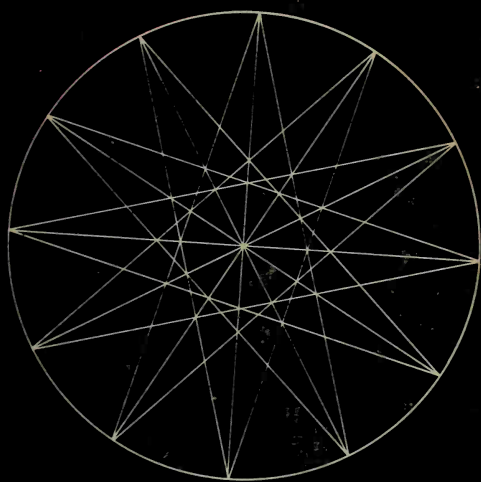


Now at last—You can perform feats of Mental Magic that will enable you to generate the full power of your subconscious mind and win for yourself all the good things in life.

Secrets of MENTAL MAGIC

HOW TO USE YOUR FULL POWER OF MIND



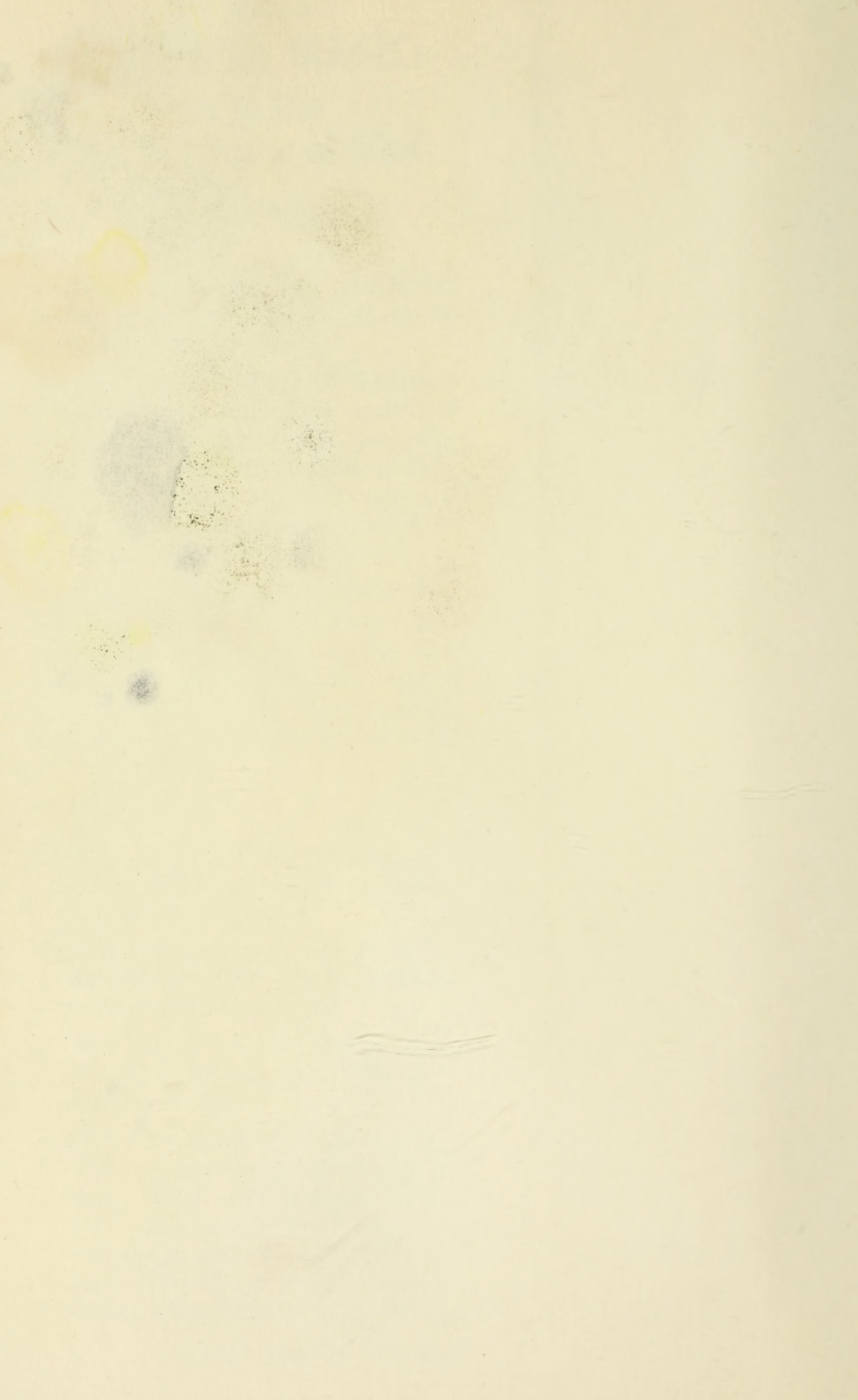
By Vernon Howard

- To:
- Change and brighten both today and tomorrow
 - Assure your own future success
 - Rid yourself of unnecessary responsibilities and burdens
 - Wipe out loneliness, anxiety, fear, depression
 - Attain the security you have always wanted

Yes! You will develop astonishing mental gifts which will serve you every day for the rest of your life!

Gifts of — Will-Power . . . Concentration . . . Self-Control . . . Habit-Breaking . . . Meditation . . . Worry-Control . . . Learning . . .

and many, many more



**Secrets of
Mental
Magic**

Other Prentice-Hall Books by

VERNON HOWARD

*ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful
New Life*

*Your Magic Power to Persuade and Command People
Success Through the Magic of Personal Power
Time Power for Personal Success*

Secrets of
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*how to use your
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PRENTICE-HALL, INC.
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*I love to plunge into that realm of mystery,
giving a comprehension of the power of mind,
and accustom me to the workings of mind.*

—HONORÉ DE BALZAC

“Something Exciting Is About to Happen!”

In a few moments we will explore together the marvelous world of mental magic. But before we set out, I'd like to give you a glimpse of the marvels just ahead. Let's begin with an anecdote from history:

SOMETHING EXCITING IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN!

That was the sign hanging on the wall of a gold miner's cabin. Guided by an accurate map of the area, he had traveled on horseback into the ranges to seek a long-lost gold mine.

He also had something else: the enthusiastic expectancy that “something exciting is about to happen!” His sign on the wall kept him reminded of that as he searched the mountains.

It happened all right. He found the gold mine. History reveals that it gave him a fabulous fortune.

You, too, can find the gold in your own life. Your map is your copy of *Secrets of Mental Magic*. You need only let it guide you to your personal fortunes.

Maybe you ask, “Exactly what kind of benefits can I expect to come my way?”

Let's take a look at a few forthcoming treasures:

- You will catch your first exciting glimpse of an entirely new way of living. Based on findings of both ancient wisdom and modern psychology, we call it your *Magnificent Glimpse*.

- Do you ever wonder how to solve problems too personal to talk over with others? Mental magic supplies solutions to such difficulties as loneliness, anxiety, fear, depression.

- We will read the fascinating story of a man who became famous around the world for his special kind of magic. You will then learn how your own magical touch can give you overwhelming success.

- Ever feel that you are carrying burdensome responsibilities?

Through these scientific systems, you will find yourself free—free to live lightheartedly, as nature intends.

- We will take an adventurous journey to the Sacred Well of the mysterious Mayans. Here we will see how tested mental principles supply appeal to the opposite sex, promote financial prosperity—whatever your target.

- "Miracles are within us." That is the declaration of French author Honoré de Balzac. One of the miracles you can expect is a new sense of lasting security.

- Like to predict a dazzling future for yourself? Through the accurate secrets of mental magic, you can do just that—then sit back and watch them come true!

A business acquaintance told me, "I'm very much interested in your forthcoming book, *Secrets of Mental Magic*. In a single sentence, how would you describe it?"

"The book is a system for *winning*."

For winning whatever you want and need.

That is why we can now confidently explore together the marvelous world of mental magic. You can enthusiastically expect that "something exciting is about to happen!"

Something wealthy.

VERNON HOWARD

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Your First Secret of Mental Magic!

Here is your first exciting secret: before reading this book, please turn to Chapter XVI on page 214. Go through the first two sections entitled *Your Special Secrets* and *Have a Mental Magic Party!*

By doing this you perform your first act as a mental magician. You turn this book into your personal guide to the richer life!

I

The Exciting Truth About Your Mind

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD the story about the tourist visiting a beautiful tropical isle of the South Seas. As he strolled along the white sands he came across a native resting comfortably in the shade of a palm tree. Alongside him was his grass-skirted girl friend. The tourist asked the native:

"How come you don't work?"

"Why?" replied the native.

"To earn some money."

"Why?"

"To save for your future."

"Why?"

"So you can retire peacefully."

"Peaceful already."

That amusing story contains a curious truth, which is: comfort and peace of mind can be yours *now*.

How?

That is just one of the great secrets of mental magic we will discover together as we go along.

YOUR MIND CAN PREDICT YOUR FUTURE!

At this early point it is good that we define the phrase *secrets of mental magic*.

By this we mean that every man possesses—possesses at this very moment—enormous mental powers. However, many of these thought-forces are unknown to him; he is unaware of their existence within his mind.

So our purpose is to discover these secrets of mental magic (which we will refer to as SOMM). By uncovering these mental treasures we can use them for daily prosperities.

Everything changes magically for the man who discovers the secrets of his own power. This great transformation is excellently described by Dr. Maurice Nicoll:

But a man can begin to live differently in himself. He can begin to think differently and feel differently and desire differently and love differently . . . If this happens the man has another relationship to himself, internally. His life in himself then begins to change.¹

Such changes result in practical prosperities. One of them is the ability to predict your own future, which we will cover in Chapter VI. But you may wish to ask, "Can I really foretell coming events?"

Of course you can.

Not only that, but you can predict either success or failure for yourself.

If you prefer success, you can have it. Your future can be prosperous far beyond anything you dream about.

How come?

Because the way you think determines the way you act. And the way you act decides the kind of future that unfolds before you. In forthcoming pages I will show you *exactly how* you can foretell your own prosperous future—and make it come true!

¹ Maurice Nicoll, *The New Man* (London: Vincent Stuart, Ltd.; New York: Hermitage House, Inc., 1951).

Simple? Of course it is. But you must make its simplicity a part of your everyday affairs.

Marvelous? Certainly. And you can be the marvel-making magician.

"You need not be surprised to hear such things are possible, because everything is possible that is consistent with natural laws." (Paracelsus—Swiss physician)

WHAT TO BELIEVE ABOUT YOURSELF

When Evelyn R. came to talk things over, she spoke of her bewilderment and lack of purpose:

"I think," she explained, "that I need something to believe in. I'd like a project that I can pursue with whole-hearted interest. I need to find something that really means something to me. I've tried so many things—social activities, hobbies, philosophies. There have been men in my life, and one or two affairs. But nothing seems to lift the inner ache. Sooner or later I'm forced to admit that I'm trying to lose myself in things that don't interest me at all. Tell me, please, what can I really believe in?"

"For a change," I replied, "try believing in yourself."

"In what way?"

"It's not at all complicated. Just believe in the right things about yourself."

"What are the right things?"

"That you can change your life by changing your thoughts. Believe that conflict and frustration are unnecessary. Take the stand that life is *for* you, not against you. Proceed as if there is a way out. Hold the viewpoint that you now possess inner powers that can be uncovered and developed for any purpose you wish."

"Can I really believe all that?"

"What's stopping you?"

"I don't know."

"There is nothing at all in your way. You only think so. But that, unfortunately, *makes* it so as far as you are personally concerned."

"Yes, I understand."

"You want something in which to believe? All right. Believe in yourself. Do that much, and everything else will easily take care of itself."

Evelyn nodded. "I like that philosophy."

"It's even more than a philosophy, Evelyn; it's a fact. Don't accept your present way of living as the *only* way. It isn't at all. Whether you presently know it or not, another brighter world exists for you in the here and now."

Evelyn found that brighter world for herself through the very secrets of mental magic you are now uncovering. As English author Thomas Carlyle announced, "It is the thought of man . . . by which man works all things whatsoever."

HOW TO BE A REBEL

Human beings are in constant rebellion against failure and unhappiness. That is good. It indicates a desire for freedom. But because of unclear thinking, most men utterly waste their powers of healthy rebellion. In brief, a man *rebels against the wrong things*. By directing his protests against exterior conditions he misses the point entirely. It is not his exterior world that needs his attention; it is himself. A man falls into a self-made trap whenever he thinks that by replacing his politics or his sex partner or residence or religion that he has really changed anything. In truth, he has merely replaced one prison cell for another—and deep down in his heart he desperately knows it. But, by not facing that truth, he is desperately driven to rebel again and again against some exterior condition—with the same empty results.

What, then, should we rebel against? What is the logical and profitable target?

We have one thing and one thing only to rebel against: *Our own negative or unrealistic or unworkable states of mind.*

In *that* is complete freedom, and in no place else.

When a man makes right his mental processes, every exterior condition effortlessly rights itself!

A man's mental forces can be compared to several independent armies, separated from each other, but wishing to defeat a common enemy. If they remain apart by not knowing of each other, or by some sort of disagreement, their attack will be less than maximum. But if they agree to join forces in the common purpose, nothing can withstand their attack.

Likewise, as we unite all our mental powers, as we present a strong front, our life-victories are assured.

SOME SECRET THOUGHTS

What are some ideas to hold in mind from the very start of this book? What wealthy thoughts will guarantee your final prosperity?

First, take an adventurous attitude toward everything you are about to explore. Turn everything into a fun-filled expedition. Lots of people fail to realize that self-improvement can be an enjoyable experience. If *you* realize it, you are certain to speed up your progress. A spirit of adventure fires up your enthusiasm and releases your inner powers.

Next, expect to make some delightful discoveries. A group of psychologists, gathered at a banquet, held an interesting contest among themselves. Each member of the group was asked to submit an answer to the question: "What, in your opinion, is the brightest moment in a man's life?" Out of dozens of answers, here is the one winning first prize: "The moment he really sees that by changing his mental attitudes he can change his life." That is just one of the dozens of delightful discoveries you can expect to make.

This book is designed to avoid all wasteful wanderings. Our energies are too precious to squander in pointless searchings of any kind. We want to get right to the point of things and ignore all else. And what is the point? *To gain our rightful mental freedom.* That is the only point worth our attention. To wander off into non-essentials is like a man who falls into a pit and then sits there wondering whether it was his left or right foot that slipped first. What he should think about is *the way out.*

PRACTICAL MAGIC!

After an opening class of mine in SOMM, a woman approached me somewhat hesitantly. Sensing her reluctance, I asked, "Something you'd like to discuss?"

She smiled. "I'm almost embarrassed to ask, but you mentioned the word *magic* several times during your talk. I'm wondering, Mr. Howard . . . do you really believe in magic?"

"Of course," I told her. "But let's call it *practical* magic."

