrin & Smith*

12. Ongoing Education

Continuous learning, development, and growth in your field of interest, resulting in ever-increasing competence.

Introspection. A life-long process of 1)self-searching
2)education and 3)applying what you learn.

A thirst for self-improvement. Exploring. Discovering.
Learn from your failures.

“The purpose of education is not knowledge –
it is right action.” – *Herbert Spencer*

Living an examined life will liberate and transform us.

13. Enthusiasm

Optimistic. Cheerful. Upbeat. Zeal. Vigor. Internal Locus of Control –
believing you can influence your outcomes.

14. Humility

Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.

The willingness to admit our faults; to apologize;
to accept criticism; to give others the credit.

It allows us to see how our wrong thinking
or wrong actions have hurt us in the past.

Playing the “big shot” turns others against us and harms our outcomes.

15. Respectfulness

Be courteous & polite. Treat others with dignity.

Be punctual. Avoid foul language.

Show respect for all persons and their property. Have respect for yourself.

16. Gratitude

“The deepest principle in human nature
is the craving to be appreciated.” – *William James*

Show your appreciation. Count your blessings.

17. Loyalty

Toward noble people and high ideals.

One indicator of high character is a large number of long relationships.

18. Generosity

Charity. Charitably interpret the actions of others. Goodwill for others.

Give with no expectation of return, to family, in-laws,
neighbors & fellow citizens in a jam.

The power of generosity to make a life of prosperity and consequence.

*If you study the lives of people who have achieved above average
“destinies”*

you can trace the source back to the “character traits” listed here.

**This is the whole list. So if you are good at these then you are of high
character ...**

and

Character is Destiny

- Rick and Terry Peterson

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*Are there any character traits
I could improve, that would
improve my outcomes?*

CREED OF DON QUIXOTE

Call nothing thine
except thy soul.

Love not what thou art
only what thou may become.

Do not pursue pleasure
for thou may have the misfortune
to overtake it.

Look always forward
for in last year's nest
there are no birds this year.

Be just to all peers
and courteous to all others.

CREED OF MOTHER TERESA

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior
motives.
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends
and some genuine enemies.
Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.
Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy
overnight.
Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.
Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.
Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.
It was never between you and them anyway.

DESIDERATA

GO PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE & HASTE AND REMEMBER WHAT PEACE THERE MAY BE IN SILENCE. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud & aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter; for always there will be greater & lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to the virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about Love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.

But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees & the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt, the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors & aspirations in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

Be careful. Strive to be happy.

Found Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore; (Dated 1692)

DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
When the funds are low, and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow,
You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things seem worse,
That you must not quit.

- Edgar A. Guest (1921)

ENCHIRIDION – EPICTETUS

Stoicism – emphasizes reason, and self-control. Its aim is to secure for oneself happiness and a flourishing life. Stoic philosophy is a formula to live a tranquil, calm, life of freedom; by behaving virtuously in all circumstances.

1. Some things are in our power (our complete control), and others are not.
In our power is our opinion, our desire to move toward a thing, or away from a thing.
Not in our power is our body, our possessions, our reputation, nor our appointed office.

If you care too much for the things which are in the power of others, you will feel hindered, you will lament, be disturbed, and you will blame both God and men.

If you realize that the only things within your complete control are your opinion, your attitude and your will, then no man can hinder you, you will never blame or accuse, and no one can harm you.

Every time you encounter a “harsh appearance” say to yourself, “This is just an appearance.” Then examine it by the first and chief rule you possess: Ask yourself if it concerns what is in your power or what is not in your power. If it concerns what is not in your complete power, be ready to say, “This is nothing to me.”

5. Men are disturbed not by the things which happen, but By their opinion of the things.
If you maintain your will in a way “comfortable to nature” then circumstances (harsh appearances)

won't cause you to feel vexed, frustrated, disturbed, troubled or to feel grief.

12. Is the milk spilled? Is something you valued stolen?
Say on these occasions, "At such price is sold tranquility." For freedom from vexation is the prize, and nothing is got without price.
14. If you would have your children, your wife, or you friends live forever you are a fool. If you would have your associates be free from faults you are silly. These things are not within your power. What is within your power is to control your desires. Whoever then wishes to be free, let him not require anything that depends on others.
16. Take care that the "appearance" of the "external" does not carry you away with it.
19. You can be invincible, if you only enter contests where the outcome is within your complete control. Care not for the things which are not within your complete control.
30. Be aware of the role you are in and the duties associated with it.

Family roles: husband, father, grown son, brother, uncle, son-in-law.

Occupational roles: student, employee, employer, professional, soldier.

Modern-day consumer roles: shopper, moviegoer, hotel guest, airplane occupant, spectator.

General roles: pedestrian, motorist, fisherman, bystander, visitor, role model for young people.

Each of these roles, if rightly considered, points to the acts appropriate to it.

Be conscious of which particular social role you are playing, and which actions are required for fulfilling that role to the highest standard.

Did you have a bad father? Does a neighbor wrong you? Their behavior is not within your power. Examine instead what is your duty to be a virtuous son or neighbor.

I can live a flourishing life if I recognize each role I find myself in, and choose to act in a morally excellent, virtuous manner.

31. Nothing is good except moral virtue.
For each one of us the only good in the world is our virtuous activity.
The only evil in the world is our actions which are not virtuous.

Every creature is formed by nature to turn from things which cause harm, and to follow and admire things which are useful. To we human creatures who are social and rational, among the things which are useful are friendships, strong family relationships, wealth and material comfort.

Only the uninstructed son would revile his father for giving him no part of his father's estate. It is the uninstructed farmer who reviles the gods for the

poor crop; the sailor for the bad weather; the merchant for his meager profits; and the man for the loss of his wife or children.

33. Avoid making yourself disagreeable.

Do not reprove the uninstructed, nor boast that you are learned.

If you are told that another speaks ill of you, make no defense. Reply, "He must not know the rest of my faults, for he would not have mentioned these only."

Abstain entirely from shouts at any person, or violent emotions.

38. Just as in walking about you pay attention so as not to twist your ankle, pay attention in the same way so as not to harm your ruling principles:

- ☐ I alone am in control of my attitude.
- ☐ Things I am not in control of are nothing to me.
- ☐ It is my duty to behave virtuously in each circumstance.

48. The uninstructed person expects advantages or harm from externals. The philosopher expects all advantage and all harm from himself.

*Every time you encounter a
“harsh appearance” say to
yourself, “this is just an
appearance.”*

EXCELLENCE CAN BE ATTAINED

Excellence can be attained if you...

- ☐ Care more than others think is wise.
- ☐ Risk more than others think is safe.
- ☐ Dream more than others think is practical.
- ☐ Expect more than others think is possible.

