



As a Man Thinketh

by James Allen

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"There is nothing
either bad or good but
thinking makes it so."
William Shakespeare

Who'd a think it? Everybody, that's who. Every human being thinks. Like the mind you possess that you can't claim you don't, thinking puts us all in the same tight spot. None of us can claim we don't think. Imagine someone trying to get away with that: "I don't think." It's simply impossible. No human being alive does not think. It's the *sine qua non* of human life. In my opinion, Rene Descartes got it backwards in his most famous statement, "I think, therefore I am." (Cognito ergo sum) It should be, I am, therefore I think. I was not thinking before I was (am), right? Knowledge of what the nature of some thing is does not come before it's existence, does it? We ARE (a human being) before we find out what it IS we (human beings) do, correct? Do you think I'm pulling a riddle on you? Write me if you think so.

Of course, what really matters here, talking about that YOU Thinketh, is what the quality of your thoughts are. That's really what matters when we are talking about thinking, isn't it? You don't buy it? You don't believe that how and what you think effects the quality of your life, your health...your attitude...your circumstances? What, you believe that when you get in a negative mood you get that way because you picked up a "negative mood" virus someplace? You believe that when you choose to not walk through the door of a place and apply for a job where you'd like to work, or choose to not walk up and introduce yourself to someone you want to meet, or choose to not make the effort to find and learn the knowledge you need to achieve some goal you envision -- you believe when you choose to not do any of these things it's because you're paralyzed by some mystical force field out of your control?

As I read that last paragraph back to myself it all sounds silly and absurd, like who would ever imagine anyone believing it. Does it sound silly and unimaginable to you? What, then, would we call it if it were true? Madness? Insane? Mental illness? Well, apparently, there are a lot of mad, insane and mentally ill people in the world, because a lot of people don't buy the idea that thinking gives them absolute control over their lives and attitude.

I have my own ideas about why people don't take thinking seriously. I'll save those for another time. But I will tell you this. Whatever their problem about thinking may be, it doesn't change the fact that thinking is the solution to every single problem.

Sometimes what we need to get serious about something we need to take seriously is a good kick in the ass. Inspirational books and writings are great for this. They get your mind and attitude in the right mood and they do it quick. Who can't read a quote and immediately have their outlook change on the spot. Hell, even a fortune cookie at lunch can get you through the rest of the day in higher spirits. It's amazing isn't it? Just a few words of someone else's thoughts and ideas can have a powerful effect on you.



As I was thinking (Yes!!) about what book to start with in this pursuit of mine to provide you insight into The Great Books and great Inspirational books, I couldn't think (Yes!!) of a better book than "As a Man Thinketh," by James Allen. It's one of my all-time favorites. I've read it at least 25 times. In fact, there are two books I carry with me at all times. They are both small pocket books. One is of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution and the other is "As a Man Thinketh." It's a short, quick, intense (gotta love this! Ultimate Warrior-like!!) read, and the writing is true to its title. It is a terse and powerful declaration of the very fact that, as you thinketh, what thoughts your mind holds will manifest your external circumstances and determine the quality of your life.

I've included a PDF file of the book for those who want to read it themselves.

For those who don't, I've used my machete and lobbed off the book's life-changing chunks of knowledge for you and put them down in this 7 page pdf file.

Get enlightened. Act empowered.

Your Founding Father of Ring Intensity and Inspiration,

Always Believe,

Warrior

*Except for our thoughts,
there is nothing absolutely in
our power. - Descartes*

*Man's greatness lies in his
power of thought. - Blaise
Pascal*



*Mind is the Master-power that molds and makes,
And Man is Mind, and evermore he takes
The tool of Thought, and, shaping what he wills
Brings forth a thousand joys, a thousand ills:--
He thinks in secret, and it comes to pass:
Environment is but his looking-glass*



"They themselves are makers of themselves"



A man is literally what he thinks, his character being the sum total of all his thoughts.



Man is growth by law, and not a creation by artifice, and cause and effect is as absolute and undeviating in the hidden realm of thought as in the world of visible and material things.



Man is made or unmade by himself. In the armory of thought he forges the weapons by which he destroys himself. He also fashions the tools with which he builds for himself heavenly mansions of joy and strength and peace. By the right choice and true application of thought, man ascends to the divine perfection. By the abuse and wrong application of thought he descends below the level of the beast. Between these two extremes are all the grades of character, and man is their maker and master.