"Practical magic? Like what?"

"Like a woman who gains self-insight that changes her emotions from troubled to peaceful. Like a man who learns that it is more important to be happy than rich. Like anyone who changes his life by discovering his hidden mental riches."

She laughed. "Where do I sign up for the class?"

So, as you read along, be completely practical. Give your attention to the essentials, to what you really want. Be like the farmer who once ran an ad in a New York newspaper: *Farmer, age 40, reasonably nice-looking, wishes to meet woman of same qualifications who owns a tractor. Please enclose photo of tractor.* That farmer at least knew what he wanted, and so should you. Make your goal clear to your mind. Write it down in a single, short, plain sentence. Review it often. Most importantly, use the techniques of this book.

Next, know this: The perfect place to start any new program is exactly where you are at the present moment. If life is anything, she is fair. She asks you to do *only* what you are capable of doing at any particular level of development. If you will simply relax and do the best you can for now, you need do nothing else.

Wrote Cicero, the ancient Roman statesman, "I follow nature as the surest guide."

Nothing can prevent a man's swift progress once he heeds the natural guides he possesses at any given time. A little truth, when followed, always leads to greater ones.

RELAXING NEWS

When Fridtjof Nansen, the Norwegian explorer, ventured into the Arctic regions he brought along several carrier-pigeons. On one occasion a bird was assigned the daring adventure of flying a thousand miles over frozen wasteland to deliver a personal note to Mrs. Nansen. There was some doubt as to the bird's success, for after all, the expedition had now been gone for thirty months. That was a long time for the pigeon to be gone from home. But one morning Mrs. Nansen heard a tapping on her window. It was the courageous pigeon. He had completed his daring flight, bearing a note informing Mrs. Nansen that all was well with the polar expedition.

Any man or woman who feels long-gone can get home before dark. The way back is certain. The natural guidances of life are incapable of failure. Whether it's in music, cooking, gardening, or *living*, there are basic principles that carry a man all the way to his desired destinations. We need only *permit* them to carry us forward.

And that is why you need never strain or struggle at anything, including the ideas in this book. You need never try to think or understand or act above your present level. As a matter of fact, no man *can* perform above his present level. And you are not expected to.

You can relieve yourself of all responsibility for being anything but what you are at the present moment. Once you actually see this truth, and rest in it, you will take the deepest breath of relaxation you have ever taken.

The wise Hindu philosopher Patanjali points out, "To supply human needs is the function of the universe."

It is never our responsibility to *create* our supply of good. It is our delightful task to *accept* that already-created good.

Remember, the man who commands the secrets of mental magic need not struggle for peace or prosperity or anything else.

He has them.

YOUR NEW WORLD

Most men lead dreary lives of sullen submission broken only by occasional angry outbursts. The submission keeps them frustrated and the outbursts make them feel guilty. No man can possibly be happy in a state like this. What he fails to realize is that *a way of life exists that has nothing to do with either submission or outburst.*

There exists a new world which you may not as yet know about.

It is a wonderful world of freedom.

If you do not know it, you can find it.

It is not lack of intelligence that prevents a man from discovering this new existence; it is lack of knowledge. Knowledge of what? Of our true nature. If we do not see that we were made for freedom, we then suffer all the pains of self-imprisonment. If we do not proceed in our daily lives armed with the simple truth that all can be brightly changed, then we remain in static hopelessness.

In discussing the peaceful and productive life, Dr. Albert Ellis and Dr. Robert A. Harper cheerfully declare:

So it can be done. With or without prior psychological sophistication, an individual can read or hear about a new idea, can forcefully set about applying it to his own thought and action, and can carve amazingly constructive changes in his own psyche.²

The average man is like someone forced to take a daily ride through the Tunnel of Horrors at an amusement park. He is unwillingly carried through a variety of frightening experiences. When bits of overhanging thread brush across his face he mistakes them for ghostly fingers. When a terrifying monster lunges from a dark corner he cringes as if it were real. Day after day he reluctantly rides upon his horrifying journey, anxious and defensive.

What is the real tragedy? *It is that he does not refuse to be bluffed by unreality.* That he does not challenge, question, defy and investigate each and every one of those seeming terrors. That he does not *fight for himself.*

² Albert Ellis and Robert A. Harper, *A Guide to Rational Living* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961).

Were he to do so, he would soon find himself out of his private Tunnel of Horrors and into his rightful sunshine. *If he does not choose to ride, he need not do so.*

TRY THIS EXPERIMENT

One lecturing psychologist pauses in his talk long enough to let his audience take part in a curious experiment. It reminds everyone of how easily the mind “sees” things that don’t exist in reality. You can try it for yourself, as follows:

Hold your forefinger before your face, about a foot away. Look at it, then blink your eyes alternately, left and right, left and right. Your finger will appear to jump back and forth. What gives your finger the illusion of motion, even though you know it actually remains motionless? The way your mind “sees” it.

This experiment also introduces us to one of the great secrets of mental magic, which is: We must learn to see things as they really are, not as our conditioned mind falsely interprets them. If we see life as a threat to our progress, we will *react* as if it were a threat. That wastes our valuable energies.

Learn to challenge, question, defy and investigate each situation that bothers you. Learn to fight *for yourself* but never *against anything*.

Don’t permit anyone or anything to bluff you. Greet all situations with a wise mind. Examine them carefully and you will see that circumstances lack power to harm you. During World War I the Germans built a fake airfield made up of flimsy wooden buildings. They hoped to lure the British into wasting bombs on a phony target. But the British saw through the scheme. They sent a single airplane over the field to drop a single bomb—a wooden one.

Work at seeing every situation as it really is—not as the mind may distort it. This is what places you in command of every situation.

YOUR MIND IS ENOUGH

Suppose we were able to gather together in one hall all the great thinkers of the ages—Confucius, Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Baruch Spinoza, William James, Sigmund Freud. Then suppose we asked

them, one by one, "How can a man lose his bondage and gain his freedom?"

Each would give us the very same answer. They might phrase it differently, but since the truth is the truth, they would agree:

"Change your *thinking*."

"Examine your *beliefs*."

"Switch your *attitudes*."

"Check your *premises*."

"Alter your *viewpoints*."

"Challenge your *assumptions*."

The *Bhagavada Gita*, the sacred book of the East, sums up like this: "Man is made by his belief. As he believes, so is he."

What exciting conclusion can we draw? Well, it's like the small boy who visited the ocean for the first time. When asked what he thought about it he called out, "I'm glad to see something that's enough!"

Your mind, when it thinks correctly, is enough to fulfill every desire.

And one way to think correctly is to *aim at understanding* your secrets of mental magic.

A police lieutenant was instructing a class of officers in indoor marksmanship with a revolver. "Aim is everything," he told them. "If you aim right, you can't fail to hit the target." He then held up a revolver to which was attached a small but powerful flashlight, set parallel to the barrel. Turning off the lights, the instructor flashed the light against the target. "You see," he explained, "that when you aim rightly, you just can't miss."

That is a good idea to remember. As you go through this book, make it your aim, make it your single intention, to understand SOMM. By doing so, you just can't miss its benefits.

THE TURNING POINT

At some time or other in a man's life he hears an inner shout that confirms what he dimly suspects—that something is all wrong.

He sees that his life is distasteful to him—yes, even hateful—in many ways. This awakening—and that is what it is—should be heeded and encouraged. If he listens to it, and does not suppress it as something “bad,” it can be the turning point of his life.

If you are disillusioned, discouraged or dismayed—be glad! It is a wise and necessary step toward discovery of the richer self. Disillusionment means that you have frankly faced your way of life and found it no life at all. It means that you see for the first time that the unworkable *is* unworkable. Dismay with your present self *must* occur before your higher self can appear. A self-satisfied man never climbs a single step above his present level. So be disillusioned, if that is the way you feel, and be glad about it. You have cracked the old negative pattern just a bit.

A preliminary step for finding the richer self is to get utterly weary of explanations offered you which really explain nothing. There are lots of people eager to give you advice on how to live your life. Much of it is not only worthless in itself but it throws you even farther off the right track. Your advisors may be nice enough people, and well-meaning, but that doesn't mean they know what they are talking about when it comes to *your* life. As one man humorously explained to me, “I quit asking my friends for advice. I found out they were as mixed up as I!”

The truth itself is the only reliable advice.

THE TROJAN HORSE

How do we go about finding the truth that sets us free? The first thing to know is that we already know it! Somewhere, deep down inside, every man knows what is best for him. But his mind has accepted an amazing load of false doctrine. He mistakes too many illusions for realities, as with the man in the Tunnel of Horrors. So the truth becomes lost in a maze of misinformation.

You probably remember that classic tale of the wooden horse that caused the downfall of Troy. The Greek army, encamped outside the barred gates of Troy, plotted to take the city by trickery. They built a huge wooden horse, planted thirty soldiers inside, sealed up the secret

exit, and withdrew their army. The next morning the Trojans rubbed their eyes with delight—the Greeks had disappeared. But what was this strange wooden horse they had left behind? They were about to haul it into the city when a wise man named Laocoön shouted his objection: “No! Don’t you see—it’s a trick. Beware of this Greek gift!”

But the Trojans refused the warning. The wooden horse was dragged inside the gates of Troy. That night the hidden warriors slipped through the trap door. Racing to the gates they flung them open to the waiting Greek army.

That’s an excellent illustration of how the truth can save us from folly—if we only heed it. Every man has the capacity to hear the truth, but he must *listen*:

Declares Dr. David Seabury:

There is no greater, simpler or surer way to transform your life than to stop, look and listen, seeking the experimental processes of your mind. At every crossroads of thought, at every blind turn in your life experience, experiment. Stop your thoughtless involvement in the rush of events; look calmly and carefully at the situation; then listen, listen quietly, to the deeper guidances that rise up in your consciousness to help you. If you are attentive to the experimental process, and shut out for a little time the noise of life, you will receive great help.³

This leads us to another dynamic secret of mental magic which we can call:

YOUR MAGNIFICENT GLIMPSE

There is a cheering principle governing all personal progress that goes like this:

Once a man catches a glimpse of something better, nothing can prevent him from attaining it. Once you realize, or even suspect, that a superior way of life *actually exists*, it is practically yours. The only thing that prevents a man from discovering his richer world is his non-awareness of its existence.

³ David Seabury, *The Art of Living Without Tension* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958).

The Magnificent Glimpse is a major power behind all the successes you have enjoyed thus far. When fully understood and employed, it paves the way for further conquests that may astonish you. It is like sighting the first star in the early evening. Seeing it, you know that it is just the first, that many more will appear before your gaze.

Notice how it has already aided you in many ways: As you glimpsed the possibility of learning a new skill, you tackled it and eventually became its commander. Once you first suspected that you might talk skillfully before an audience, you tried and succeeded. As the idea of a better home fluttered across your mind, you acted on it until that home became a reality.

Let's clarify this great idea a bit more by examining it from the negative view:

Without that first Magnificent Glimpse of the richer life, a man has neither motive nor energy for searching it out. Obviously, a man never looks for something of which he is unaware; it's impossible to pursue something that doesn't first exist as an idea in mind. But as a man gets his first exciting suspicion—ever so faintly—his entire energies unite to bring it his way.

The adventure of one of our western pioneers illustrates the point:

A Pennsylvania man rode west with the intention of making his fortune in cattle. With high hopes he founded his ranch at the base of a mountain. But hard times came in the form of drought. While riding around one morning in search of fresh water he chanced to glance toward the base of the mountain and caught his Magnificent Glimpse. Something unusual over there claimed his attention; something he hadn't noticed before. He rode on over for further investigation. He discovered a half-covered opening to a canyon that cut all the way through the mountain. On the other side he found his new world—a valley of lush grass and sparkling streams.

BE MENTALLY RECEPTIVE

Your Magnificent Glimpse of something better can occur anytime, maybe while at the office or when working around the yard. It

often comes suddenly, in unexpected moments, when the mind is relaxed and receptive. In a flash you see the answer to a problem or feel inspired to leap toward a new goal.

Dr. Rollo May describes this thrilling experience:

It is as though for a moment one stood on a mountain peak, and viewed his life from that wide and unlimited perspective. One gets his sense of direction from his view from the peak and sketches a mental map which guides him for weeks . . . the fact that we have had these glimpses gives a basis of meaning and direction for all of our later actions.⁴

Dozens of ideas in this book are devoted to the full awakening of your mind, to giving it that Magnificent Glimpse. You might find inspiration in the success story of a businessman. Maybe you instantaneously solve a problem by hearing how a homemaker solved hers. The adventurous action of this man or that woman could well inspire you toward your own new adventures. In one of my classes a salesman remarked that he had recently increased his sales by ten percent. I asked him how. "By simply remembering," he replied, "that nothing gives so much self-satisfaction as seeing how well you can do something. I make every account a challenge to my creative abilities. It pays off both financially and in great feelings of self-worth."

Experiences like that can come to you, too. So keep your mind receptive to the Magnificent Glimpse. "Those who make room for impressions will receive them." (Paracelsus)

To insure profitable journeys, the ancient Persian kings drank only the water from the river Choaspes, which they carried in silver jars. The water was said to contain magical powers for success. Likewise, we will have prosperous journeys when we carry along with us the principles of right thinking. In a few moments we will explore ten of them.

⁴ Rollo May, *Man's Search for Himself* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1953).

SUMMARY OF VITAL IDEAS

1. The secrets of mental magic can change your life completely. Let them!
2. Accept the delightful truth that you can find a far different and far brighter world.
3. Remember that the only thing we need to change is our states of mind. When we do that, everything else changes effortlessly.
4. The best place to start your program of self-improvement is right where you are at the present moment.
5. No one needs to live in unhappiness and defeat. The way out exists, and the earnest seeker can find it.
6. All problems are opportunities for finding your richer self. Study your problems with the intention of understanding them.
7. Examine your daily attitudes and viewpoints. Gradually replace those that fail to serve your best interests.
8. It is the truths of life that set us free. We need only to listen to them.
9. Be receptive to the Magnificent Glimpse. It can flash into your consciousness at any time. It comes to the relaxed and waiting mind.
10. Carry SOMM with you into your everyday affairs. There is nothing more practical or exciting!

II

Ten Great Secrets of Mental Magic

A BUSINESSMAN ONCE ASKED ME, "Exactly why should I study the secrets of mental magic?"

"Because," I told him, "you can have either a genuinely new life or you can have the counterfeit of a new life. The choice is yours. If you wish to continue with a dreary imitation, you can certainly do so. But if you are tired of inner distress, you can certainly break free. You can have a new life far beyond anything you can imagine. The secrets of mental magic will show you the way. They are ready to give enlightenment to anyone who really wants them."

"This real thing that you speak of . . . what is it?"

"The very things that you want: Freedom from worry. The eagerness for life that you once had as a boy. A tender and romantic relation with the woman in your life. A lasting sense of security and comfort. Not being afraid at every corner."

"Is all that really possible?"

"It really is."

"That's what I want all right."