GOALS

Held in the heart
Seen only in the mind
Toward which you are moving

Source of happiness
Mile markers in life
Reached and surpassed only with perseverance

Outlet for the basic human need to take risks
Teaching us the pleasure of persistence
Empowering us to move forward,
Toward a life of fulfillment

- Earl Nightingale

GRADATIM

Heaven is not gained at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

We rise by things that are 'neath our feet;
By what we have mastered of good and gain;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

- Josiah Holland

GREAT STRUGGLES

We learn about our own strengths and limits and extend them by overcoming difficulties, by straining ourselves to the utmost, by meeting challenge and hardship; even failing. There can be great enjoyment in a great struggle and this can displace fear. Furthermore, this is the best path to healthy self-esteem, which is based not only upon approval from others, but also upon actual achievements and successes and upon the realistic self-confidence which ensues!

- Abraham Maslow

HOW DID YOU DIE?

Did you tackle that trouble that came your way
With a resolute heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day
With a craven soul and fearful?
Oh, a trouble's a ton, or a trouble's an ounce,
Or a trouble is what you make it,
And it isn't the fact that you're hurt that counts,
But only how did you take it?

You are beaten to earth? Well, well, what's that?
Come up with a smiling face.
It's nothing against you to fall down flat,
But to lie there -- that's disgrace.
The harder you're thrown, why the higher you bounce;
Be proud of your blackened eye!
It isn't the fact that you're licked that counts,
It's how did you fight -- and why?

And though you be done to the death, what then?
If you battled the best you could,
If you played your part in the world of men,
Why, the critic will call it good.
Death comes with a crawl, or comes with a pounce,
And whether he's slow or spry,
It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts,
But only how did you die?

- Edmond Vance Cooke

*If you can meet with
Triumph and Disaster
and treat those two imposters
just the same.*

IF

If you can keep your head when all about you
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
 But make allowance for their doubting too:
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
 Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
 And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;
 If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
 And treat those two impostors just the same:
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
 And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
 And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings,
 And never breathe a word about your loss:
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
 Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
 Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
 If all men count with you, but none too much:
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
 And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!

- Rudyard Kipling

KINDNESS

There will be times when you will be sorry –
Sorry about something you said
or left unsaid;

Sorry about something you did
or sorry that you didn't do something
you should have;

Sorry that you stayed late
or sorry that you went so early;

Sorry that you won something or lost;

But all your life you'll never be sorry
you were **kind**.

LAWS OF SUCCESS

1. **Definite Chief Aim** – Fix your heart and hand on some definite purpose.
2. **Self-Confidence** – not egotism, but real confidence based upon determination and specialized knowledge.
3. **Habit of Saving** – No one will have financial success in life without saving money. There is no exception to this rule, and no one may escape it.
4. **Initiative & Leadership** – will cause you to gravitate to the top.
5. **Imagination** – creates new ideas out of old concepts, puts old ideas to new uses, and solves the problems in front of you in novel ways.
6. **Enthusiasm** – enables you to “saturate” others, with interest in you and your ideas. It influences others to cooperate with you.
7. **Self-Control** – allows you to become the Master of your fate, and the captain of your soul.
8. **Habit of Doing More Than Paid For** – Doing more work and better work than you are paid for will eventually insure you a return in money far out of proportion to the service you render.

9. **Pleasing Personality** – If you can adapt yourself to any environment or any personality, you will win.
10. **Accurate Thinking** – separates facts from emotions, organizes facts into the important and unimportant, and builds effective working plans based on facts.
11. **Concentration** – focusing your attention upon a subject until you master it.
12. **Cooperation** – gives you access to the “Master Mind” and the value of teamwork.
13. **Profiting from Failure** – makes steppingstones out of all your past and future mistakes.
14. **Tolerance** – avoids the disastrous effects of prejudice.
15. **Practicing the Golden Rule** – Not understanding this universal law of human conduct causes millions to remain in misery, poverty and want, all their lives.

Employment of these laws will guarantee you the attainment of your Definite Chief Aim, without violating the rights of others.

You can rate people on this scale.
Where could you improve?

- Napoleon Hill

*Every day we are
presented with lessons.
Each lesson will continue to
present itself until learned.*

LIFE LESSONS

You are enrolled in a full-time school called “life.” Each day in this school you will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons or not, but your aspirations, combined with your shortcomings have designed the lessons as part of your curriculum.

- a. Each person has his or her own purpose and distinct path, unique and separate from anyone else’s.
- b. As you travel your life path, you will be presented with numerous lessons that you will need to learn in order to potentialize and fulfill your purpose.
- c. The lessons you are presented with will be specific to your shortcomings, or the goals you’ve set for yourself.
- d. As you travel through your life, you will encounter challenging lessons that others don’t have to face. It will appear to you, that you have a more difficult life-path than others around you. But others will spend years struggling with challenges that you don’t need to deal with.

Everyone’s circumstances are unique, and each of us needs to handle our own.

- e. You are being presented with a lesson every time you experience negative emotions, e.g.:

hurt	frustration	regret
anger	fear	remorse
rejection	annoyance	stressed out
irritation	disrespected	disappointment
picked on	unsettled	exploited
guilt	embarrassment	threatened
failure	shame	want

- f. To learn the lesson, analyze what caused you to feel the negative emotion, then conclude ways to modify your behavior or mind-set to avoid it in the future. (Remember: You can only control you.)
- g. Positive emotions have instructive value also, e.g.:
 - the emotions you feel as a result of being generous or charitable
 - the feeling of accomplishment resulting from your diligent effort
- h. But beware false lessons in the “happy” feelings. Pursuit of pleasure is dangerous, e.g.:
 - intoxication
 - infatuation
 - happiness as a result of buying things
 - love of ease
- i. None of the lessons presented to you will be useful unless you recognize them and are open to their value. NOTICE YOUR FEELINGS. Be open to learning all the lessons you are given.
- j. Hint: many times, the lesson you need to learn involves “Letting Go.” It requires “letting go” of your combative attitude, wrong thinking, selfishness, bad habits, ego or preferences.
- k. Come to see the pains and frustrations as gifts, or guides along your true path. View these crummy feelings as valuable learning opportunities. Associate the pain with the potential benefit.
- l. Remind yourself that you have a choice. You can either continue your resistance and feel badly, or you can learn whatever the lesson is there to teach you and become empowered.
- m. When you find your mind saying, “I hate this” or “This is miserable,” or when you find your mind asking, “Why are people so mean to me?”

or “Why are people such jerks?” convert the question to, “What is the lesson here for me?”

- n. In order for this to work you must acknowledge your role in the “pain” you find yourself in. You must admit that you are accountable for your behavior, and fully accept any consequences created by your actions or lack of action. Ask yourself, **“What role did I have in this negative outcome?”**
- o. There really is no way to skirt around the learning process. Whether you choose to learn your lessons or not is entirely up to you. But each lesson will continue to present itself until learned.
- p. This process may not be easy, but the rewards are worth the struggle.
- q. You will be presented with all the lessons you specifically need to learn. To live the most fulfilling life, you must be open to learning them all...

WHAT LESSONS ARE YOU RESISTING LATELY?

- T&RP after reading Cherie Carter-Scott

*Notice your feelings.
Be open to learning all the lessons
you are given.*

LIFE SCULPTURE

Children of life are we, as we stand
With our lives uncarved before us,
Waiting the hour when, at God's command,
Our life-dream shall pass o'er us.