Man is the maker of his character, the molder of his life, and the builder of his destiny, he may unerringly prove, if he will watch, control, and alter his thoughts...



...man is the master of thought, the molder of character, and the maker and shaper of condition, environment, and destiny.



Man is always the master, even in his weakest and most abandoned state. But in his weakness and degradation he is a foolish master who misgoverns his "household."



A man's mind may be likened to a garden, which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild; but whether cultivated or neglected, it must, and will bring forth.



...a man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life.



Thought and character are one, and as character can only manifest and discover itself through environment and circumstance, the outer conditions of a person's life will always be found to be harmoniously related to his inner state.

Men fear thought as they fear nothing else on earth, more than ruin, more even than death. Thought is subversive and revolutionary, destructive and terrible, thought is merciless to privilege, established institutions, and comfortable habit. Thought looks into the pit of hell and is not afraid. Thought is great and swift and free, the light of the world, and the chief glory of man. ~Bertrand Russell



*You and I are not what we eat; we are what we think.
~Walter Anderson*



Every man is where he is by the law of his being; the thoughts which he has built into his character have brought him there, and in the arrangement of his life there is no element of chance, but all is the result of a law which cannot err.



Circumstance does not make the man; it reveals him to himself.



A man does not come to the alms-house or the jail by the tyranny of fate or circumstance, but by the pathway of grovelling thoughts and base desires.



Men do not attract that which they want, but that which they are. Their whims, fancies, and ambitions are thwarted at every step, but their inmost thoughts and desires are fed with their own food, be it foul or clean. Man is manacled only by himself; thought and action are the jailors of Fate--they imprison, being base; they are also the angels of Freedom--they liberate, being noble. Not what he wished and prays for does a man get, but what he justly earns. His wishes and prayers are only gratified and answered when they harmonize with his thoughts and actions.



Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results. This is but saying that nothing can come from corn but corn, nothing from nettles but nettles. Men understand this law in the natural world, and work with it; but few understand it in the mental and moral world (though its operation there is just as simple and undeviating), and they, therefore, do not cooperate with it.



Indigence and indulgence are the two extremes of wretchedness. They are both equally unnatural and the result of mental disorder. A man is not rightly conditioned until he is a happy, healthy, and prosperous being; and happiness, health, and prosperity are the result of a harmonious adjustment of the inner with the outer of the man with his surroundings.



A man only begins to be a man when he ceases to whine and revile, and commences to search for the hidden justice which regulates his life. And he adapts his mind to that regulating factor, he ceases to accuse others as the cause of his condition, and builds himself up in strong and noble thoughts; ceases to kick against circumstances, but beings to use them as aids to his more rapid progress, and as a means of discovering the hidden powers and possibilities within himself.

*People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use.
~Soren Kierkegaard*



No problem can withstand the assault of sustained thinking. ~Voltaire



Men imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot. It rapidly crystallizes into habit, and habit solidifies into circumstance. Bestial thoughts crystallize into habits of drunkenness and sensuality, which solidify into circumstances of destitution and disease. Impure thoughts of every kind crystallize into enervating and confusing habits, which solidify into distracting and adverse circumstances. Thoughts of fear, doubt, and indecision crystallize into weak, unmanly, and irresolute habits, which solidify into circumstances of failure, indigence, and slavish dependence. Lazy thoughts crystallize into weak, habits of uncleanness and dishonesty, which solidify into circumstances of foulness and beggary. Hateful and condemnatory thoughts crystallize into habits of accusation and violence, which solidify into circumstances of injury and persecution. Selfish thoughts of all kinds crystallize into habits of self-seeking, which solidify into distressful circumstances.



On the other hand, beautiful thoughts of all kinds crystallize into habits of grace and kindness, which solidify into genial and sunny circumstances. Pure thoughts crystallize into habits of temperance and self-control, which solidify into circumstances of repose and peace. Thoughts of courage, self-reliance, and decision crystallize into manly habits, which solidify into circumstances of success, plenty, and freedom. Energetic thoughts crystallize into habits of cleanliness and industry, which solidify into circumstances of pleasantness. Gentle and forgiving thoughts crystallize into habits of gentleness, which solidify into protective and preservative circumstances. Loving and unselfish thoughts which solidify into circumstances of sure and abiding prosperity and true riches.



Change of diet will not help a man who will not change his thoughts.



The body is the servant of the mind. It obeys the operations of the mind, whether they be deliberately chosen or automatically expressed....Disease and health, like circumstances, are rooted in thought. Sickly thoughts will express themselves through a sickly body.