"Then that's what you can really have."

THE MAN WITH THE BLUE PAINT

The story is told about the man who was overwhelmed with buckets of blue paint. All his friends had extra supplies of blue paint that they didn't want. So they carried them on over and left them on his doorstep. Before long his house and garage bulged with buckets of blue paint. But still they came. It wasn't long before his yard was a jungle of buckets of blue paint.

"Well," sighed the man, "I've got to do something with all this blue paint so kindly left me by my friends." So he started painting everything blue. He painted his house blue. He bought a green car and brushed it blue. When a set of red books were delivered to his door he quickly slapped it with a coat of blue. Everything he knew became blue.

"I really don't know why I do it," he sighed, "but since I don't know what else to do, everything gets blue." So he painted and painted, without the slightest idea why.

But one day as he was painting something blue, his brush paused in midair. A fantastic idea struck his mind. "Why not paint something a *cheery red* or a *bright yellow* or maybe a *refreshing green*? Seems to me I used to enjoy those happy colors. What a revelation! *There is an alternative to blue!*"

So from that time on he never painted anything blue. And every hour was cheery and bright and colorful.

The lesson? *There is an alternative to colorless living. A bright new life does exist.*

If you wish to find your own more colorful days, we can start together with these ten basic secrets of mental magic.

1. EVERY MAN IS MENTALLY WEALTHY

It happened during the days of the early West.

An Apache raiding party captured a U.S. Army safe containing

\$7,000 in paper money. The thick safe with its combination lock baffled the Indians. They knew the heavy metal box contained something of value, but hadn't the slightest notion of how to put their hands on it. In desperation they pounded at the safe with tomahawks and tried to melt it in fire. When it still resisted, they dropped boulders on it and pushed it off a mountain peak. After a month of frustrating effort they abandoned it in a river. The army finally recovered the safe with its contents untouched.

Every man's mind is like that safe. The riches are there for sure. The question is, how can we break through the walls of misunderstanding and so reach our mental riches.

There *is* a way.

We need only to know the combination.

And that is the whole purpose of this book—to show you how to release the vast wealth you already possess within your mind.

Start thinking in terms of *mental freedom*. That is an excellent phrase to run through your mind. When your wealthy thoughts are released, they express themselves as happiness and prosperity.

Dr. Erich Fromm speaks of this self-expression:

We believe that there is a positive answer, that the process of growing freedom does not constitute a vicious circle, and that man can be free and yet not alone, critical and yet not filled with doubts, independent and yet an integral part of mankind. This freedom man can attain by the realization of his self, by being himself . . . We believe that the realization of the self is accomplished not only by an act of thinking but also by the realization of man's total personality, by the active expression of his emotional and intellectual potentialities. These potentialities are present in everybody; they become real only to the extent to which they are expressed. In other words, *positive freedom consists in the spontaneous activity of the total, integrated personality*.¹

The realization and the release of your natural mental wealth is the first great secret of mental magic.

¹ Erich Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1941).

2. YOUR MIND IS FASCINATING!

Honoré de Balzac, the French novelist, once declared:

"I love to plunge into that realm of mystery, giving a comprehension of the power of mind, and accustom me to the workings of the mind."

The mysteries and fascinations of the human mind are endless. A detective story is a mild thrill by comparison.

I once assigned several members of a class of mine to make some personal observations of other people. The students were to use their minds as observers of other people in action. One of the women came back with this curious report:

"There's a definite difference in the mental workings of men and of women. For instance, I noticed something interesting about a conversation between a man and a woman. When the woman talks she looks almost constantly at the face of the man; she keeps an eye on his reactions. But when the man talks to her he looks infrequently at her face. I don't know the significance of this peculiarity in male-female conversation, but it makes a fascinating mystery!"

Get interested in the workings of your own mind. Watch how it responds and imagines and creates. Become aware of its surprise, delight, puzzlement and wonder as you go through your day. Why do this? Because an understanding of your mental machinery turns it into your personal servant. Your mind is a *power*. By *realizing* it as a power you turn it into a mighty force for self-advancement.

Take the area of interpersonal relations. As you understand the basic principles of the human mind, you become an expert in handling other people. The story goes about the weary mother whose strength was fading fast during the birthday party for her young son. She thought fast, then came up with a workable plan: She offered a prize to the first child to go home! That woman based her strategy on knowledge of a child's mind—and it worked!

Get fascinated by your own mind. The great men and women of all historical ages were those who were enchanted by mental power. And why not? It is the basis of *all* power.

Your fascination with your own mental make-up is the second secret of mental magic.

3. YOUR OWN WAY IS THE BEST WAY

An inquirer came to say, "I sincerely want to discover the secrets of mental magic. What is the best way?"

If that is also your question, here is the heartening answer: The best method is the one that appears easiest for *you*. It is your preferred procedure that makes the search a self-satisfying one. "Each mind has its own method." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

There are dozens of good techniques for collecting your mental riches. Many of them are just right for you.

Here are three different methods that worked out perfectly for Earl C., Marie W. and Dale B.

1. Earl was an enthusiastic reader. In his letter to me he exclaimed, "I have just finished my first reading of your book *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life*. I have marked it in dozens of special places. I now intend to go over those special ideas time and time again. I know that each review will uncover new nuggets I missed before."

Earl's personal technique was to concentrate his reading around ideas that impressed him as being especially valuable. Try it for yourself.

2. Marie admitted to periods of depression whenever things went wrong. I asked her, "Did you ever stop to think that while you may be *disappointed* over something that you need not go so far as *depression*?" By understanding that simple truth, she gradually dissolved gloomy feelings.

3. Dale was a boulevard merchant with an adventurous turn of mind. He liked to take familiar ideas and turn them into profitable business aids. One time at a party he saw a magic trick in which a silver dollar floated in a bowl of water. He adapted that idea for his own use by placing his own bowl and dollar in his shop window. It attracted attention and customers.

Dale's sense of adventure served him profitably. Where can an adventurous spirit serve you?

Picture in your mind an attractive mountain cabin that commands a magnificent view of the vast countryside. You wish to reach the cabin in order to enjoy its pleasures and comforts. At first you don't know which of the many trails to take, for you have never traveled any of them before. Suddenly it strikes you: *All trails lead to the cabin.* So, secure in this knowledge, you easily select the one nearest and best for you. You hike happily upward, knowing that your arrival is certain.

Going forward in your own best way is your third helpful secret of mental magic.

4. YOUR MIND CAN CHANGE YOU

When Herbert B. came to talk over his lack of progress he asked, "Is it possible to boil down my failure to a single main problem? I think that if I could clearly identify the barrier, I might leap over it."

After assuring him that he was on the right track, we talked things over. I studied Herbert's answers to my various questions about his life, then was able to tell him what he wanted to know.

"Your single greatest problem, Herbert, is your doubt about the power of your own thoughts. The simple fact is, when you switch your mental processes from negative to affirmative, your life changes miraculously. That is the plain fact. At the present time you don't see that fact. That is your only problem. But we can solve it."

We looked around trying to find an opening where Herbert could break through to affirmative mental acts. We decided upon a simple and practical plan. The object was for him to demonstrate to himself that his thoughts could actually change things.

"Here's what to do." I outlined the plan. "The next time you feel unable to achieve some beneficial task, assume that it can be done. Then, act out that assumption."

"I see. Get into action with an affirmative assumption. I'll do it."

Herbert's success-story, told to me a few days later, was a pleasure to hear:

"For a long time I'd had an idea in my mind concerning the arrangement of the office furniture. By switching certain desks and chairs the entire staff would be more comfortable and work more efficiently. I wanted to suggest it to the boss, but I'm not the boldest man around, so I kept it to myself. But last Wednesday, after our talk, I just walked on over and showed him how everyone would benefit. He was so delighted he ordered the rearrangements made at once. Maybe that wasn't an earth-shaking achievement, Mr. Howard, but it did prove that enterprising thoughts can change things. I expect to go on to greater successes. You are right—a man's thoughts *can* change his life."

Dr. Joost A. M. Meerloo adds his agreement: ". . . change and growth of personal outlook is one of the most important scientific findings in psychology and is agreed on by all psychologists."²

The simple truth that your daily thoughts can richly change your life is your fourth great secret of mental magic.

5. THOUGHTS CAN COMMAND CIRCUMSTANCES

Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor and philosopher, made the statement, "The happiness of your life depends upon your thoughts."

And so does everything else. Including your circumstances.

At first, this is difficult for some people to grasp. We tend to think of conditions as just happening, when, in reality, they are *caused*. If we will honestly face the fact that *we* create our circumstances, we are well on our way toward causing the kind of conditions we want.

Just as a controlled ship is master of the waves and winds, so can you control your surrounding conditions. Even though the world often seems harsh and unfair, you need not be affected or hurt at all. You can be free. You can sleep peacefully. You need not be irritated by

² Reprinted by permission of The World Publishing Company from *The Rape of the Mind* by Joost A. M. Meerloo.

unpleasant people or thrown off balance by unexpected events. You need not unwillingly do things you really don't want to do. You are not required to live in conflict or in frustration.

Does that sound like a lovely ideal that's encouraging to hear but which is impossible to attain? If we think so, that is our first mistake.

Any man who thinks so must remember that he is thinking with a negatively conditioned mind that can only think in that manner. Happily, what a man may mistakenly *think* is so, may not *be* so. And in this case it just isn't so!

That triumphant thinker Ralph Waldo Emerson makes it clear: "Victory over things is the office of man. Each man is a new power in nature. He holds the keys of the world in his hands."

The truth, then, is that you are capable of floating freely over all problems or irritations that may now form part of your day. And you can experience this free-floating *anywhere*—in the home, at the busy office, while driving your car, anywhere at all. How is this possible? Because, really, *you* are your contentment; because your happiness depends upon nothing outside yourself. Wherever you go, you are your very own peace.

The ability of your thoughts to command circumstances is your fifth great secret of mental magic.

6. YOUR MENTAL POWERS ARE LIMITLESS

When an Egyptian shepherd boy was given charge of a flock of sheep he was told, "The pool on the other side of the hill is for emergency only. Its water is limited, so don't use it unless other sources dry up."

An extreme hot spell brought on the emergency, so the boy led his flock to the pool. Although the sheep drank from the pool all day long, the water maintained its original level. The shepherd investigated the strange situation and made a curious discovery: The pool was fed by an underground stream. As the water was removed from the top of the pool, the underground pressure was activated into streaming

upward. In other words, the pool had a constant and limitless source of supply.

A man's mental powers are like that—limitless.

"Then why," comes the logical question, "do the majority of men and women lead such limited lives?"

The answer can also be found in the story of the pool: The majority of men and women never really investigate their potentialities. They wrongly assume that what they *now* see is all that they *will ever* see. They think that what they *presently* do is all that they can *ever* do. They falsely believe that tomorrow must be as unsuccessful as today. So they sadly accept self-limitation. And as long as a man accepts limitation, he will not be motivated to discover the great potentialities that his mind actually possesses.

That shepherd boy discovered great natural resources because of an emergency. But we need not wait for an emergency before locating our great reserves of inner abundance. Because they are within *now*, we can have them *now*. And one benefit is that they prevent emergencies from arising at all. Incidentally, of all the riches of SOMM there is none more remarkable than its ability to keep a man out of trouble in the first place. The self-aware man, the mental magician, the man who understands his mind, not only knows what to do for his own benefit, but he knows what *not* to do. Such a man is free from the vicious circle of one difficulty after another.

What we need is self-knowledge. That is the secret of limitless self-power.

An anxious passenger on a Mississippi riverboat asked the captain, "Are you sure you know where all the rocks are?"

"No," the captain replied, "but I know where the channel is."

You and I need never be anxious about any hazards we may encounter as we sail along. Once we know our own channels of strength we can totally unconcern ourselves with hazards. They no longer have anything to do with us.

Your awareness of your limitless thought-power is your sixth basic secret of mental magic.

7. YOU CAN CHOOSE YOUR THOUGHTS

Let's try an interesting experiment. Start by reading the following three thoughts:

1. "The supply of what I want is always equal to my need."
2. "Every individual possesses magical powers, ready for release into his service."
3. "Results surpassing all expectations can be achieved by me."

Here you have three power-packed thoughts that can inspire your thinking and guide your action. Furthermore, they are thoughts you can run through your mind any time you choose to do so. *Nothing* can stop you from thinking them whenever you like. As English philosopher John Locke states, "Man may have full power over his own mind." All a man needs to do is choose to have that power, just as you might select a certain key on a cash register. In either case you ring up value!

Experiment throughout your day. Memorize the thought you like best among the preceding three. Choose to let it inspire your mind as you go about your activities. It will refresh you.

I want to give you an interesting mental exercise. It will remind you that you actually have the power to spell out the successes you want:

Consider yourself surrounded by an unlimited supply of wooden alphabet blocks. Next, think of something that you desire, perhaps more self-confidence, maybe a feeling of security, or whatever. Picture yourself reaching out for whatever blocks you need for spelling out that desire. Block by block you construct it. It is really a matter of simply going ahead and spelling it out, for you have an unlimited supply from which to draw.

Your mind is like that. It contains every element you need for spelling out whatever you really need. Work with this idea. More and more you will increase your ability to select only those thoughts that do you good, that spell out your needs.

Your ability to choose constructive thoughts is your seventh secret of mental magic.

8. YOU HAVE DEFINITE GUIDANCES

Some friends called on me the other night, arriving about an hour late. They explained, "We took the wrong turn at an intersection. When we got back to that corner we saw a sign we should have noticed in the first place."

Lots of people are like that in their daily journeys. They fail to take time to notice the guiding signs along the way. They drive on, bewildered, getting nowhere and getting worried. They never stop to realize that there are definite guiding signs that could direct them to their desired destinations.

Stop, look and listen is not only a fine highway practice but good conduct when driving toward any life-goal.

You already possess the capacity for discovering these guiding principles. Your mind is perfectly capable of finding what it looks for. As the author of *Every Man a King* points out:

There can be no more important study, no higher duty owed to ourselves and those about us, than this of thought-control, of self-control, which results in self-development. Perhaps because thought in itself is intangible, and most of us really have so little control over it, there is an impression that direction of mind action is a difficult and abstruse affair, something that requires hard study, leisure, and book knowledge to accomplish. Nothing is further from the truth. Every person . . . has within himself all that is needful, and has all the time needful, to remake his intellectual nature, his character, and practically his body and his life.³

You have already absorbed some of these self-enriching guidances, and many more will present themselves as you read on through. They will, when you permit them to work freely within you, change everything. For one thing, you will be free from tiring responsibility, as we will see in Chapter IV.

³ Orison Swett Marden, *Every Man a King* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company).

The observance of definite and all-powerful guidances is your eighth secret of mental magic.

9. THE SECRET OF MENTAL LIBERTY

At one time a gigantic rock was perched three thousand feet above the town of Thormery, in France. For years the villagers lived in dread of it breaking loose from its flimsy base to thunder down upon their homes. The Frenchmen finally got tired of living under its threat. They made up their minds to remove the cause of their anxiety. They took charges of dynamite, climbed up to the massive stone, and blew it to bits. They lived in complete peace from that day on.