If we carve it then on the yielding stone,
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own, -
Our lives, that angel-vision.

- George Washington Doane

MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

- **St. Francis of Assisi**

MAN'S WILL TO RISE

A man in earnest finds means.
A vigorous purpose makes much out of little.
Every condition has means of progress,
if we have spirit enough to use them.

Progress is the purpose of our being.
A man is to cultivate himself, because he is a man.
Inward improvements have a worth and dignity in themselves,
quite distinct from the power they give us outwardly.

Undoubtedly, a man is to labor to better his conditions,
but first to better himself.
Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage.
The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict.

You cannot, without guilt and disgrace, stop where you are.
The past and the present call you to advance.
Let what you have gained be an impulse to something higher.
If you will ... you can rise.

No power in society, no hardship or condition can keep you
down—in knowledge, power, virtue, influence ...
but by your own consent.

- William Ellory Channing

MARKER'S LAW

It doesn't matter if:

1. You need it,
2. You can get it now at a bargain price,
3. You feel you deserve it because
 - you've gone so long without, or
 - you go without other things, or
 - lesser people have better.

The only thing that matters is:

CAN YOU AFFORD IT?

You can't afford it if:

- 1. You don't have the cash in hand, or*
- 2. Your savings account balances
aren't where they should be.*

- John Marker, IRS collection agent

MEDITATIONS – MARCUS AURELIUS

Book 1

Able to hear unwelcome truths.

To be the same in all circumstances, even intense pain – like the loss of a child or chronic illness.

Optimism in adversity

To not display anger or other negative emotions.

(The Silver Rule)

Don't lose emotional control.

Book 2

The human soul degrades itself:

- ☐ When it becomes disgruntled at anything that happens.
- ☐ When it sets out to do another person harm, as the souls of the angry do.

Book 3

The greatest of all contests – the struggle not to be overwhelmed by anything that happens.

What is it – this thing that now forces itself on my notice?

What is it made up of? How long is it designed to last? What qualities do I need to bring to bear on it – tranquility, courage, honesty, straightforwardness or what?

Not to stain or disturb the spirit with a mess of false beliefs or unnecessary assumptions.

Book 4

React to events by accommodating yourself to what you face – to what is possible. Turn obstacles into fuel.

Don't feel harmed – and you haven't been.

You say to yourself, "It's unfortunate that this has happened." Could you say, "It's fortunate that, since this happened, I've remained unharmed by it – not shattered by the present or frightened of the future"?

Does what's happened keep you from acting with justice, generosity, self-control, prudence, honesty, humility, and all the other qualities that allow a person's nature to fulfill itself?

Book 5

The same thing happens to other people, and they weather it.

The mind is the ruler of the soul. It should remain unstirred by agitations.

Don't let the mind start in with judgments, calling a thing "good" or "bad."

You can lead an untroubled life, provided you can define goodness as you thinking and doing the right thing, and limit your desires to that.

Be tolerant with others and strict with yourself.

Book 6

Pride is a master of deception: when you think you're occupied in the weightiest business, that's when he has you in his spell.

Take Antoninus (Marcus' adopted father) as your model – His energy in doing what was rational ... his steadiness in any situation ... his calm expression ... his gentleness ... his modesty ... his eagerness to grasp things. How he never let things go before he was sure he had examined them thoroughly ... the way he put up with unfair criticism, without returning it ... not prone to backbiting, or cowardice, or jealousy ... content with the basics – in living quarters, clothes, food ... how hard he worked ... his constancy and reliability as a friend ... his delight at seeing his ideas improved on.

You take things you don't control and define them as "good" or "bad." If we limited "good" and "bad" to our own actions, we'd have no call to blame God, or to treat other people as enemies.

This doesn't have to upset you. Use this setback to practice other virtues.

Book 7

Treat what you don't have as nonexistent. Look at what you have, the things you value most, and think how much you'd crave them if you didn't have them.

At each moment you have the option:

- ☐ To accept this event with humility.
- ☐ To approach your thoughts with care, so that nothing irrational creeps in.
- ☐ To labor cheerfully and so endure the wind that blows from heaven

Some may be better at other things, but my goal is to be a better resource in tight places, and a better forgiver of faults.

In all that happens, keep before your eyes those who experienced it before you and felt shocked and outraged and resentment at it. And now where are they?

Book 8

Don't be overheard complaining – Not even to yourself.

The interrogation of appearances.

Blame no one. Where does blaming people get you? You know better than to engage in pointless actions.

Book 9

Today I escaped from anxiety. I discarded it, because it was within me, in my own perceptions – not outside.

Book 10

You can endure anything your mind can make endurable, by treating it as in your interest to do so.

Nature gives and nature takes away. Anyone with sense and humility will tell her, "Give and take as you please," not out of defiance, but out of obedience and goodwill.

A healthy mind should be prepared for anything. It should maintain a confidence founded on understanding.

Learn to ask of all actions, “Why are they doing that?” starting with your own.

Book 11

Anger is weakness, as much as breaking down and giving up the struggle. Both are deserters.

As long as you work for others’ good, by any and all means – what is there that can harm you?

Why is it so hard when things go against you? If it’s imposed by nature (like health problems), accept it and stop fighting. If not, work out what your own nature requires, and aim at that.

How much more damage anger and grief do than the things that cause them.

When you start to lose your temper, remember: There’s nothing manly about rage. It’s courtesy and kindness that define a human being. That’s who possesses strength, not the angry whiners.

To expect bad people not to injure others is crazy. And to expect them to exempt you is arrogant.

Anger and fear are wrong and self-indulgent. Anger alienates you from your fellow humans.

For the mind to complain about anything that happens is to desert its post.

“No thefts of free will reported.”

Book 12

Your three components: Body, breath, mind. Two are yours in trust; to the third alone you have clear title.

If you can cut your mind free of what other people do and say, of the things that you're afraid will happen, and concentrate on living what can be lived ... then you can spend the time you have left in tranquility, in kindness, at peace.

To be angry at something means you've forgotten:

- ☐ That everything that happens is natural.
- ☐ That whatever happens has always happened, and always will.
- ☐ That it is all how you choose to see things.
- ☐ That the present is all we have to live in. Or to lose.

How trivial the things we want so passionately? How much more philosophical it would be to take what we are given and show uprightness and self-control.

- Marcus Aurelius (121 to 179 AD)

*The greatest contest –
the struggle not to be overwhelmed
by anything that happens.*

MISTAKES

“Mistakes cannot be avoided, but repeating the same mistake can be.”

“When mistakes occur, don’t merely correct them, eliminate the cause.”

Management’s responsibility regarding mistakes:

- ☐ Know when they are made
- ☐ Learn why each was made
- ☐ Remove the cause (whenever practical)

“Repeating the same mistake harms progress!”

- Jim Rand (circa 1920)

MY HIGHEST ASPIRATIONS

“Far away there in the sunshine

are my highest aspirations.

I may not reach them,

but I can look up and see their beauty,

believe in them,

and try to follow where they lead.”