As the physically weak man can make himself strong by careful and patient training, so the man of weak thoughts can make them strong by exercising himself in right thinking.



Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves.



The average man never really thinks from end to end of his life. The mental activity of such people is only a mouthing of clichés. ~H.L. Mencken

*“you will be what you will be:
Let failure find its false content
In that poor world, environment,”
But spirit scorns it, and is free.*

*“It masters time, it conquers space;
It crows that boastful trickster, Chance,
And bids the tyrant Circumstance
Uncrown, and fill a servant’s place.*

*“The human Will, that force unseen,
the offspring of a deathless Soul, Can hew a way to any
goal, Though walls of granite intervene.*

*“Be not impatient in delay,
But wait as one who understands;
When spirit rises and commands, The gods are ready to obey.”*



Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment. Aimlessness is a vice, and such drifting must not continue for him who would street clear of catastrophe and destruction.



They who have no central purpose in their life fall an easy prey to petty worries, fears, troubles, and self-pityings, all of which are indications of weakness, which lead, just as surely as deliberately planned sins (though by a diff route), to failure, unhappiness, and loss, for weakness cannot persist in a power-evolving universe.



Having conceived of his purpose, a man should mentally mark out a straight pathway to its achievement, looking neither to the right nor left. Doubts and fears should be rigorously excluded. They are disintegrating elements which break up the straight line of effort, rendering it crooked, ineffectual, useless. Thoughts of doubt and fear can never accomplish anything. They always lead to failure. Purpose, energy, power to do, and all strong thoughts cease when doubt and fear creep in. The will to do springs from the knowledge that we can do. Doubt and fear are the great enemies of knowledge, and he who encourages them, who does not slay them, thwarts himself at every step.

*What luck for rulers,
that men do not think.
~Adolph Hitler*



There can be no progress nor achievement without sacrifice, and a man’s worldly success will be by the measure that he sacrifices his confused animal thoughts, and fixes his mind on the development of his plans, and the strengthening of his resolution and self-reliance. The higher his he lifts his thoughts, the greater will be his success, the more blessed and enduring will be his achievements.



*If you don't control
what you think, you
can't control what you
do. Napoleon Hill*

*Thinking is the hardest work
there is, which is the probable
reason so few engage in it.
Henry Ford*



Achievement of any kind is the crown of effort, the diadem of thought. By the aid of self-control, resolution, purity, righteousness, and well-directed thought a man ascends.



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



All that a man achieves and all that he fails to achieve is the direct result of his own thoughts. A man's weakness and strength, purity and impurity, are his own and not another man's. They are brought about by himself and not by another; and they can only be altered by himself, never by another. His condition is also his own, and not another man's. His sufferings and his happiness are evolved from within. As he thinks, so is he; as he continues to think, so he remains. A strong man cannot help a weaker unless that weaker is willing to be helped. And even then the weak man must become strong of himself. He must, by his own efforts, develop the strength which he admires in another. None but himself can alter his condition.



The dreamers are the saviors of the world. Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become. Your vision is the promise of what you shall one day be; your ideal is the prophecy of what you shall at last unveil. The greatest achievement was at first and for a time a dream. Dreams are the seedlings of realities.



The thoughtless, the ignorant, and the indolent, seeing only the apparent effects of things and not the things themselves, talk of luck, of fortune, and chance. Seeing a man grow rich, they say, "How lucky he is!" Observing another become skilled intellectually, they exclaim, "How highly favored he is!" And noting the saintly character and wide influence of another, they remark, "How chance helps him at every turn!" They do not see the trials and failures and struggles which these men have encountered in order to gain their experience. They have no knowledge of the sacrifices they have made, of the undaunted efforts they have put forth, of the faith they have exercised so that they might overcome the apparently insurmountable and realize the vision of their heart. They do not know the darkness and the heartaches; they only see the light and joy, and call it "luck." Do not see the long, arduous journey, but only behold the pleasant goal and call it "good fortune." Do not understand the process, but only perceive the result, and call it "chance."



In all human affairs there are efforts, and there are results. The strength of the effort is the measure of the result. Change is not. Gifts, powers, material, intellectual and spiritual possessions are the fruits of effort. They are thoughts completed, objectives accomplished, visions realized. The vision that you glorify in your mind, the ideal that you enthrone in your heart- -this you will build your life by; this you will become.