So can it be with anyone who wishes to be free of *any* kind of mental negativity. All our fears and anxieties have a common base—*misunderstanding*. Once we have the courage to revolt against the tricks our minds play on us we can be sure that any confusions are on their way out.

When we make up our minds to act, things start to happen. We may have to blow up a few things—such as our false beliefs—but that is just the blast that removes the threat!

Virginia W. commented, "If I could only be hopeful about uncovering the secrets of mental magic. I want to clear my mind, but I need some encouragement. Can you supply some sort of an inspiration, something to keep me going ahead?"

"Think back, Virginia, to those days when you were the very happiest of all, I mean, before the heaviness set into your mind. Remember that sense of freedom you had?"

She smiled and sighed, "Those were the days."

"Like to know something?"

"What?"

"You can have them again. You can do more than that. You can exceed those joys far beyond anything you can imagine."

Virginia nodded. "That is encouraging. All right. I'll remember that I *can* regain those sunny hours. It's the kind of hope that will keep me eagerly searching."

From that day forward Virginia was a changed woman. She was like someone who has found a great secret. And that, of course, was what actually had happened.

Your freedom from mental negativity is your ninth great secret of mental magic.

10. MENTAL MAGIC IS EXCITING!

One evening a Frenchman named Jean-Eugene Robert was strolling along the banks of the river Loire, in Orleans. Questions about his future popped into his mind. What career should he plan for himself? How could he make the most of his talents? Where could he find something to get excited about?

His thoughts were interrupted by sight of a crowd which had gathered around a wandering magician who had set up a sidewalk stand. Jean-Eugene walked on over to idly watch. On the magician's table were several shiny cups and three small balls. Like a wizard from a fairy tale the magician made the balls appear and vanish from one cup to another. Almost as if they were alive, the balls flashed up here and disappeared there.

As the performance ended, the magician offered a book for sale that promised to reveal the secrets of this amazing magic. Jean-Eugene eagerly bought one and rushed home to read it.

As he explored the pages, his mind tingled with exhilaration. He sensed that he had at last found something to get excited about. This magic was for him!

He was right. It was the great turning point of his life. He plunged into the secrets of stage magic with total enthusiasm. That was all it took. As Robert-Houdin, he became one of the great stage magicians of all time. Thousands flocked to his performances throughout Europe. He performed before kings and queens, and amassed a fortune. All because he found something to get excited about. You, too, have something to get excited about: *The secrets of mental magic!*

You can have a way of life that *stays* exciting. It will have no backwash of anxiety or depression. Most people, when they get excited over something, feel vaguely disturbed about it. They feel that their

elation will be followed by a swing to the other extreme, to depression. And it usually happens. Why? Because their elation is based on some passing sensation, such as a raise in pay or in receiving a compliment. Such exterior excitements always produce an opposite reaction. As long as a man looks to such outer events for his excitement he will be at the mercy of his own negative reaction.

But if you want an inner state of excitement that is permanent, that is never followed by depression, then it is yours for the taking.

So get excited over the secrets of mental magic! It is the most exciting adventure you could ever take. It faithfully carries you to loftier levels of luxurious living.

Your excited adventure with the ideas of this book is your tenth great secret of mental magic.

YOUR TEN GREAT SECRETS IN REVIEW

1. You presently possess all the mental wealth you need for prosperous days. Use SOMM to unlock this treasure.
2. The mind is a fascinating instrument! Get interested in learning more about it.
3. You can proceed with these secrets in the way that seems best for you. Make it your personal adventure.
4. Your mind can perform miracles of change. By cooperating with its powers you experience profitable transformation, both within and without.
5. You can increasingly command circumstances. As you go along with SOMM, outer conditions come more and more under your control.
6. Don't assume that your present level is all that there is. Your mental powers can carry you to much loftier levels.
7. You can select the kind of thoughts that advance your best interests. Do so!
8. The secrets of mental magic are sure guides. You can rely on them and rest in them.
9. No negative condition can imprison the man who deter-

mines to break free. If you make inner liberty your steadfast goal, you will find total freedom.

10. The most exciting adventure in life is your search for the secrets of mental magic. So get excited!

III

Your Power of Self-Confidence

ONE SUMMER EVENING a number of us were invited to a party held in a spacious garden. As we entered the area we found ourselves in complete darkness. Our host guided us to chairs at the head of the garden, alongside other guests. For a few minutes we sat there in the darkness, wondering what it was all about.

Then, suddenly, something interesting happened.

A single light went on, revealing a small section of a lovely garden. It was followed by another. One by one the lights flashed on, each adding a bit more to the garden and its occupants. One light revealed a long table, spread with refreshments. Another caused the appearance of several guests.

One fascinating feature of those lights supplies a perfect mental picture for starting this chapter: As each light flashed on, it not only brightened its immediate area, but shed light on surrounding sections. In other words, each light helped the other to make that garden an interesting scene.

This is how insight into ourselves can grow. The understanding of one particular truth helps us to understand many more. Every light aids the others. For instance, as you grow more confident in handling people in your business world, you increase your self-assurance when dealing with the opposite sex.

Let this truth be your first power for constructing greater self-trust.

YOUR MIND IS FREE

Gaining self-confidence is like stepping on an escalator: you can take any one of the dozens of moving steps and let it carry you upward. In this chapter we will take many of these uplifting steps.

The first dynamic truth we must realize is this:

In its natural and unblocked state, your mind is amazingly free of fear and timidity. (We are speaking of psychological fears, not those self-protective feelings we have when crossing a busy street.) To repeat, the natural mind is free, but negative experiences of the past have so covered this original state that it cannot express itself as it should. In other words, self-doubt is an acquired condition. And anything acquired can be dropped!

In my classes we have an experiment that proves this. Before their very eyes, class members see that confidence-building is not really a "building" process at all; we merely use that word as a convenient description.

So, if you don't "build" self-confidence, what *do* you do?

You uncover it by removing the negative conditioning.

Suppose you have before you a plate covered with a napkin. To get at that plate you don't have to "build" it. Not in the slightest. What you must do is remove the covering napkin—and there is the plate, ready for your service. *It was always there.*

That classroom experiment goes like this: I ask various class members whether they have enough confidence to stand up right now and give a short talk. They can choose any topic they like, one with which they are entirely familiar. Many of the members smile and shake their heads.

THE KING'S CROWN

I then ask everyone to make the following experiment the very next day: "Notice how easily you speak up whenever you are chatting with friends. You have no trouble at all in finding things to say. There isn't the slightest strain or nervousness. Your words flow out freely and abundantly."

Class members come back with some interesting reports. One man's comment was typical: "I see the point of the experiment. It proves that spontaneous confidence is there all the time; it's merely blocked by various inhibitions. I couldn't give that talk in class because I feared I wouldn't make a good impression. Now that I see that confidence is really *here*, I can correct things in the right way, that is, by removing those mental blocks."

If you like, try that helpful experiment for yourself. Let it prove that you are *now* a confident person, but just don't know it! By applying the secrets of mental magic of this chapter you can soon know it.

Some years ago there was a violent rainstorm in Spain. It uncovered the crown of King Swinthila, ruler of the Visigoths. That valuable crown had been hidden in Spanish earth for 1200 years.

Let that anecdote remind you that your crown of self-confidence is ready for your discovery.

Next, let's see what good things come to the man who makes this rich find. In the words of Dr. Erich Fromm:

The search for reality and the uncovering of illusions not only produces insight and knowledge, it changes man in the process. His eyes are opened, he awakens, he sees the world as it is and, correspondingly, he learns how to use and develop his own intellectual and affective powers in order to cope with reality. Only the one whose eyes have been opened is a realist.¹

The reality of your life is that you *are* capable of living with a totally new kind of self-assurance. This is true of you, whether you believe it or not. Disbelief in a fact doesn't destroy a fact, but it does

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prevent its practical operation. To find this new reality, we must begin a program that will rid our minds of non-realistic notions.

So, to sum up, just as your hands and arms are a natural part of you, so is your personal strength. Most people unknowingly cover it up, to one degree or another, but *it can never be permanently lost*. Like that king's crown, it is always there. You can start uncovering it any time you choose. Choose to do so now!

HOW TO BANISH SELF-DOUBT

Exactly what is self-doubt? Well, obviously it's not something we can touch or taste or hear. It is clearly a mental attitude. It is a way of thinking.

"How," the question then comes up, "do you banish this hurtful kind of thinking? How can we release, instead, mental motions that stir up good feelings?"

Let's answer with the adventure of Leonard E., an attorney. He called to say:

"I certainly agree that it takes self-affirmation to win business success. I've seen for myself how a man wins financial prosperity by believing in his own worth. But somehow I can't win the game when it comes to my private life. I'm not nearly as confident on the inside as I appear to be in public. I know I must have positive attitudes toward myself, but the big question is, how can I achieve that happy state?"

"First, by seeing that any *direct* effort to become self-confident won't work."

"Yes, how well I know. Why does it fail?"

"Because you are trying to force your mind to accept something which it cannot presently accept as true. Any deliberate attempt to be strong is merely a reaction from the opposite state of no-strength."

"So what do I do?"

A DEFINITION OF COURAGE

"Do something you haven't dared to do before. Face the fact that you are scared. Don't run away from your fear through pretense of courage. *Be* scared—and study it. Don't attempt to evade the fact

of fear. Don't try to cover it up or explain it away. Have the courage to be as scared as you actually are. You don't have to tell others about it, if you don't want to, but let yourself in on it for sure. That, Leonard, is the only accurate definition of courage—to *be whatever you are, whatever that may be*. Not one person in a million really knows this secret, but you can know it."

"If I do what you say, what will happen?"

"A miracle."

"In what way?"

"You will see that fear can be banished by just standing there and facing it, by not resisting it. You see, Leonard, you need not try to create courage at all. You *can't* create it. But you can let it come to you. Let me explain. A frightened mind can only produce fright, not courage, just as a weed seed produces only a weed. To repeat, you cannot *build* positive thoughts but *they can come to you*. Once you see the truth about all this, they rush in to fill the vacuum."

"Sounds interesting."

"Become alertly aware that self-doubt is unnecessary. *You don't really need it*. Once you really see that it contributes nothing to your mind, it falls away of itself. And that makes room for wonderfully new kinds of thoughts—courageous ones."

In a later session Leonard brightly reported, "You are right. I now see that courage isn't the opposite of fear, but the *absence* of fear. Well, what do you know," he smilingly sighed, "I had courage all along and didn't even know it. Now I know!"

Whenever you are afraid of anything, such as your own inadequacy, do not try to force courage. This only increases the confusion. Rather, calmly and casually observe your timidity with the *intention of understanding why you react to it the way you do*. If you will really do this, the end of that fear is certain. It is your understanding of self-doubt that dissolves it.

THE SONG HIT

We have seen that personal bravery cannot be—and need not be—forced. When we have met the necessary mental conditions it appears effortlessly, all by itself. The needed conditions are a relaxed

and receptive mind, one that has abandoned all strain and struggle. It appears to the man who has learned at last that the easy way is the only way. In Chapter II we will be covering this idea in detail, when we go into the tremendous secret of non-resistance.

Let's see how a relaxed mind supplies an easy confidence in your creative abilities.

One day in 1918 a man named Richard Whiting traveled out to the Detroit suburbs to visit a married friend, Ray Egan. Whiting sat down at Egan's piano to casually play around with the keys. He didn't try to force anything; he just rambled around to see what tunes would arise from the piano.

Egan, who was walking past, suddenly stopped. He asked Whiting to repeat a certain passage, and vary it a bit. Whiting did so. Working together, the two men soon had a charming melody. They gave the finished song the German title of *Auf Wiedersehen*. It was later changed to an English title meaning just about the same thing as *Auf Wiedersehen*.

Because of their relaxed receptivity, one of the most enduring of all popular songs came to Richard Whiting and Ray Egan. It has sold millions of copies and has been a hit around the world several times. You probably have hummed or sung the lovely *Till We Meet Again*.

So, if an affirmative attitude toward ourselves and toward our inner creative powers cannot be forced, then how does it arrive? Let's find out by going into:

YOUR FOUR SECRET WORDS

Modern psychology has shed additional light on a secret of mental magic that was known by the ancients. The secret is that every man and woman has a *self-image*. Defined in simple terms, self-image means that you see yourself as being a certain kind of person. If you see yourself as being confident, then you also *act* confidently, for all exterior actions are identical in nature to the thoughts that cause them. On the other hand, if you see yourself as frightened, then your actions must obey the command of that negative self-image.

"So," commented Norman A., "the trick is to alter that self-image of mine from timid to confident. Can I do it?"

"You can do it."

"I'd like to get going. Where's the starting line?"

I pushed paper and pencil across the desk to him. "Please write what I tell you."

As he took the pencil I instructed, "Please write in bold letters the following four magic words: *I need not obey.*"

Norman spoke aloud as he wrote, "I need not obey." Looking up he asked, "It's meaning is what?"

"Those are your four magic words. Whenever you feel like retreating from a situation that calls for courage, stop and catch yourself for a moment. Notice that your self-image is whispering to you; it's telling you that you are scared. Don't accept it. Remind yourself—calmly and firmly—that you need not obey that suggestion of timidity."

"I like the plan."

NORMAN'S STORY

"You see, Norman, you yourself have built this self-image of negativity. Without realizing it, of course. You've suggested it to yourself so long and so often that it's become a fixed habit. Your four magic words are your counter-attack to crack that habit. It reverses the process. You are telling yourself the exact truth when you state *I need not obey*. You really don't. You just *think* so. That thinking has deceived and cheated you long enough. Use the four magic words to claim your natural and rightful state of calm confidence. Use them often. You needn't struggle to convince yourself of this existing confidence, any more than it's a strain to see that today is Wednesday. You don't have to try to believe a truth; you need only accept it. See that your self-confidence *is* true. Experiment with all this. Let me know how you come out."

About ten days later he let me know. Like this:

"I'm single, you know. I like girls all right, but I'm scared of them. More than they know. I think about girls a lot, but what good

is that? I'd like to find a nice girl, but it never works out. Do you know something, Mr. Howard? When you're scared of a girl she knows it. And then she doesn't like you as much any more. She's disappointed that you're not a strong and confident man who makes her feel secure. Well, anyway, the other night something happened that changed a lot of things. Like to hear?"

"Like to hear."

SUCCESS!