- Louisa May Alcott

NOBILITY

True worth is in *being*, not *seeming*,---
In doing, each day that goes by,
Some little good---not in dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in their blindness,
And spite of the fancies of youth,
There's nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth.

We get back our mete as we measure---
We cannot do wrong and feel right,
Nor can we give pain and gain pleasure,
For justice avenges each slight.
The air for the wing of the sparrow,
The bush for the robin and wren,
But always the path that is narrow
And straight, for the children of men.

'Tis not in the pages of story
The heart of its ills to beguile,
Though he who makes courtship to glory
Gives all that he hath for her smile.
For when from her heights he has won her,
Alas! It is only to prove
That nothing's so sacred as honor,
And nothing so loyal as love!

We cannot make bargains for blisses,
Nor catch them like fishes in nets;

And sometimes the thing our life misses
Helps more than the thing which it gets.
For good lieth not in pursuing,
Nor gaining of great nor of small,
But just in the doing, and doing
As we would be done by, it all.

Through envy, through malice, through hating,
Against the world, early and late,
No jot of our courage abating---
Our part is to work and to wait.
And slight is the sting of his trouble
Whose winnings are less than his worth;
For he who is honest is noble,
Whatever his fortunes or birth.

- **Alice Cary**

O GREAT SPIRIT

Whose voice I hear in the wind and whose
breath gives life to all the world,
hear me.

I come before you,
one of your many children.
I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty,
and my eyes behold
the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect
the things you have made,
my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise so that I may know
the things you have taught my people,
the lesson you have hidden
in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength,
not to be superior to my brothers,
but to fight my greatest enemy—myself.

Make me ever ready to come to you
with clean hands and straight eyes.
So when life fades as a fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you without shame.

- Native American Prayer

PREREQUISITES TO A PRODUCTIVE, REWARDING, SATISFYING LIFE

1. HONESTY
In everything we do or say
2. WORKMANSHIP
Doing each job to the best of our ability
3. AMBITION
Striving for those things we believe worthwhile
4. REASON
Accurate, critical thinking
5. EDUCATION
Never stop learning
6. CHARITY
The more we share the more we get
7. RESPONSIBILITY
Live up to our commitments
8. COURAGE
Do the hard thing

- Earl Nightingale

PRESS ON

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not:

Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men
with talent.

Genius will not:

Unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not:

The world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

- Calvin Coolidge

RELATIONSHIP PHILOSOPHY

“Golden Rule” philosophy of Zig Ziglar

The promise: *You can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want.*

Of the eight things everybody wants, six of them, to a large degree, depend on relationships:

1)Happiness, 2)Prosperity, 3)Security, 4)Health, 5)Peace of mind, 6)Hope

The other two are relationships:

7)Loyal friends, 8)Good family relationships

To make the relationships you are involved in the best they can be, put others first.

If you want to:

- ☐ Find more direction in your life – *put others first.*
- ☐ Strengthen your relationship with your spouse, or children, or parents – *put their needs first.*
- ☐ Improve your spiritual life – *put others first.*
- ☐ Accelerate your career – *put the needs of your employer first.*
- ☐ Truly make living a joy – *put others first.*

You aren’t truly successful until success permeates all seven goal areas of your life:

1. Physical
2. Mental

3. Spiritual
4. Family
5. Social
6. Career
7. Financial

If any one of the seven is out of balance, the other areas of your life suffer. To improve in any of the goal areas, focus on improving your relationships associated with it.

Relationships and income: People who dedicate themselves to meeting the needs of their employer, and their co-workers will watch their income soar. (If your current employer won't pay you what you're worth, the competition gladly will.)

Relationships and security: People who "put others first" are rewarded with the security of knowing that they have the love, trust and support of family, friends and work associates.

Relationships and health: People who have a positive feeling about their life, who are surrounded by positive relationships, tend to have more energy and be healthier.

Relationships and mental goals: People who focus on helping others will drive from their life any feelings of anger, greed, guilt, envy, or thoughts of revenge.

Relationships and happiness: Happiness comes from doing things for others. If you want to increase your happiness:

- ☐ Give hope to the hopeless
- ☐ Be generous to the needy
- ☐ Be pleasant to the grouch
- ☐ Be courteous to the rude

Focus less on your selfishness, and more on being a servant to others.

Your rewards will be:

- a. Closing the door at your office at the end of the day with a smile of satisfied contentment; knowing you did a good job; and that those who interacted with you had a positive experience.
- b. Looking forward to getting home and seeing the people you love; mentally and emotionally free to share yourself with them, and to be interested in them.
- c. Being loved by the people you love.
- d. Sitting down to pay the bills knowing that you have enough money to cover them this month and next month. Knowing that you are saving at a rate that will allow you financial freedom in retirement.
- e. Being grounded enough spiritually that you know where to turn when it seems like there is nowhere to turn.
- f. Slipping under the covers at night thinking, “It just doesn’t get much better than this.”

Recognize the vital role that relationships play in your success.

Improving your relationships will be accomplished primarily by you behaving with “High Character.”

Improving your relationships doesn’t necessarily require monumental acts of servanthood.

You can improve your relationships with friends, family, neighbors and co-workers by following even these simple rules:

- ☐ If you open it, close it.
- ☐ If you turn it on, turn it off.
- ☐ If you unlock it, lock it back up.
- ☐ If you move it, put it back.
- ☐ If you make a mess, clean it up.
- ☐ If you borrow it, return it.
- ☐ If you break it, admit it. Then repair or replace it.

The greatest are those who choose to be the servant of all.

*You can have everything
in life you want, if you will
just help enough other people
get what they want.*

RESPONDING TO CRITICISM

(Adapted from the book, “Feeling Good” by Dr. David Burns, Chapter 6)

What is the most productive way to respond when someone criticizes you or your work?

Step one – Seek To Understand

“Seek to understand, before seeking to be understood.”

When someone criticizes you, their conclusions may be right, wrong or somewhere in between. But it is not wise to focus on “right or wrong” initially. Instead:

1. Ask the person a series of specific questions designed to find out exactly what he or she means.
2. Try to avoid being judgmental or defensive as you ask the questions.
3. Continue to ask for more and more specific information.
4. Attempt to see the issue through the critic’s eyes.

Frequently, critics accuse you with vague, over-arching labels. Ask him or her to be more specific, and to give examples. This approach will usually transform an “attack – defense” interaction into one of collaboration and mutual respect.

After someone registers a criticism with you, try to have the next words out of your mouth be something like:

- ☐ Okay - what causes you to say that?
- ☐ Okay - are you saying that you feel I am ...
- ☐ Okay - what examples do you have that support ...

By you asking specific questions your critic is made to feel that you are open minded about improving.

Your willingness to listen to them and hear them out tends to diffuse any emotional build up that prompted them to bring up the criticism. If the critic was feeling anger or hostility, your approach introduces a problem-solving orientation in the place of blame casting or debate.

Step two – Find something to agree on.

When being criticized most people feel a profound, almost irresistible drive to defend themselves. Acting on this is a MAJOR mistake. If you give in to this tendency, you will find the intensity of your critic will increase.