"Well, there's this girl in the office down the hall. She's very nice. Sort of bashful, like me. I have to go in there once or twice a day. Most of the time I just kid with her. Know why I kid? Because I don't have the courage to seriously ask. I kid because I hope that some time she'll hint we should go out together. I know it's up to me to take the initiative, but I just don't have the nerve. Anyway, I had to drop in her office the other day. I wanted to ask her to have lunch with me in the company cafeteria. But I was afraid, mostly afraid she'd say no and leave me standing there embarrassed. Then I remembered. I need not obey that timidity. You know something? It worked. No strain at all. It simply occurred to me that I need not submit to that feeling. So I asked her. Just like that. She smiled and told me, "It sounds like fun." We had lunch together. I have the feeling she wanted me to ask long ago. You know, Mr. Howard, that's just a small victory, but I know I've cracked that timid self-image a bit. I see that it has only the authority over me that I unknowingly give it. I need not obey."

This SOMM is highly practical for you, too. Use it wherever you find yourself reacting more shyly than you want. As you hear the negative whispering, quietly remind yourself, "I need not obey."

Start like this: In the spaces below, list three situations where you want to act with more daring. This will keep you reminded of your goals. Now, apply the ideas you have just covered. Use them easily, casually, without rush or strain. Just apply them wherever you can in your daily affairs.

1. _____

2. _____
3. _____

A surprisingly delightful thing will happen to you. You will discover that you have command of yourself after all!

HOW TO ACHIEVE MORE

Your thoughts determine the place you occupy in life. "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts." (Buddha)

The quality of your ideas determines the quality of the actions you take toward your desires. The average person heads for his goal with a blend of both affirmative and negative ideas. The more affirmative his thinking, the greater his degree of success. But the extent to which negative factors control his mind, the lesser his achievement.

The process can be likened to baking a tasty chocolate cake. If the baker uses the ingredients as listed by the tested recipe, he cannot fail to come up with a tasty chocolate cake. But if he leaves some of them out, or if he adds untasty ones, his cake will be less than it could have been.

All the ingredients for living confidently are known.

We can load our table of life with as many delicious recipes as we like. We need only discover and follow the tested recipes. In this book we call those recipes the secrets of mental magic.

Try this good recipe for discovering your confident self:

Select a goal which you feel to be just slightly beyond your present capacities. Tackle it enthusiastically, as best you can. You will achieve some degrees of success. That success expands both your abilities and your confidence in yourself to succeed with the next slightly beyond goal.

In other words, dare to put yourself to the test. This is an easily observable characteristic of successful people. They are forever acting *beyond themselves*. Their mental attitude might be expressed, "To achieve more than I think I can, I do more than I think I can."

Such people find a constant stream of good things coming their way: It came to J. L. Kraft, founder of Kraft Foods, like this:

THE CONFIDENCE OF J. L. KRAFT

Officials of the United States Army and Navy were eager to find a cheese with certain qualities. The cheese had to preserve its freshness and flavor over long voyages to foreign shores. They heard that the Kraft company was putting up some of its cheese in tins. An invitation was extended to Mr. Kraft to bring a five-pound tin of cheese to headquarters for appraisal. Upon arriving he was told that the Department of Agriculture was also working on a method for preserving cheese in tins. Kraft boldly suggested that his cheese and the rival one be tested alongside each other. So both tins were placed on an office radiator for two weeks.

When Kraft returned two weeks later he saw splattered evidence of victory. The rival cheese had blown its top over the heat. But the Kraft tin was in perfect shape.

"You win!" an official declared, then sadly added, "But who's going to clean up the office?"

The daring confidence of J. L. Kraft in both himself and his product led to government orders for millions of pounds of cheese.

You can challenge yourself in both your business affairs and in your personal life with good results. Writes Professor James C. Coleman:

Our human nature seems to be such that we actually function more smoothly and more happily when we are active, questing, challenging, stimulated. When we go out of our way to expand our interests and our knowledge, we gain a sense of satisfaction; when we narrow our interests and cease to grow, we feel dissatisfied. We are bored with a vegetative existence that offers no challenge.²

Success often arrives at an unexpected hour to the person who challenges life, who persistently maintains his self-value. Few people realize that from 1776 to 1781 George Washington never won a major military victory over the British. In March of 1776 he drove the British out of Boston. From that date on it was a matter of strategy,

² Reprinted from *Personality Dynamics and Effective Behavior* by James A. Coleman, copyright © 1960 by Scott, Foresman and Company, Chicago.

of watching, of being an inspiration to his men. In an unexpected place, at Yorktown, in October of 1781, General Cornwallis surrendered his army to the Americans. General Washington won out because, in spite of apparent failure, he maintained his value as a commander.

THE SINGLE GREATEST THOUGHT!

During the early days of whaling ships a golden coin was fastened to the mainmast of a vessel. It was the reward for the first man to sight a whale. What confidence it gave to a man's sharp eyesight!

Would you like to know the greatest single thought for inspiring your confidence?

It is the thought that *your actions will be richly rewarded*.

With that excitement over forthcoming benefits, nothing can stop you.

Without that thought, your actions will be half-hearted and your results will be few.

Nature made us reward-minded people. We like rich results and happy endings. And we can have what we like.

But here is the exciting point to grasp: By working with the secrets of mental magic you can know *for sure* that those rich results are winging their way toward you. The Principles of Life have never failed and they never will fail anyone who lives in harmony with them. Any success that you have achieved thus far is clear evidence that you have wisely allied yourself with these natural principles. And you can prove your increased wisdom by relying on them more and more.

All this is not something mystical or impractical. It is richly workable in everyday affairs. I have seen it guide parents who wanted to help their children; I've watched it work miracles of financial increase for businessmen. Like sunshine, life-principles brighten everyone who steps outdoors.

"Nature cannot miss." (John Dryden)

"Come forth into the light of things; let nature be your teacher."
(William Wordsworth)

EXCITING IDEAS

You can always find inner harmony by working with the natural order of things. A very wise high school teacher illustrated this to her class with the following experiment, which you will find fascinating to try for yourself:

Take a length of string about a yard long. At its center, tie a teaspoon. Tie the teaspoon by its handle. Hold the ends of the string in your ears and swing the spoon so that it strikes a solid object, perhaps the back of a chair. You will hear surprising deep, rich and bell-like chimes.

Any of us can find the harmonies we need—including self-confidence—by discovering our natural powers.

One man came to ask several questions about his studies of SOMM. His special goal was to build a greater reserve of inner strength. As we finished our discussion he asked, "Will you please review everything we've talked about? I'd like a brief summary that I can keep in mind as I go through my day."

"Everything can be summarized in two exciting ideas."

"What is the first?"

"There is a way out."

"And the second?"

"You can find it."

YOUR NATURAL CONFIDENCE

Someone once asked me, "When we speak of self-assurance, what do we mean? I hope this doesn't sound like a stupid question, but what is actually meant by the term *self-confidence*?"

That was really a very intelligent question. It revealed honest inquiry on the part of that person.

The answer is this: Genuine self-confidence is your reliance upon the natural principles we have been talking about. You can call them whatever you like—Divine Doctrines, Natural Laws, Universal Principles, Cosmic Forces—but we are talking about the same thing. You

don't and you can't *create* these principles, but you can certainly *depend* upon them.

But before your reliance must come your *awareness*. You must see that they exist and exist for your service.

As we saw in early pages of this chapter, personal strength is a natural possession of your mind. Like all natural strengths, it awaits your discovery. Wrote Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Alexis Carrel: "Natural laws differ profoundly from man-made ones. They are discovered, not invented. Like the spring at the bottom of the well, they exist before they are discovered."³

Why are you confident when you slide into your automobile? Because you quietly depend upon mechanical principles. You know that your alliance with them will serve you with the transportation you want. Such confidence cannot be shattered by *anything*. Even if someone were to scornfully tell you that the car won't function, you know better. You know very well that as long as you work in harmony with that automobile you will be carried forward.

Likewise can you confidently permit the principles of life to carry you toward your goals.

The story goes about the young lady who went shopping at the perfume counter. The saleslady told her that a certain new brand of perfume would attract a handsome millionaire within two weeks. "Better give me two bottles," the young miss eagerly replied, "I want him by next week-end."

That at least reminds us of the simple confidence that can govern our actions. We need only let them prove themselves to us. Nature doesn't mind if we challenge her. She invites us to put her to the test. She knows she cannot fail. And neither can you. Luther Burbank, for one, proved himself with his bold experiments with plant life. You can prove it in your personal life.

POWER-POINTS FOR SELF-CONFIDENCE

1. In its natural state the human mind is free of timidity. Our goal is to recover this original state of mind.

³ Alexis Carrel, *Reflections on Life* (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1952).

2. You are perfectly capable of living with an entirely new kind of self-assurance.
3. Your natural strengths are never permanently lost. You can regain them with SOMM.
4. Review the story in this chapter about Leonard. It contains vital truths.
5. You need never obey fearful suggestions from your mind. Quietly refuse them.
6. All the ingredients for living a fully confident life are known. Make them your personal aids.
7. Constantly challenge yourself to do more than you think you can. You will soon see that you actually can!
8. Success often comes at unexpected times and from unseen sources to the man who maintains his self-value.
9. Remember your forthcoming rewards. Let them inspire you.
10. Learn about and trust the natural laws of life. They never fail the man who harmonizes with them.

IV

Freedom from Tiring Responsibility

AFTER A LECTURE ENTITLED *Eleven Magic Words*, a couple wrote me a nice note which read:

Dear Mr. Howard:

Thank you so much for those inspiring Eleven Magic Words. We cannot begin to tell you how much they mean to the entire family. They are like a golden light that cleared the fog from our minds. You have no idea of how they relieved us from the burden of false responsibility. Everything has lightened in a way we never thought possible. If you have copies of that talk we would like to purchase several hundred to pass around to friends and business associates. We know it will give them the same sense of lightness that is now ours.

With deepest gratitude and appreciation.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy L.

Later in this chapter I want to supply you with those eleven magic words. I am confident that they will be as golden to you,

too. But first, let's take some first steps toward your freedom from tiring responsibility.

WHY YOU SHOULD BE DEFIANT

When Donald K. came to talk things over he seemed reluctant to get to the point. Sensing this I asked, "Is there something in particular on your mind? Why not come right out with it? You don't have to feel apologetic for having the problem, whatever it is. The important thing is to get it out into the open where we can work on it. There is no such thing as an impossible situation. Let's get rid of the difficulty. All right?"

He smiled. "It's good to hear you say that. I've kept it bottled up for a long time. It's this business of one wearisome responsibility after another. I feel like a man who's forced to carry a load on his back. I wonder whether all that weight really belongs there. I may not be stating it very clearly, but do you know what I mean?"

"You feel that something is taking unfair advantage of you. You stagger under that constant load, but you don't know what it is or who causes it. Is that right?"

"That's just about it."

"Would you like to know who's causing it?"

"Who?"

"You."

"Really?"

"Really."

"How am I burdening myself?"

"Nine-tenths of the weights you carry don't belong to you at all. But you don't see it—yet. Through a mistaken sense of duty, usually accompanied by pangs of false guilt, you constantly do things you desperately wish you didn't have to do. The truth is, you don't have to do them. You only think you do. They are mental in origin, but you don't know it—yet. There are secrets of mental magic that will clear up your thinking. I'll show you how to use them. Then, Donald, you will find yourself delightfully free from all those mystifying loads."

"Give me a single good secret."

"Cheerfully defy all duties that you honestly feel don't belong to you. It's *your* life—remember?"

Donald felt much better after that. His days took on new meaning and purpose. He learned to separate genuine duties from false ones, a liberating action which is your next step toward personal freedom.

WHAT YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE NOT

A man in Arizona once found a faded treasure map which gave directions for finding a chest of gold coins. The map was puzzling because it also included some false and misleading directions. But the man took time to separate the true from the false—and found his gold.

If we want to discover our personal treasures, we can start by separating our genuine responsibilities from those that only *seem* to belong to us.

It is *never* your duty to:

1. Give what you really don't want to give.
2. *Sacrifice your integrity to anyone.*
3. Do more than you have time to do.
4. *Drain your strength for others.*
5. Listen to unwise counsel.
6. *Act above your present capacity.*
7. Retain an unfair relationship.
8. *Be anyone but exactly who you are.*
9. Conform to unreasonable demands.
10. *Be one-hundred percent perfect.*
11. Follow the crowd.
12. *Put up with unpleasant situations.*
13. Try to please unpleasant people.
14. *Bear the burden of another's misbehavior.*
15. Do something you cannot really do.
16. *Endure your own negative thoughts.*
17. Feel guilty toward your inner desires.
18. *Submit to overbearing conditions.*

19. Apologize for being yourself.

20. *Meekly let life pass you by.*

HOW BETTY MADE PROGRESS

One of the most hoaxing of all false responsibilities is indicated in Point 8. Whatever other secrets of mental magic you apply to your life, be sure to remember that you need never be anyone but exactly who you are. This is a truth that sets you free, as Betty H. happily discovered.

"I'd like," she explained as she made herself comfortable, "to discover the truth about things. I mean the *truth*, not just some pleasant-sounding philosophy that doesn't really work. I've tried everything from astrology to Zen. So, please, could we think it through? Where do we find the truth?"

"Inside your own mind. The truth about yourself is within. You had it at birth, you can never lose it. Deep down inside your mind, Betty, you know the truth about yourself. You may resist it, you may fight it, but still you know it."

"What do you mean?"

"You really know what is best for yourself, but nonsensical ideas about your duties toward others have suppressed it. You know—and you know very well—that there is a big difference between the way you *really* feel about things and the way you *pretend* to feel."

She smiled with good humor. "Are you saying I'm artificial? Yes, I am. I know it. That's what I want to crash through. I'm tired of artificiality. Pretense is part of my problem, isn't it?"

"Yes, but you've already made progress by realizing it. You see, Betty, inner conflict is caused by the clash between the truth about yourself and the falsehoods which your mind has innocently absorbed. This conflict is at the root of all human unhappiness."

THE TRUTH THAT SETS YOU FREE

Betty asked, "Would it be accurate to state it in another way, I mean, is unhappiness actually the conflict between the genuine self and the artificial self?"

"Exactly. All varieties of mental pain—anxiety, despair, depression—spring from the difference between your real self and the self you think you *should* be."

"What's the way out?"

"Have the courage to be whatever you are, and never mind what you *should* be. What you think you should be will take care of itself in the natural way and in its own good time. For instance, if you are afraid of someone in your family or maybe someone you work with, simply admit to yourself that you are afraid. Then try to understand why you feel that way. Once you grasp what that fear is all about, it falls away of itself."

"Then it really *is* the truth that sets us free."

"Of course."

"I feel much better already."

"You are entitled to it. It's based on honest thinking. You see, the truth is really the best friend you have. You can suppress it, deny it, fight it, even try to destroy it, but it's always faithful to you. The truth never leaves the mind; it *can't*, for it's a natural built-in part of you. Don't worry, Betty, if you don't fully grasp all this as yet. You are on the right track. Just have a little patience. It will come."

"I'll keep after it."

"Then you can't fail to be free."

YOUR ONLY DUTY

You are never responsible for any situation where you have neither the power nor authority to change things. Parents are responsible for their children because parents do have control in their own homes. (I hear a mother of tornado-like tots coming back with, "That's what *you* think!") But when the children grow up and fly the family nest, parental responsibility goes with it. This may seem like an obvious fact, yet I find many parents needlessly burdening themselves long past natural requirements. Assistance, yes; responsibility, no.

No adult human being *can* take responsibility for another adult, and any feelings contrary to that fact are both unrealistic and self-punishing.

Whenever you run into an unchangeable situation involving another person, your only task is to abandon all feelings of responsibility toward it. And you should do so cheerfully. Where you can do nothing, you owe nothing. You should be like a man who throws off a heavy coat on a hot day. He is done with it.

A man has a conditioned conscience which is made up of all the nonsense and hypocrisy it has absorbed from a confused society. And he also has a natural conscience which is pure and free. To see the difference in the two is the difference between frustration and joy.

You can drop half your burdens at this very instant by disbelieving those fuzzy-minded people who insist that they know what your duties are.

A number of people have told me of considerable help they received from a paragraph in my previous book, *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life*. It reads:

Take the impossible task of trying to love someone merely because you think it's your duty to do so. The truth is, you are not required to love an unlovable person. Your only duty toward an unlovable person is to face the realities about his personality, and even that not for his sake but for your own. You owe nothing—absolutely nothing—to the person whose psychological make-up prevents him from returning your kindness. No amount of preaching by confused moralists can ever change the basic law of life that every adult *must earn the right to be loved*.¹

MAKE IT A PLEASURE

Do you know what our genuine responsibilities are? They are those that we as mature-thinking adults *want* to accept. They are never those imposed upon us by demanding people.

Remember, a worthwhile responsibility in life is never tiring or painful. You *want* to do it! It's a pleasure. If it's not that, it's not yours to do.

It is our responsibility to love, to take delight in our inner powers, to enjoy the company of friends, to work at ridding our minds of nega-

¹ Vernon Howard, *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963).

tivities, to recognize the pleasure in everything pleasurable. Robert Louis Stevenson was aware of this secret when he wrote, "There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy."

No doubt you have heard many times the advice, "To be happy, make others happy." True. Of course. But a deeper examination of that idea by modern psychology has come up with a curious revelation. It seems that we have had the cart before the horse. The scientifically accurate declaration is, "To make others happy, be happy yourself."

People often remark to me, "I want to feel useful, to be of benefit to people. I'd like to contribute something worthwhile to those around me. But I don't know that I have much to give."

I usually reply, "The greatest gift you could ever give to anyone is your own happy and mature self. Any benefit you try to pass on to others without first being personally happy will be strained and unnatural. Not only that, but sooner or later you will resent your efforts—you will feel that they are unappreciated. When you are a spontaneously kind individual, your goodness will be a natural offspring of that cheery state. Genuine goodness cannot be something apart from your total personality; it must be an overflow of it."

ATTEND TO WHAT YOU WANT

As both Donald K. and Betty H. discovered, it is the truth about ourselves that frees us from ourselves.

One great truth is this:

Nothing can be right that forces you to work against your personal integrity. You have the right—no, the *duty*—to rebel against anything that openly or slyly cuts away at the ground of your human dignity. Your inner integrity comes first, for without it you cannot be a happy and productive person.

But we must take care to see what our best-interests really are; otherwise, our rebellion is likely to be just the opposite of what we really need. Resistance against any truth we may discover about ourselves is not healthy rebellion; it is self-harming. We must recognize the truth before we are capable of fighting for it. And no battle is more rewarding!

How can you rightfully rebel against a burdensome sense of duty, and replace it with joyous action?

Like this:

Turn your attention to what you really want from life. Let's state that same thought in another way: A joyous sense of responsibility toward *yourself* will free you from mistaken ideas about your duties in life.

Dr. David Seabury sums up with brilliant clarity:

There is delight in doing what one's hopes designate, one's interests impel and lure one to do. Passionate desire helps one to concentrate on what is important to one's personal being, and deliciously to ignore the millions of duties that others would pour upon one's head.²

Learn to defy cheerfully all duties that you honestly feel do not belong to you. Like the little man you will now read about.

THE MAGIC KINGDOM

Once upon a time there was a magic kingdom called Elfonia. Every citizen was an elf. One day a new elf arrived at the gates of the kingdom. As he walked down the main street, someone called out, "Welcome stranger! What's your name?"

"My name," he said "is Inquiring Elf."

"Welcome, Inquiring Elf. But where is your sack of plums?"

"Pardon?" asked Inquiring Elf. "Where is my *what*?"

"Maybe you haven't noticed," a citizen explained, "that everyone in Elfonia carries a sack of plums over his shoulder. If you wish to live in our kingdom you must also carry a heavy sack of plums over your shoulder."

"Well, if that is the custom," Inquiring Elf pleasantly agreed, "I guess I'd better fall in line."

So Inquiring Elf went to the Plum Market and took on a heavy sack of plums. And for the next several days he carried it around. Wherever he went—to the theater, to the book store, even to bed—he carried his heavy sack of plums over his shoulder.

²David Seabury, *The Art of Living Without Tension* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958).

On the sixth day he began to wonder about something. So, being Inquiring Elf, he casually inquired of his neighbor, "Why must I carry a heavy sack of plums all day long?"

The neighbor looked startled as he replied, "I've never heard that question before. I'd better ask the mayor."

So the neighbor asked the mayor, "Why must I carry a heavy sack of plums all day long?"

The mayor shook his head and said, "I really don't know. I will have to ask the Prime Minister."

So the mayor asked the Prime Minister, "Why must I carry a heavy sack of plums all day long?"

The Prime Minister stared into space for awhile, then answered, "That's a real baffler all right. We had better see what the King has to say."

So the Prime Minister stood before the King to ask, "Why must I carry a heavy sack of plums all day long?"

The King looked shocked as he replied, "That is a most perplexing question. Maybe we'd better ask that newcomer to town called Inquiring Elf."

So everyone went to Inquiring Elf to ask, "Why must we carry a heavy sack of plums all day long?"

"I've been thinking about that," replied Inquiring Elf, "and I finally found the answer. It's because we don't know that *we really don't have to carry a heavy sack of plums all day long.*"

"Then off with the burden!" cried the King.

"Freedom at last!" echoed the people.

"Now we're getting smart," agreed Inquiring Elf.

YOUR POWER OF SELF-INTEREST

While inviting me to speak before her club for the second time the president requested, "Will you please include an idea that you discussed before. I refer to the topic of self-interest. A number of us found this a fascinating idea, and would appreciate more details."

Few things will free you from tiring responsibility more quickly

than to understand your healthy self-interest. So let's look into its powers and possibilities.

The first vital point to grasp is that self-interest is not the same thing as selfishness. Selfishness is the *result* of a man's inability to serve his own best welfare! What, really, is a selfish man? He is simply one who fails to realize that he has vast inner forces ready to supply him with whatever he needs for a wealthy life. Because he doesn't grasp this truth he desperately clings to whatever he can grab. Because he fears losing what little he has, he never gains the much greater good he *could* possess.

Your eager self-interest acts as a searchlight for locating your rich personal powers. Far from being selfish, it is the very thing that destroys selfishness!

The person with a healthy sense of what is right for himself is what we would call a mature and self-directed personality. He has dissolved his frantic inner scramblings, he has poise and self-assurance, and those who meet him sense it and are attracted to his side.

It is often a false sense of guilt that prevents many people from cheerfully plunging after their own good.

Guilty or not, this emotion swirls around the human system to cause more damage and distress than one might imagine. This is a tremendous subject which social scientists like Dr. Freud have studied with intense interest. For our purposes here, it is enough to remember this:

People feel guilty whenever they fail to live up to their self-made standards of conduct. To say the same thing in another way, false guilt arises when we act differently from the way we think we *should* act. But we should realize that the way we think we should act may be entirely incorrect, unrealistic, and therefore an enemy to healthy living.

ELEVEN MAGIC WORDS

Take the idea that you should be "good." Now what, in heaven's name, is meant by that? All we really have is a word, a noble sounding word to be sure, but merely a word *that has only the meaning that*

you give it. Quite obviously it is good to drive your car safely, and it is plainly good to brush your teeth in the morning. No one questions that kind of goodness. But is it "good cooperation" to serve on a committee when you really don't want to? No, because you are sacrificing your genuine desire to *not* serve to a false feeling that it is your "duty" to serve. Is it "good patience" to endlessly give in to a domineering individual? No, because you are giving away your own individuality and integrity in the false name of "good humility" or maybe "good patience."

Abandon all notions that you must sacrifice yourself to others in any way whatsoever. Sacrifice is a denial of life, never an affirmation. We make sacrifice only when we feel we have nothing worth keeping for ourselves.

At the start of this chapter we read of the couple who lightened their lives in a way they never dreamed possible. Here are the *eleven magic words* that performed this miracle for them:

Your first responsibility in life is toward your own mental advancement.

The Law of Life says *first things first*. If you will make this your principle of living you will free yourself from all tiring responsibilities. Not just because Vernon Howard says so, but because it is so. Nature decrees that you should cheerfully serve yourself *so that you will have something of genuine value for others*.

The satisfaction of your natural needs is a primary law of nature. It creates a happy and generous personality. Once a man's inner self is satisfied he is free to go about his daily business with cheery enthusiasm and without a hampering sense of guilt. Because he has something to give, and because he realizes that his riches are inexhaustible, he enriches everyone he meets.

THE ADVENTURE OF ULYSSES

One of the adventures of Ulysses, the legendary hero of Greek mythology, makes a good point for us here. Ulysses and his crew landed on the shore of a strange and lovely island. While some of the men were refilling water jars, a report came to Ulysses. He was told

that the island was ruled by Circe, a beautiful and wicked sorceress who had power to change men into animals. But the really bad news was that she had already worked her swift wickedness on some of his own men who had carelessly wandered away from shore.

Ulysses was angrily marching toward the palace of the wicked princess when he was stopped by the god Mercury. "Take this magic sprig of a plant," said Mercury. "It will protect you from Circe's evil enchantment."

As Ulysses stood within the palace, Circe was sure she had another gullible victim. She gave him food and drink, then touched him with her magic wand, calling, "Go! Seek the woods and fields with your animal companions!"

But the magic twig blocked Circe's power. She was defeated and knew it. Falling on her knees before Ulysses she agreed to restore his friends to human form. And she did. From that day on Circe was a loyal friend of the Greek hero.

The man who has found himself possesses a magic twig like that. Because he is in charge of his own mind he cannot be degraded or harmed. Simply by being who he is—a man free of tyrannical notions of duty—he gives far more to the world than all the professional do-gooders. What this world needs more than anything else is men and women who are free from mental sorcery.

YOUR GENUINE WELFARE

Dr. Rollo May observes: "William James once remarked that those who are concerned with making the world more healthy had best start with themselves. We could go farther and point out that finding the center of strength within ourselves is in the long run the best contribution we can make to our fellow men."³

Healthy self-interest can be defined as the capacity to place your *genuine* welfare ahead of *false* welfare. Or to state the same thing in another way, the capacity to do what is *actually beneficial*, not what we *wrongly assume* is beneficial. Take for instance that familiar emo-

³ Rollo May, *Man's Search for Himself* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1953).

tion of anger. Is it to our benefit to become angry? Obviously not. Anger destroys peace of mind. It weakens good judgment. It promotes impulsive behavior that turns out to be self-harming and that we later regret. Then why would anyone employ this useless and self-damaging tool? It's because our present level of understanding supplies no other method, because we can't think of an alternative, because we are unable to see that clear and calm reasoning can free us. Anger supplies temporary ego-satisfaction, but never lasting self-satisfaction.

We are free at last when we start pleasing *ourselves*, not our *conditioned and false notions about ourselves*.

All negative tools, such as anger, envy, worry fall away like autumn leaves once a man really *sees* them as negative tools. Once he catches his Magnificent Glimpse of the new, he has no further use for the old. Then his life changes magically in his favor.

Whenever you are thinking about a certain action, put this simple question to yourself, "In the long run, is it self-defeating or self-serving?"

The habit of making this self-inquiry enables you to *tell the difference* between a constructive and a harmful action. And once you clearly see where your best-interests lie, you effortlessly choose that happy course.

The English philosopher John Stuart Mill supplies this simple guide: "Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to promote the reverse of happiness."

Summary: Your freedom from tiring responsibility always equals your ability to serve your healthy self-interest. So, it is to your self-interest to serve your self-interest!

YOUR DECLARATIONS OF FREEDOM

1. Become aware that you are carrying needless notions about your responsibilities. Freedom soon follows.
2. Learn to cheerfully defy all duties that you honestly feel have no place in your day.

3. Review the 20 listed points in this chapter. How many can you rid from your mind and practice?
4. Deep down inside your mind you know what is best for you. Ignore the demands of confused people and listen only to this inner voice.
5. Know this: It is the truth about your inner self that frees you to live your own life.
6. When we have found ourselves, there are no longer any burdensome duties. There are only those pleasurable actions we enjoy taking.
7. By being a personally happy person you automatically contribute benefits to others. That is what this world needs—genuinely happy people.
8. Remember the adventure of Inquiring Elf. Notice how he challenged society's right to burden him with miserable custom.
9. Use your power of mature self-interest.
10. Write down and memorize your eleven magic words: *Your first responsibility in life is toward your own mental advancement.*

V

Mental Magic Wins the Opposite Sex

DURING A CLASS in the secrets of mental magic, Nancy F. asked a question that was on the minds of several people.

"How do the secrets apply to my relations with the opposite sex? Will my affairs with the man in my life go smoother? Will there be more love, I mean, the genuine kind of love?"

"Let me answer that, Nancy, by asking you a question. What are some of the things you've learned so far in our studies? Please give us a few main features of mental magic."

She tilted her head thoughtfully. "Well, let's see. Our first target is to change our mental selves. We must challenge our fixed attitudes and beliefs, then alter them. That causes us to see everything in an entirely different way, a way that we never thought possible. And that means that we will act and react differently to everything. We will be more mature, have deeper insight into ourselves."

"All right. Suppose that you actually achieve this change of mind. Suppose that your mental level is elevated, that your

viewpoints are sharper and wiser. What will happen to everything outside you, things like your social affairs and your daily work?"

"They get better."

"You mean that everything on the outside becomes both different and improved?"

"Why, yes. An uplifted mind elevates *everything* with which it comes in contact, just as sunshine brightens everything it shines on."

"Please explain that a bit, Nancy."

"Hmmm. Well, it's like this. The way we think is what makes things the way they are. Think better and things get better."

"Do you know this as a personal experience, or are you repeating ideas we have covered in class?"

"In a small way, I know it personally. But I'm working at turning on more light."

"Now, Nancy, what was your original question?"

"I asked whether the secrets of mental magic can help our relations with the opposite sex." Nancy suddenly smiled. "Oh, I see what you mean. I just answered my own question, didn't I? An uplifted mind uplifts *everything*. That means that my life with that man will get nicer and nicer. How nice!"