When being criticized you have choices. You can stand toe-to-toe and debate them, frequently leading to warfare. You can intellectually run away, frequently resulting in resentment, and your loss of self-esteem. Or you can turn this into a relationship strengthening event by finding some way to agree, at least in part.

Whether your critic is right or wrong, initially find some way to agree with at least some part of what they are saying. Here are the rules:

1. Find some way to agree.
2. Avoid sarcasm or defensiveness.
3. Always speak the truth.

Even if you feel that the criticism is unjustified you can begin with agreement on something, e.g.:

- ☐ I can see why you might think that I ...
- ☐ You are right about the point that I ...
- ☐ I do feel sometimes that I ...

Step three – Explain your side

Once you have let your critic get their points all the way out, really seeking to understand; and you've neutralized his or her emotions by finding some way to agree, you are now in a position to explain your side.

1. If your view of the facts and details differ from theirs, explain your view.
2. Explain what you were thinking and feeling which motivated your behavior.
3. Avoid directing destructive labels at your critic or using this conversation as a forum to recount their shortcomings.

Step four – Draw Conclusions

Once all the facts, views and motivations are out on the table, and both sides can see the other person's point of view, whether a behavior change is required usually becomes apparent.

A. If your critic has some good points and you would be advantaged by changing your future behavior:

1. Agree with the criticism.
2. Thank them for providing the input.
3. Apologize for any hurt you might have caused.
4. Commit to doing your best to perform better next time.
5. Ask them to point out future occurrences of the problem behavior, if any show up.

B. If you don't agree with the criticism, agree to discuss future evidence.

If you don't agree with the criticism, but you haven't been able to sell your critic that you aren't guilty of it – suspend conclusions.

Let future evidence show the truth. Ask them to point out future occurrences of the problem behavior if any show up.

If there are no future examples of your accused shortcoming you will win your point. If there are future examples of your accused shortcoming you will win because you'll see that you do need to improve, and you will be better if you do.

C. Hear precisely what your critic is saying.

Your supervisor may say, "Your emails are error-prone." But you internalize it as, "You reject me. You think I am no good." Don't expand the criticism beyond its intended scope.

You will advantage yourself if you focus precisely on the specific criticism and don't exaggerate it into an all-encompassing, "They're telling me I am a loser." Most criticisms are about a specific behavior. It is not an assessment of you in your entirety. It is about one aspect of your behavior. Separate the emotions you feel from the content of their specific accusation.

D. How badly should you feel if you are guilty of the criticism?

Feel bad enough that you register the commitment to improve in the future... but no worse.
Beyond feeling bad enough to anchor your conviction to eliminate the problem, don't beat yourself up over it.

E. Learn to view criticism as a beneficial thing that can accelerate you toward your goals.

If you have the goal to be a better husband or wife, you will welcome criticism from your spouse.

If you have a goal to be a better adult brother or sister to your siblings, you should welcome their criticism. If you have a goal to be more successful at work, criticism from customers or co-workers or supervisors should be weighed and evaluated for its potential to accelerate you toward your goals.

You are not expected to be perfect. If you just acknowledge any shortcomings and take whatever steps you can to improve, it will strengthen your performance and your relationships. It sounds simple, and it is!

There are three ways you can react to criticism – mad, sad or glad. “Mad” is destructive. “Sad” isn’t helpful. “Glad” is the best. See if you can bring yourself to feel “Glad” about receiving criticism, and watch it accelerate you toward your goals.

“The small person flies into a rage over the slightest criticism; but the wise person is eager to learn from those who have censured and reproved him.”

- Dale Carnegie

*Seek to understand before
seeking to be understood.*

SELF-ESTEEM

People can find purpose and dignity in their labor. There is a self-esteem that people get from their industry.

Accomplishment gives people a sense of their own self-worth. When there is no necessity to accomplish, people often quit accomplishing – which leads to absence of self-esteem.

Absence of self-esteem causes some people to surrender their identities to mass movements, cliques and cults.

A person is likely to mind his own business when it is worth minding. When it is not, he takes his mind off his meaningless affairs by minding other people's business.

Nonconformists travel as a rule in bunches. And woe to him inside a nonconformist clique who does not conform with the nonconformists. This is how families get divided when involved in a movement.

- Eric Hoffer

SUCCESS OR FAILURE – WHAT IS THE CAUSE?

Whether a person will be a success in life is not so much determined by his physical or personality strengths, as it is by his shortcomings.

The main traits (shortcomings) which predispose a person toward failure:

- 1) Over-emotional: lack of emotional control; hysteria, hot-headed, excessive passion.
- 2) Inflexible: Not open-minded. Can't deal with surprises or change.
- 3) Belief that you are unable to influence:
 - i) Others: Feeling that life is unfair and the world is a harsh place and there is nothing I can do about it. "My wife can't understand me, my boss is unreasonable, and my kids are uncontrollable." (Blaming others)
 - ii) Yourself: "It's not my fault I steal, I was born with the criminal gene." "It's not my fault I am always late, my mom was always late." "It's not my fault I am a hothead, it's just the way I am." (Blaming your circumstances)

- 4) Doing sloppy work. (Inserted by TCP)

These "Failure Traits" out-work our "Success Traits" and therefore are the main determinant of a fulfilling life.

Summation: We do not rise to the heights our talents can lift us; because our shortcomings chain us where we are, like a tethered hot-air balloon. We rise, instead, in proportion to the shortcomings we can unshackle ourselves from.

- From a speech given by Dennis Waitley (Nov. 1997)

TAO TE CHING

(He with the fewest preferences wins)

2. The sage has no attachment to anything.
5. Heaven and earth are impartial; the wise are impartial.
10. Deal with the most vital matters by letting events take their course.
16. When you realize the Tao you naturally become tolerant, disinterested, amused, kindhearted as a grandmother, dignified as a king, your heart is at peace.
19. Diminish the self and curb the desires.
37. Preferences are futile. Without preferences there is tranquility.
40. Yielding is the way of the Tao.
46. There is no greater illusion than fear, no greater wrong than preparing to defend yourself, no greater misfortune than having an enemy.
48. In the pursuit of knowledge, every day something is added.
In the practice of the Tao, every day something is dropped.
Keep on diminishing until you reach the state of no-ado.
49. The sage is never opinionated. He is self-effacing and mindful not to offend.

- 57. Stop trying to control. Let go of fixed plans and concepts.
- 74. You can't know what is advantageous or harmful.
Who can tell how events will be transformed?
What makes you so sure this one is a disaster?
- 79. Be like the archer who, when he misses the mark, seeks the reason for the failure in himself.
- 81. Good men are not argumentative. The way of the sage is to do his duty, but not to strive with anyone.
The sage does not compete.

- Lao Tzu (500 BC)

TEACH US

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve:

to give
and not count the cost,
to strive
and not heed the wounds,
to toil
and not seek for rest,
to labor
and not ask for reward
save that of knowing
we do your will.