FREEDOM TO LOVE

That was a roundabout way to answer Nancy's question, that is, to let her answer it for herself. That is one of the goals of this book: *proof through personal insight*. That is what really changes things. What we are covering together in every chapter, what we are really talking over, is the way to *become a new person*. When that is achieved, your world changes. Without it, nothing changes.

This includes the world of the opposite sex. Because this is a vital area of daily living, let's discover how this new life connects with male-female relations.

The person who changes himself through SOMM will find some fascinating differences in his relations with the opposite sex. He will think and behave in a way that at first is strange, but gradually comes

to be his newly natural manner. A man sees a woman as an individual for *sharing*, rather than as merely *using*. A woman sees a man as someone with whom she can *communicate*, not merely *converse*.

The little pleasantries, for which both the man and the woman yearn, express themselves with delightful frequency. Both have an inner freedom that releases and exchanges tenderness, affection, simple kindness and understanding. The Real Self possesses all these qualities; they need only freedom of expression.

Poet Richard Lovelace sees it:

*If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.*

When we become new, so does our love.

LOVE AND SELF-GROWTH

Take the idea of responsibility, covered in the previous chapter. Many husbands and wives, many lovers, feel burdened by a relationship. Though this may not be outwardly admitted, it is a major cause of inner tension and irritability.

What can SOMM do about this?

Well, we can see that our primary responsibility in life is toward our own personal growth. We can put first things first. *Then*, when this higher level of understanding is reached, there is no longer any sense of having an unwanted burden. In its place we have positive feelings toward the relationship. Instead of irritating responsibility, we have a lighthearted outlook that makes the relationship pleasant for both the man and the woman.

Our first responsibility is toward personal growth. That alone guarantees a lovely love life with the opposite sex.

This is clearly explained by Dr. Fritz Kunkel:

Our duties towards ourselves and towards our social environment coincide. Indeed there is only one duty, namely: to grow mature. To

find ourselves, our center, our highest value . . . means unlimited growth, both of individual creativity and of expanding brotherhood . . ."¹

Couples who have disagreements have a perfect opportunity for mutual growth. By taking their responsibility toward growth, they can use a problem—actually use it—for gaining self-insight. The longleaf pine, growing in the South, has an interesting characteristic. It uses fire to promote its own health and development. The flames burn away surrounding obstacles to its growth. Likewise, any couple can make their very conflicts a source of mutual enrichment.

It is strange how easily the human mind misses the point. To be loved, we need not be rich or famous or influential. We need be only one thing. Ovid, the ancient poet, makes it clear: "To be loved, be lovable."

UNDERSTANDING THE OTHER SEX

This is a good place to pause for an interesting inquiry: Exactly why are we studying the secrets of mental magic? What purpose do we have in making this search? Why are we taking time to explore these ideas? What is the point of it all?

The point?

It is of utmost significance and simplicity:

To enable you to live and love freely.

An uplifted mind is the only power capable of delivering happiness and harmony. Unless we think in an entirely new manner, all our actions will be meaningless. We will be like puppets tugged from one unwanted condition to another. Our relations with the opposite sex will be anxious and confused.

But as the secrets of mental magic do their good work, everything changes. You no longer think toward the opposite sex with anxiety or confusion. You have no sense of burden. Instead, there is a certain clarity of mind that makes everything just what it should be.

Clear thinking toward the other sex is essential. That is why we

¹ Fritz Kunkel, M.D., *In Search of Maturity* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943).

will cover this feature in following pages. But a few preliminary ideas at this point will help.

Someone once wrote, "Although the world is thousands of years old, we still have three major problems to solve: blondes, brunettes and redheads."

Yet, if a man makes it his purpose to understand women, he can certainly do so. If a woman makes it her intention to grasp the workings of the male mind, she has no real problem. Their overall understanding of SOMM will overflow beneficially into their inquiry of each other.

One of the men in our class made the women smile by frowning and asking, "Why do women seem so awfully mysterious to us men?"

Women themselves encourage the fiction that you can't understand them. It gives them a sense of power. But a woman goes all out for a man who has sense enough to see through her. It relieves her of so much painful pretense. A woman really doesn't want to be mysterious. She wants to be loved.

THE SECRET OF ATTRACTION

The subconscious attitudes that a man holds toward a woman are not much different from his other attitudes. The way he thinks toward a specific woman will be similar to his manner of thinking toward life in general. His mind is like a revolving searchlight that casts the same quality of light on everything in its path. If he has at least a fair grasp of the realities of life he will express them in some favorable form toward the woman in his life. If he has a good degree of self-acceptance it will reveal itself in his acceptance of the woman, in fact, of any woman.

The same is true of his negative viewpoints. A mind that is fearful and hostile toward life in general will have no choice but to extend those damaging viewpoints toward the opposite sex. They may be disguised in one way or another, but sooner or later they will do their damage, either openly or by some subtle means.

All this brings us to a vital point: It is useless to try to build a

surface personality in the hope that it will win mature love from another person. We *attract* what we *are*. If we are mature-minded, we will attract members of the opposite sex who are likewise minded. Here are three rules: Mature minds get along fine. One mature mind and one immature mind get along not at all. Two immature minds can use each other, but can never really like each other.

If you are interested in a finer love life, you must not miss the significance of this mental law:

We attract and hold a person of the other sex who dwells on the same general level that we ourselves occupy. Like attracts like. To attract someone on a higher level—which means that he or she will be a much nicer person—we need do only one thing: raise our own level.

GOOD NEWS!

So again we come back to an exciting principle of this book, which is: A change in the self is the sure way of attracting, winning and maintaining the mature love of a man or a woman.

Each of us has the capacity for finding this greater maturity, for it already exists within us. Our part, as we will see in forthcoming pages, is to remove unnatural blockages. These blocks are made up of unrealistic and unworkable attitudes:

Writes Professor Henry Clay Lindgren:

It is true that we all have a capacity to love and be loved which normally develops and grows as we pass through various stages of maturity. But what we do not often realize is that our capacity to love may be blocked or limited by anxiety, by emotional immaturity, or by attitudes, feelings, and patterns of behavior which are the residues of childhood experiences. The more we are affected by such factors, the more difficult it is for us to love.²

Our goal, then, is not to “create” a capacity for love, but to destroy those barriers that prevent its release and enjoyment.

² Henry Clay Lindgren, *How to Live with Yourself and Like It* (Greenwich, Conn.: Premier Books, Fawcett Publications, Inc.). Reprinted by permission of author, copyright © 1953.

All this is really very good news. It means that *every* secret of mental magic—such as those in following chapters—contribute to inner freedom. And one of these inner freedoms is that of love.

THE FORTUNE HUNTERS

A story is told about some men and women who had heard exciting tales about lost treasure chests. They were told that fabulous fortunes were hidden away on some distant islands. So they joined forces to seek out their riches. They agreed to share whatever fortune they found.

They boarded ship, and with an experienced captain at the helm, set sail with high hopes.

On the fifth day out the captain called out, "Treasure island ahead!" But they were too busy talking about their treasure-hunting plans to look up.

On the tenth day the captain shouted, "Treasure island on the horizon!" But they were so busily occupied with studying some old treasure maps that they didn't bother to answer.

On the fifteenth day the captain shouted, "Treasure island to the starboard!" But they were so intent on deciding on just how to divide the treasure that they paid no attention.

Fortunately, that story has a happy ending. Those men and women finally became aware of what they were missing. They realized that their supposed earnestness was only a series of distractions that robbed them of the very thing they wanted. So they stopped distracting themselves. They began to listen. And so they found their fortunes.

So many male-female ventures are like that. The man and the woman needlessly distract themselves from their very fortunes of mutual happiness that they expect from their venture.

One study at a university came up with five major distractions:

1. Worry about yesterday and tomorrow, instead of making the relationship a pleasurable one right now.
2. Shallow thinking. Talking about love and harmony instead of becoming the kind of mature person who can express these harmonious characteristics.

3. Indifference to the need of the other party for attention and affection.
4. Believing that additional material possessions will bring human intimacy. They won't.
5. Protecting the ego, rather than expanding the mind to its greater capacities for love.

LOVE AND A CLEAR MIND

One of the strangest things about the human mind is that it so seldom stops to really think—to *think clearly*. We often imagine that our thoughts are clearly new, when in truth we are merely repeating old and familiar ideas. We mistake familiarity for accuracy. We imagine that we are seeing things realistically, when we are only expressing our personal viewpoints—which may well be mistaken. It's like the two flies walking on the ceiling. One remarked to the other, "Aren't human beings silly? They spend a fortune on this beautiful ceiling and then walk on the floor."

In no place do we need more mental clarity than in our lives with the other sex.

Take the common practice of comparing the sexes. Comparison is bound to induce feelings of inferiority or superiority. Both are based on insecure thinking. Both should be abandoned. The mature-minded lover thinks neither of inferiority nor superiority, nor even equality. Only a soldier in battle wonders whether the enemy is stronger or weaker than he is. The terms of inferiority, superiority and equality have no meaning to the free and mature man. In their place he thinks about things that are really meaningful, such as enjoying the relationship!

English author John Ruskin writes, "We are foolish and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the superiority of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things! Each has what the other has not; each completes the other; they are nothing alike; and the happiness and perfection of both depend on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give."

Asked someone, "What keeps a person in a confused state of mind?"

"His lack of awareness that he *is* confused."

"What prevents him from becoming aware?"

"His lack of a good look at himself."

"What is the way out?"

"A good look."

"Will that make him a more loving person?"

"It is the *only* thing that will."

"Why is that?"

"Because, as the false goes, the truth comes."

"It's the truth that sets you free?"

"Free, among other things, to genuinely love."

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING!

The story is told about the noted French artist who was interviewed in Paris by an American reporter. The American asked the artist why he never visited the United States. Replied the Frenchman, "Because I only know a half-dozen sentences in English."

"What are they?"

The artist answered, "Hello. Good-by. How much? Ham and eggs. I love you. Come see my paintings."

"That is enough," the reporter told him, "to get you by in the United States for at least a year."

That story introduces us to a basic principle for all happy human relations: *Simplicity*.

How unnecessarily complicated we are. What magical changes would occur in everyone's life if everyone would work at simplification!

If men and women would reduce their relations to one single purpose, everything else would fall into place with ease.

What single purpose?

To simply enjoy each other.

When your sole occupation is to find pleasure in the company of the other, there is no room left for anything else. Harmful emotions, like envy and touchiness, are crowded out by your enjoyment.

As one woman laughed during a class, "You know, I never realized how much fun he could be!"

YOUR STARTING POINT

This is the perfect starting point for building every other element needed for harmonious relations. A simple resolve to enjoy each other cannot fail to quietly produce further enrichments, such as cooperation and patience.

This secret of mental magic was sparked by the response to a page in my previous book *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life*. It reads:

Happily, the single most important thing you should do with a woman is the very same thing she wants:

Enjoy her!

If you will simply do that much, your entire relationship with her will fall into place delightfully. You won't have to struggle trying to understand her. You can rest from trying to get her to do something that you want but doubt that she wants.

When you simply enjoy a woman, she knows that you like her. And that in itself is just about the most persuasive act you could ever perform. A woman soon wearies of a man who won't relax, let go, and enjoy her company. She doesn't want to be changed, analyzed, advised, judged, contradicted, sermonized, educated, pressured, or anything else.

She wants you to enjoy her as she is. And that, never forget, is what makes her enjoy you.³

THE MENTAL MAGICIAN

Let's explore a bit more the ways in which the general secrets of mental magic contribute specifically to male-female relations.

Do you wonder what they would be like if a person were an advanced mental magician on a higher level of understanding?

On this loftier level he would:

³ Vernon Howard, *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963).

1. Be competent in matters of sex.
2. *Never fear loss of love.*
3. Really understand him or her.
4. *Not be sensitive or touchy.*
5. Be confident toward him or her.
6. *Fully enjoy every mutual venture.*
7. Not be at the mercy of domination.
8. *Have an attractive sex-personality.*
9. Know how to act naturally.
10. *Handle the other person smoothly.*
11. Never get his feelings hurt.
12. *Be at ease with the opposite sex.*

We had reached these ideas in one of our classes when someone spoke up, "But it all sounds too good to be true. Can these ideal states really be attained by us? I can't imagine them as actualities."

"Of course. At the present time they are merely introductory ideas. You can no more picture them than you can picture some new person that you haven't as yet met personally. But that doesn't mean that they don't exist. They are real; just as real as an unknown person that you may meet and know tomorrow.

AN ILLUSTRATION

"I assure you that it is entirely possible for you to know them *personally*—as living experiences. You may nod your head in agreement at this, or you may not, but that is unimportant for now. Our purpose is to build new attitudes that will make you a new person. Then you will know these delightful states as actual experiences. You will change so much you will no longer recognize your former self."

Asked one of the married women, "Will you please give us some sort of illustration about this self-change. How does it come about? Where do we start? Take the matter of hurt feelings. I don't understand how I can be free of them. I'm sensitive to criticism. It's been my nature for years. Just a disapproving glance from my husband plunges me into gloom. With all this touchiness, how can I keep from getting my feelings hurt?"

"The answer is in the way you identify yourself, that is, in this person you call 'I.' Your present 'I' has no choice but to get hurt. It is reacting to everything on a lesser level of understanding. Once this lesser 'I' is dissolved, a new one takes its place. This is your Real Self. This new 'I' cannot be hurt or offended or insulted in any way by anyone. Don't worry if you don't understand all this at present. It will become clearer to you as we go along. All right?"

"Don't worry. I intend sticking with this until I really get it. It's fascinating."

"You asked for an illustration. Let's use this one: Picture in your mind a set of bowling pins sitting upright at the end of the alley. As long as those pins are sitting there, they are ready to get knocked down. They are in a position to be tumbled by anyone who comes along. But what if they were entirely removed from the alley? Then they couldn't be knocked down by anyone or anything. How can non-existent bowling pins get knocked down?"

LASTING CONTENTMENT

"Now, in our mental life, our beliefs are the pins. The ways that other people act toward us are the bowling balls.

"To go on with the illustration, you have certain beliefs that should not exist in your mind. They are unrealistic. But as long as they do exist, they are certain to get knocked down, and you will get your feelings hurt. For instance, you may believe that other people should appreciate you more than they do. Then, when this desired appreciation doesn't appear, you get hurt and maybe resentful. Now we come to the big question: What would happen if you removed the false notion that you *should* receive all that appreciation? What if you faced the reality that it just doesn't come as you want it? In that case, you would never ever be hurt again. How can a non-existent belief get hurt? It can't."

"Then, the abandonment of all our false beliefs is the way to lasting peace of mind."

"It is the only way. You see, all mental suffering results from a clash between the truth about things and our mistaken viewpoints

toward them. Take away the false viewpoint and the truth comes. As the truth comes, pain goes. It no longer has a home."

"Then, as you have said, there is really no need to suffer from anything?"

"Absolutely nothing can harm the man who has found himself."

"I think this may help our home life."

"Try it. Then you will know for sure."