- St. Ignatius of Loyola

THE BUDDHA SAID:

The Buddha suggested a MIDDLE PATH for achieving a balanced approach to everyday experience. The “Middle Path” aims at 1) Balance, 2) Propriety, and 3) Equanimity.

Eat no more than you need. Use no more than is necessary for a modest style of living.

Life has four stages:

1. Studentship
2. Life as a householder and wealth-winner
3. Retirement
4. Complete renunciation of all ties.

The Buddha said there are fundamental qualities of our existence:

The FIRST is hardship and suffering.

Look around. Nobody is immune to sadness and disappointment. No one has a lock on success and genuine contentment.

The SECOND is impermanence.

Everything comes to an end. Everything.

ENLIGHTENMENT

- ☐ The simple, clear realization of the most basic truths about life.
- ☐ It suggests the utmost attentiveness to whatever one is experiencing as one experiences it.
- ☐ It begins and ends precisely with the ordinary.
- ☐ The realization that the headlong pursuit of pleasure and the dogged avoidance of pleasure both yield the same result: suffering.

The FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

1. Life is difficult

We can't control this, but we can control how we respond to it.

2. All hardship and suffering come from inappropriate desire, attachment or grasping.

Whatever I "must" either have or avoid will finally make me suffer. If I get what I want, it will soon disappoint. If I avoid for a time what I fear, something else will replace it.

We suffer because we cling to desires that lead us to frustration and suffering.

3. To avoid suffering, avoid inappropriate desire or craving.

The inappropriate cravings prevent one from achieving liberation.

Genuine liberation means, "The extinction of the flames of desire." What the Buddha called, "No wind." The individual is the power of ultimate significance in the quest for liberation.

Avoidance requires keen awareness of one's own motives and intentions.

4. To stop inappropriate craving, follow the Eightfold Noble Path.

The EIGHTFOLD NOBLE PATH

Wisdom

1. Proper understanding of the Four Noble Truths
2. Proper intent / resolve
Perform all acts out of compassion rather than out of selfish motives.

Ethics

3. Proper speech
Avoid all evils of the tongue. (Bad language; emotional outbursts; bitter or unkind words)
4. Proper action
Refrain from inappropriate sexual relationships, intoxication, deception, injuring others or vanity.
5. Proper livelihood
Avoid occupations that cause harm, such as dealing in slavery or weapons.

Concentration

6. Proper effort
Using time wisely, in ways that are self-improving and productive.
7. Proper attentiveness / mindfulness
Deep reflection on one's behavior. Carefully measured responses. Constant intellectual awareness.
8. Proper absorption
Genuinely content in equilibrium between pursuing goals and running from fears. A habit of discipline and keen awareness of one's personal motivations.

The TEN GREAT VIRTUES

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Charity | 6. Patience |
| 2. Morality | 7. Truth |
| 3. Renunciation | 8. Determination |
| 4. Wisdom | 9. Universal Love |
| 5. Effort | 10. Equanimity |

Stop being enslaved by the effects of self-centered choices.

The Buddha wanted us to change our minds about what matters most. What you are really looking for you cannot get from this possession or that person. It is a serious mistake to treat the world as though it existed for you. Things simply do not possess what a grasping, craving person invests them with. Pile all your expectations onto some person or object as though it will deliver what you want, and you are making the fundamental mistake.

- Siddhartha Gautama (500 BC)

*All hardship and suffering
come from inappropriate
desire, attachment, or grasping.*

THE BUILDERS

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our todays and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

Build today, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall tomorrow find its place.

- Longfellow

THE FOOL'S PRAYER

The ill-timed truth we might have kept –
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say –
Who knows how grandly it had rung?

- Edward Sill

THE GREATEST VIRTUE

*“If I could choose only one,
to which should I dedicate my life?”*

“Order,” said the law court;
“Knowledge,” said the school;
“Truth,” said the wise man;
“Pleasure,” said the fool;
“Love,” said the maiden;
“Beauty,” said the page;
“Freedom,” said the dreamer;
“Home,” said the sage;
“Fame,” said the soldier;
“Equity,” said the seer.

Spake my heart fully sad:
“The answer is not here.”

Then within my bosom
Softly this I heard:

“Each heart holds the secret:
‘Kindness’ is the word.”

- Answer by John Boyle O'Reilly

THE MEN THAT DON'T FIT IN

There's a race of men that don't fit in,
A race that can't stay still;
So they break the hearts of kith and kin,
And they roam the world at will.

If they just went straight they might go far;
They are strong and brave and true;
But they're always tired of the things that are,
And they want the strange and new.

They say: "Could I find my proper groove,
What a deep mark I would make!"
So they chop and change, and each fresh move
Is only a fresh mistake.

And each forgets, as he strips and runs
With a brilliant, fitful pace,
It's the steady, quiet, plodding ones
Who win in the lifelong race.

- Robert W. Service

*If they just went straight
they might go far.*

THE OBSTACLE IS THE WAY

1. “Our actions may be impeded, but there can be no impeding our intentions or dispositions, because we can accommodate and adapt. The impediment to action advances action. What stands in the way becomes the way.” – Marcus Aurelius
2. There is always a way out or another route to get to where you need to go. Setbacks or problems are always expected and never permanent. What impedes us can empower us.
3. See each and every obstacle as an opportunity to practice some virtue: patience, courage, humility, resourcefulness, reason, justice, creativity, or hard work.
4. Whenever we face obstacles, we have a choice: Will we be blocked by obstacles, or will we advance through and over them?
5. The world is constantly testing us. It asks: *Are you worthy? Will you stand up and show us what you’re made of?*
6. “The things which hurt, instruct.” – Benjamin Franklin
7. The world rarely does exactly what we want.
8. Obstacles are not only to be expected but embraced. These obstacles are actually opportunities to test ourselves, to try new things, and, ultimately, to triumph.
9. Overcoming obstacles is a discipline of three critical steps. It’s three interdependent, interconnected, and fluidly contingent disciplines: **Perception**, **Action**, and the **Will**. It’s a simple process (but again, never easy).

Part I: Perception

10. While others are excited or afraid, we will remain calm and imperturbable. This will be an incredible advantage for us in the fight against obstacles.

11. John D. Rockefeller had **sangfroid**: unflappable coolness under pressure. He could keep his head while he was losing his shirt.
12. Desperation, despair, fear, powerlessness – these reactions are functions of our perceptions. You must realize: Nothing *makes* us feel this way; we *choose* to give in to such feelings. Or, like Rockefeller, choose *not* to.
13. Talent is not the most sought-after characteristic. Grace and poise are, because these two attributes precede the opportunity to deploy any other skill.
14. Does getting upset provide you with more options?
15. No one said anything about not feeling stress. Real strength lies in the control of one's emotions, not in pretending they don't exist.
16. If you only knew just how many of the people around you are wracked with anxiety at any given time.
17. Most lives contain numerous eras defined by deeply unsettling stress.
18. Those who survive, survive because they took things day by day – that's the real secret. Focus on the moment, not the monsters that may or may not be up ahead.
19. The struggle against an obstacle inevitably propels the fighter to a new level of functioning.
20. It's a huge step forward to realize that the worst thing to happen is never the event, but the event *and* losing your head. Because then you'll have two problems (one of them unnecessary).

Part II: Action

21. We must be sure to act with deliberation, boldness, and persistence. Those are the attributes of right and affective action.

22. Action is the solution and the cure to our predicaments.
23. By all means, vent. Exhale. Take stock. Just don't take too long. Because you have to get back to work.
24. If we are to overcome our obstacles, this is the message to broadcast – internally and externally. We will not be stopped by failure, we will not be rushed or distracted by external noise. We will chisel and peg away at the obstacle until it is gone.
25. Too many people think that great victories came from a flash of insight. In fact, it was the slow pressure, repeated from many different angles, the elimination of so many other more promising options, that slowly and surely churned the solution to the top of the pile.
26. Consider this mindset:
 - a. Never in a hurry
 - b. Never worried
 - c. Never desperate
 - d. Never stopping short
27. Doing new things invariably means obstacles. A new path is, by definition, uncleared. Only with persistence and time can we cut away debris and remove impediments.
28. Great entrepreneurs are:
 - a. Never wedded to a position
 - b. Never afraid to lose a little of their investment
 - c. Never bitter or embarrassed
 - d. Never out of the game for long.
29. When it comes to our actions, disorder and distraction are death.
30. Everything is a chance to do and be your best. Don't get caught up in thinking you are too good for whatever the current situation requires.

31. To whatever we face, our job is to respond with:
 - a. Hard work
 - b. Honesty
 - c. Helping others as best we can.
32. The world could use fewer martyrs.

Part III: Will

33. True will is quiet humility, resilience, and flexibility; the other kind of will is weakness disguised by bluster and ambition. See which lasts longer under the hardest of obstacles.
34. “This too shall pass”
35. Comfort those who suffer too. This is part of the will – to think of others, to make the best of a terrible situation that we tried to prevent but could not, to deal with fate with cheerfulness and compassion.
36. Acknowledge the pain but trod onward in your task.
37. The only guarantee ever is that *things will go wrong*. The only thing we can use to mitigate this is anticipation.
38. The Stoics commanded themselves: Cheerfulness in all situations, especially the bad ones.
39. Persistence: Everything directed at the problem until it breaks.
40. When we focus on others, on helping them or simply providing a good example, our own personal fears and troubles will diminish.
41. As the Haitian proverb puts it: Behind mountains are more mountains. One does not overcome an obstacle to enter the land of no obstacles.
42. You’re always fighting uphill. Get used to it and train accordingly.

Final Thoughts

43. Tested in the crucible of adversity and forged in the furnace of trial, they realized these latent powers – the powers of **perception**, **action**, and of the **will**. With this triad, they:
 - a. First, see clearly.
 - b. Next, act correctly.
 - c. Finally, endure and accept the world as it is.
44. Let's say it once again just to remind ourselves:
 - a. See things for what they are.
 - b. Do what we can.
 - c. Endure and bear what we must.
 - d. What blocked the path now is a path.
 - e. What once impeded action, advances action.
 - f. The Obstacle is the Way.

- Ryan Holiday

*Overcoming obstacles is a
discipline of three critical steps:
Perception, Action and Will.*

THE PERSON WITH INNER BALANCE

(Inner Peace; Inner Calm)

I know myself,
what I stand for,
and how I should act.

I meet frustrating circumstances with
calmness, poise and self-control.
I don't raise my voice or resort to sarcasm.

I do not exaggerate
or use vulgar language.
I do not interrupt.

I treat others with diffidence and kindness.

I am a consensus builder and a collaborator.
I ask their opinion before stating mine.

I don't have to match each story
I hear with one of my own.

I do not ridicule or indulge in satire.

Away from work, I am not critical or fault-finding.

I express no harsh opinions that could offend.

I harbor no hostility;
convey no anger or bitterness.

I avoid admonitions that begin with,
"You . . . need to . . .
have to . . . got to . . . must";
and their counterpart "You can't . . ."

I don't get impassioned trying to convince others
that my opinion is morally justified.

I gracefully avoid public displays of disharmony.
I make high-character choices.

- T&R P

A Taoist master explained to his student,
 "Two dogs live within me.
 One is kind and considerate.
 The other is selfish and hostile."
"Which one is stronger?" asked the student,
 "The one that I feed," replied the sage.

*Those who are Great,
I have made Great.*

THE RIDDLE

I am your constant companion.

I am your greatest helper or heaviest burden.

I will push you onward or drag you down to failure.

I am completely at your command.

Half the things you do might just as well be turned over to me
and I will do them quickly and correctly.

I am easily managed – you must merely be firm with me.

Show me exactly how you want something done
and after a few lessons I will do it automatically.

I am the servant of all great people and, alas, of all failures, as
well.

Those who are great, I have made great.

Those who are failures, I have made failures.

I am not a machine, though I work with all the precision
of a machine, plus the intelligence of a person.

You may run me for profit or run me for ruin –
it makes no difference to me.

Take me, train me, be firm with me,
and I will place the world at your feet.
Be easy with me and I will destroy you.

Who am I?

The answer to the riddle is: **I am HABIT**

- Anonymous

EXAMPLES OF HOW HABITS “CAN DESTROY YOU”

- Drug habits
- Alcohol
- Gambling
- Hot-headed responses when frustrated (being a “hot head”)
- Large percent of vulgarity in communication
- Driving too fast
- Tardiness

EXAMPLES OF HOW OUR HABITS CAN “PLACE THE WORLD AT OUR FEET”

In sports, practice is the act of forming habits. More practice makes better golfers, and basketball free-throwers, and bowlers.

Same with playing a musical instrument.

In your career, the following habits contribute to whether or not you are successful. The habit of:

- Honesty; in everything you say or do
- Workmanship; doing each job to the best of your ability
- Responsibility; living up to your commitments
- Courage; to have the hard conversations
- Critical Thinking; thinking your thoughts through to their end

The Riddle continued

- Persisting; not giving up
- Kindness; treating people the way you'd like to be treated
- Life-long learner
- Note-taking to make your word good
- Getting up early

THE STRENUOUS LIFE

I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life, the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes not to the man who desires mere easy peace.

A man must be glad to do a man's work, to dare and endure and to labor; to keep himself, and to keep those dependent upon him.

... not the timid man, the lazy man, the over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues ...

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred with sweat and dust and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; and who, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

... if we shrink from the hard contests then the bolder and stronger will pass us by ...

Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well and manfully; resolute to uphold righteousness by deed and by word; resolute to be both honest and brave, to serve high ideals, yet to use practical methods. Above all, let us shrink from no strife.

- Theo. Roosevelt

THINGS THAT ARE MORE EXCELLENT

Shall we perturb and vex our soul
For “wrongs” which no true freedom mar?

- William Watson

THINK AND GROW RICH

PREFACE

The following contains the secrets through which every great fortune has been accumulated.

You can build a fortune through the aid of immutable laws.

If you employ these laws your reward will be the satisfaction that comes to all who conquer self, and force life to pay whatever is asked.

THE WHOLE FORMULA

Everything man creates or acquires begins in the form of desire, that desire is taken on the first lap of its journey, when plans for its transition are created and organized.

Desiring riches with a state of mind that becomes an obsession, then planning definite ways and means to acquire riches, and backing those plans with persistence which does not recognize failure, will bring riches.

Riches are within reach of the person who expects, plans, and “demands” them.

Riches come, if they come at all, in response to “definite demands,” based upon the application of definite principles, and not by chance or luck.

You need a definite purpose, backed by burning desire for its fulfillment; and a definite plan, expressed in continuous action.

I. DESIRE

(Determination, Definite purpose, Definite demands, Dominating thoughts)

The starting point of all achievement is desire. Weak desires bring weak results.

Our dominating thoughts attract to us the people, and circumstances which harmonize with our dominate thoughts.

Riches begin with Definiteness of purpose: the knowledge of what one wants, and a burning desire to possess it.

“His desire was not a hope! It was not a wish! It was a keen, pulsating desire, which transcended everything else.”

Thought, backed by strong desire, has a tendency to transmute itself into its physical equivalent.

II. SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE

Before you can be sure of your ability to transmute desire into its monetary equivalent, you will require specialized knowledge of the service, merchandise, or profession you intend to offer in return for fortune.

Wealth is acquired through highly organized and intelligently directed specialized knowledge.

Successful men, in all callings, never stop acquiring specialized knowledge related to their major purpose.

III. ORGANIZED PLANS

Fortunes gravitate to men whose minds have been prepared to attract them.

The world has the habit of making room for the man whose words and actions show that he knows where he is going.

IV. START WHERE YOU STAND ... THEN PERSIST

“Start where you stand,” and work with whatever tools you have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along.

Persistence is an essential factor in the procedure of transmuting desire into its monetary equivalent.

What power gives to men-of-persistence the capacity to master difficulties? Providence throws itself on the side of the person who still fights on, after the battle seems lost.

V. THE MASTER MIND

Economic advantages may be created by any person who surrounds himself with the advice, counsel, and personal cooperation of a group of men who are willing to lend him wholehearted aid, in a spirit of harmony.

Andrew Carnegie employed this Master Mind principle. His group consisted of a staff of approximately fifty men. He surrounded himself with this Master Mind group, for the definite purpose of manufacturing and marketing steel.

Plans are inert and useless, without sufficient POWER to translate them into action.

POWER may be defined as “organized and intelligently directed effort.”

POWER is produced through the coordination of effort of two or more people, who work toward a definite end, in a spirit of harmony.

POWER is required to transmute “desire” into its monetary equivalent.

POWER is necessary for the retention of money after it has been accumulated!

HERO WORSHIP

Role models can inspire you, guide you and help you hold your focus.

Ours would be:

Philosophy – Emerson, Kipling, Lao Tzu,
James Allen, Epictetus

Industrial revolution – Carnegie, Rockefeller,
Woolworth, Hershey,
E.W.Scripps, Mellon Bros.,
Drexel Bros.

Modern day -- Pat McGovern, Tata of India

- Napoleon Hill

THIS DAY

Listen to the exhortation of the Dawn!

Look well to this one day!
For it, and it alone, is life.

In its brief course
lie all the verities and realities
of your existence.

The bliss of growth,
The glory of action,
The splendor of beauty.

Yesterday is but a dream, and
tomorrow is only a vision.

But today well lived
makes every yesterday
a dream of happiness, and
every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well therefore to this day!
Such is the salutation of the dawn.

- Sanskrit (Circa 1000 BC)

TIDE IN THE AFFAIRS

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

- Julius Caesar (4.3.218-224)

TODAY

The people living in this house
are the most important people in my life.
Today I will communicate that to them.

I will tell them
I appreciate the specific contributions
they make to the household.

I will show them
I respect their feelings and their ideas.

I will convey that
I admire their positive attributes
that make them an individual.

I will demonstrate that
I love them, and I am committed to them.

I will endeavor to lighten their load today
by an act of service or kindness or loyalty.

I will smile silently when I encounter their foibles,
and I will do all this happily, knowing that if I don't,
I will fall victim to the axiom,
“Without effort, relationships tend toward dissolution.”

- T&R P

TRANQUILITY – SERENITY – EQUANIMITY

Calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom.
It is the result of long and patient effort in self-control.

A man becomes calm as he develops a right understanding.
He ceases to fuss, and fume, and worry, and grieve.
He remains poised, steadfast, serene.

The calm man, having learned how to govern himself,
knows how to adapt himself to others.
They, in turn, reverence his spiritual strength, and feel that
they can rely upon him.

The more tranquil a man becomes, the greater is his success,
his influence.

Even the ordinary trader will find his business prosperity
increase as he develops a greater self-control and equanimity.
For people will always prefer to deal with a man whose
demeanor is strongly equable.

The strong, calm man is always loved and revered.
He is like a shade-giving tree in a thirsty land.

That exquisite poise of character which we call serenity
is the last lesson of culture.

How many people we know who sour their lives
by explosive tempers, who destroy their poise of
character and make bad blood.

How few people we meet in life who have
that exquisite poise.

Yes, humanity surges with uncontrolled passion,
is tumultuous with ungoverned grief,
is blown about by anxiety and doubt.

Only the wise man, whose thoughts are purified,
makes the winds and storm of the soul obey him.

Calmness is power.

- James Allen (1864 – 1912)

WAITING

Serene, I fold my hands and wait,
No care for wind nor tide nor sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays—
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me,
No wind can drive my bark astray
Nor change the tide of destiny.

- John Burroughs

WE ARE TO BE TESTED...

- ☐ in our patience
- ☐ our forbearance
- ☐ our perseverance
- ☐ our power to endure wrong
- ☐ to withstand temptations
- ☐ to economize
- ☐ to acquire and use skill
- ☐ in our ability to compete
- ☐ to succeed in commerce
- ☐ to disregard the superficial for the real,
the appearance for the substance
- ☐ to be great and yet small
- ☐ learned and yet simple
- ☐ high and yet the servant of all

This, this is the passport to all that is best...

- Booker T. Washington

WHEN THE STORM IS LOUD

O Lord our God,
When the storm is loud,
and the night is dark,
and the soul is sad,
and the heart oppressed;
Then, as weary travelers,
may we look to You;
and beholding the light of Your love,
may it bear us on,
until we learn to sing
Your song in the night.

- George Dawson

YOU TELL ON YOURSELF

You tell on yourself by the friends you seek,
by the very manner in which you speak,
by the way you employ your leisure time,
by the use you make of dollars and dimes.

You tell what you are by the things you wear,
by the spirit in which your burdens bear,
by the kind of things at which you laugh,
by the records you play on your phonograph.

You tell what you are by the way you walk,
by the things of which you delight to talk,
by the manner in which you bear defeat,
by so simple a thing as how you eat.

By the books you choose from a well-filled shelf.
in these ways and more, you tell on yourself.
So there's really no particle of sense,
in an effort to keep up false pretense.

Because, you tell on yourself.