WHAT IS LOVE?

Asked someone, "What is love? The word is tossed about so freely, but the word is not the thing. Can love be analyzed and defined?"

"It is best to start negatively, that is, to find out what love is *not*. This clears the mind of false concepts from the very start."

"Could we please go into this idea?"

"Love is not possessiveness. It is not dependency or attachment or even admiration. It cannot be any of these things."

"Why not?"

"Because there may be unloving motives behind them. Let's take an example. Suppose that you are depending upon your spouse or sweetheart to give you a sense of importance, to admire and appreciate you. This dependency makes you afraid. You are afraid that they will fail to give you as much admiration as you think you deserve. In turn, this fear creates a demand, a sense of criticism, inner or outer hostility. Obviously, all these have nothing to do with love."

"Where does that leave us?"

"With the only accurate definition of love that there is. But this definition must be personally experienced."

"Can you give us some idea of what you mean?"

"For one thing, love will be entirely different from what you now think it is. Love is a state of complete detachment. Love is when you don't want anything from the other person, when you have no hidden motives of self-gain, when you have no demands whatsoever upon him. This kind of love is a state of total understanding. It may seem strange to define love as understanding, but that is what it really is."

"How can I tell whether another person actually possesses a genuinely loving nature?"

"By consistency of pleasant behavior. Someone who merely pretends to be kindly will sooner or later forget his rehearsed lines. He slips. You catch him in an offguard facial expression that indicates anything but kindness. A small remark may give him away. On the other hand, the genuinely loving person is consistent in both his public and private behavior. Because he has no pretenses to act out, he has no lines to forget. His Real Self, which he found by facing the truth, simply and spontaneously lives out its richness."

"Can I reach this happy state?"

"If you want it more than you want anything else."

TEN DYNAMIC SECRETS

1. Remember that all the secrets of mental magic aid your life with the opposite sex. They change everything for the better.
2. Continue to uplift your mental viewpoints. This gives you an increasingly attractive personality.
3. Resolve to deepen your self-insight. It produces smoother relations with the other sex.
4. Bear in mind your purpose in studying SOMM. You learn to live and love!
5. Everyone has a natural capacity for affection, tenderness and romance. They need only to be released.
6. Review the section dealing with love and a clear mind. It has everything to do with a better love life.
7. What is the most important thing a man and a woman can do? Enjoy each other!
8. Review the twelve benefits given in this chapter. All can be won by the man or woman who becomes an advanced mental magician.
9. We find our genuinely loving natures by abandoning false beliefs about ourselves. Work on this point.
10. Remember the definition of love supplied at the end of this chapter. Study and apply its principles.

VI

Mental Magic Predicts Your Future

YOU DON'T HAVE to take life as it comes. You can make it come the way you like.

How come?

Because mental magic can predict your future! And you don't need a gypsy tent or a crystal ball, either. You can use scientific magic that really makes your successful future come true.

The tale is told of the wealthy bachelor who consulted a gypsy fortune teller. His problem, it seems, was to find just the shapely blue-eyed blonde with whom he could share his future. The gypsy made a few passes over her magic crystal ball, then advised in a mysterious voice, "Walk into the woods until you find a stream. Follow downstream until you come to an oak tree. Resting beneath that oak tree you will find the loveliest blonde on earth."

An hour later the weary man pushed back into the gypsy tent to complain, "What's wrong with your prediction? There was no blonde at all."

Asked the fortune teller, "Did you find the woods?"

"Yes."

"Did you find the stream?"

"Yes."

"Did you find the oak tree?"

"Yes."

"Well," shrugged the gypsy with a cheery grin, "three out of four guesses is pretty good for me!"

But the bachelor's quest had a happy ending after all. He made his own prophecy. He predicted that sooner or later his search would turn up just the girl he wanted. So he searched, they met, and they shared good fortune together.

A GLIMPSE INTO TOMORROW

Greece has dozens of ancient temples where inquirers used to consult a prophet—called an oracle—about their future. At one of these temples an archaeologist named Constantin Carapanos unearthed some strange-looking bronze tablets. On them were written questions brought by inquirers, plus the answers from the oracle. The questions were surprisingly practical; much like those a modern man might ask. One inquirer wanted to know whether or not to invest in a certain piece of property. The oracle told him to go ahead; the purchase would be profitable. Another inquirer, an anxious man named Lysanias, hopefully asked whether the child to be born to his wife was his own.

Man has always been fascinated by the future. Like a traveler on an upward-curving mountain trail, he wants to know what is around the next bend. He somehow realizes that by glimpsing ahead, even just a foot or two, he can do something today to turn the future to his favor.

And he actually can. He can do it with self-observation. Just as science can predict the weather by observing the nature of winds and clouds, so can we foresee our individual futures by observing our own natures.

It is not at all difficult for you to predict your personal future for

the next several days or weeks. You can foretell the way you will feel, whether elated or depressed. You can forecast whether or not you will make progress in your financial affairs. Your relations with other people, whether pleasant or otherwise, can be seen with accuracy.

How?

Your magic crystal ball is *self-observation*. Whatever has happened to you in the past will continue to happen—*unless you take the one necessary action that changes things the way you want them*. (which we will get to in a moment).

BECOME A MENTAL MONARCH!

The happy truth is, if you don't like your own forecast, you can alter it in any way you like.

How come?

Because your future is always and only an outcome of *what you are*.

To change your future, change yourself.

Deep down in his heart of hearts, every man knows that here is the truth of the matter. We all sense that things turned out the way they are today because of the shaping we did yesterday.

If you want to be a perfectly accurate prophet of your future *success*, you can be one. You can foretell a superior tomorrow for the simple reason that you have the power to shape it.

We start by changing ourselves.

Any attempt to alter our future without first changing our mental character can only result in disappointment and confusion. It's like asking a caterpillar to fly like a butterfly. It can't fly like a butterfly until it is a butterfly.

You are your future. We like to avoid facing this fact by pretending that things just happen. In human events, nothing ever just happens. Human beings make things happen, either by what we do or by what we fail to do. You and I are the causes of our consequences. For better or for worse, our future is identical with our mental make-up. A positive mentality produces positive outcomes. Alfred Tennyson nicely sums up, "Think well! Do well will follow thought."

Once your mind takes on a royal nature, no person and no circumstance can bar you from your personal kingdom.

The adventure of Cyrus the Great, the ancient Persian monarch, makes an interesting illustration of the point. Cyrus was born a prince, but the wicked King Astyages was determined to prevent the boy from inheriting the royal throne. Cyrus found himself banished to desolate wastelands, to be brought up in the care of lowly shepherds. His future seemed hopeless. Yet through a series of courageous exploits he won his way to the throne rightfully his own.

Likewise, nothing can deny future royalty to the man whose mentality is that of a monarch.

EXPAND YOUR VISION

The paragraphs immediately following are of extreme value to you and your richer future. Please give them maximum attention.

The human mind is incapable of seeing anything above its present capacity for seeing. It is possible for it to extend its vision beyond its present state, but at any given time it can see only what it can presently see.

What is the practical meaning of this? As we raise our *capacity* for seeing future possibilities, we raise our powers for predicting accurately our future successes. As we uplift our mental viewpoint, we more clearly see that we *are* in control of our future. With that awareness, with that wisdom, we are able to *take* control.

Picture yourself climbing to the third floor of a fifteen story building. As you stand at a window you see before you a highway, with cars passing from right to left. You can predict how far a car will continue to the left, but wherever your vision of the highway ends, your accurate prediction must also end. But what would happen if you extended your view by climbing upward to the very top floor? From that greater height you could see much farther to the left. And now, because you can *see* more, you can *predict* more!

All this is not a vague philosophy, or just a pleasant idea. It is a downright practical picture of something that you can do any time you choose—with enormous personal enrichment.

Want to guarantee your richer future? Then raise your mental level, uplift your awareness.

As did Virginia L.

She didn't bother very much to hide her bitterness and resentment. She was at least honest about them. She said, "I sometimes think I'm the unluckiest woman in town. If you only knew some of the bad breaks I've had."

I asked, "Do you know anyone who has the opposite kind of luck? I mean, are you acquainted with someone who seems lucky, who constantly gets all the good things you miss?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact I do. She works in the same office with me. I don't know how she does it, but she does."

HOW VIRGINIA SUCCEEDED

"Why, Virginia," I asked, "do you suppose there is such a consistent difference between her fortunes and yours? *Something* must be causing them."

"Sure. She's lucky and I'm not."

"But what makes her so lucky?"

"Who knows? She just is."

"Does her personality have an enthusiasm that makes her attractive to others?"

"Yes, I suppose."

"Do you have that enthusiasm?"

"No. I'm too tired to get excited over anything."

"Does she tactfully take the initiative in working out problems that come up at the office?"

"Usually."

"Do you do likewise?"

"No, I'd just as soon let someone else handle it."

"Don't you suppose that *she* just might be the cause of her own good fortunes?"

"Maybe. Could be."

"Is there any reason why you can't do the same for yourself?"

"I'd like to. I really would."

To Virginia's credit, she started an active program for changing her future. Later, during a class in mental magic she reported, "For the first time I really see what creates a superior tomorrow. It's the person *himself*. I'll give you a good example: The other day I was tempted to feel envious of a woman who had won an office promotion. Instead of yielding, I looked her over. I saw that her pleasant and efficient ways had rightfully earned her that promotion. Well," Virginia smiled, "if she can do it, so can I."

And she did, too. A few weeks later the company had an opening in its department of public relations. Virginia was immediately selected. (She was right for the promotion because she was right with herself.) It is now her good fortune to travel around town, meeting new people and enjoying herself.

THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

The story goes about the scientist who produced a strange sort of creature by crossing a tiger with a parrot. When asked about it, the scientist replied, "I don't know what it is, but when it talks you'd better listen!"

That bit of humor carries a good lesson in living: Whenever the truth speaks to us, it may appear strange at first, but what great messages we hear by bending an ear!

That is why we next want to attend to the principle of Cause and Effect. This powerful principle operates in your life every minute of your day, either for your best interests or against them. Our purpose here is to make it a force that serves our welfare. And the first wise step is to become aware of its existence. The principle of Cause and Effect is like looking for a horse while riding one. It is so close to us that we often fail to see it in operation.

What, exactly, is the principle of Cause and Effect?

It is really very simple. It can be observed by anyone who gives it careful attention. Once understood, it becomes a tremendous personal power for changing the life.

Here it is:

Whenever you do anything at all, another thing occurs as a result of it. An action always produces a reaction. In other words, *one thing always leads to another*. There is no such thing as a cause without an effect. It's like a ball hurled against a wall—it *must* bounce away in one direction or another.

You have seen this principle at work in hundreds of ways: When you plant a seed, it reacts as a flower. As you speak to someone, he speaks back. If you constantly suggest to yourself that you are ill, your emotions will soon make you feel that way. When you take a bite of your favorite candy, your taste responds with pleasure.

YOUR PERSONAL PROSPERITY

It is important that we see *ourselves* as the cause of the consequences that we experience. Some people hesitate to admit that they are behind the life-conditions they now experience, for it would mean facing responsibility for their own problems. Such people are missing out on one of the greatest opportunities ever to knock, which is:

By admitting responsibility for whatever happens, we can become happily responsible for increasing success!

Or state the same thing in another way:

As a man realizes that he is the cause of his effects, *he can cause the kind of actions that reflect personal prosperity*.

It is always a sign of forthcoming abundance when a man less and less explains, "It happened to me," and more and more observes, "I caused it to happen."

Now, this word "responsibility" needs some clarification. As we saw in Chapter IV, it isn't a tiring process at all. It is purely pleasurable. This kind of responsibility means to harmonize with the universal laws of success, to go along with the secrets of mental magic. It's like the delightful responsibility you have for attending an exciting party!

You can achieve anything you want by putting good causes into action.

Want to be happier?

You can cause it to happen.

Like to increase your income?

You can employ money-making causes.

Hope to brighten your personality?

You can cause its appearance.

I used to work alongside a man who used this principle in his own way. He'd breeze into the office in the morning, grin, shake a finger toward the ceiling, exclaim, "Let's make things happen!"

It was curious how many good things *did* happen.

So why can't you start right now to make good things happen to you?

You actually *can*.

HOW TO MAKE PREDICTIONS COME TRUE

Since a good cause always produces a good consequence, you can make your self-prophecies come true. Not only that, but you can do it the easy way. The wise man or woman consistently *employs* those positive powers which shape his future for him. Such a man astounds his friends and acquaintances who wonder how he always manages to make things come his way. The self-prophet can smile. He *knows*.

What is needed is an intense interest in what the future can hold for us. Professor H. A. Overstreet makes it clear:

The great individual, then, will be future-minded. His chief interest will be in forecasting possibilities. The vitality of his mind will be directed toward shaping his world into more adequate forms.¹

Make some forecasts for yourself! When based on the solid secrets of mental magic, you can cheerfully expect good things to come your way. Here are three examples:

1. *Today's Prediction*: "By accepting the truth that my mind possesses vast and unused powers . . ."

¹ H. A. Overstreet, *About Ourselves* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1927).

Tomorrow's Fulfillment: "Those powers are released into my personal service."

The power of the human mind can reach amazing proportions. A classic example is that of Johann Dase, of Germany, who was famous in his day as a mental magician. When a handful of coins were spilled on a table he could call out the exact number of coins *instantly*. At a *glance* he could add up the total number of books on a shelf.

Never doubt the power of your mind to do far more than it does.

2. *Today's Prediction:* "By taking an adventurous attitude toward my money-making enterprises . . ."

Tomorrow's Fulfillment: "I cannot fail to cause additional prosperity for myself."

I was once introduced to a wealthy businessman named Olson who was tagged with the curious nickname of "Overlap." The nickname was explained to me like this: "Whenever Olson meets another businessman he immediately looks for areas where their financial interests overlap. When finding them, he suggests to the other man that they work together to develop mutual benefits. It's surprising how often that simple technique strikes gold for Overlap Olson."

What adventurous attitude will strike gold for you?

3. *Today's Prediction:* "By working with natural principles governing successful human relations . . ."

Tomorrow's Fulfillment: "My personality will be increasingly attractive and influential."

It was the dynamic personality of Robert Clive—the famous Clive of India—that made possible his dazzling victory at the Battle of Plassey. Many battlefields have been won by military leaders who inspired their men, but historians agree that there never was a victory quite like the one scored by this Englishman near the village of Plassey, in India. It would certainly *take* inspired leadership to win that battle, for Clive defeated an opposing army of 60,000 soldiers with only 3,000 men of his own!

Predict a more winning personality for yourself.

YOUR PERSONAL PREDICTIONS

Use the following spaces for your own forecasts. After *Today's Prediction*, list any kind of secret of mental magic that works for your richer future. After *Tomorrow's Fulfillment*, list the dream that you know can come true!

1. *Today's Prediction*: _____

Tomorrow's Fulfillment: _____

2. *Today's Prediction*: _____

Tomorrow's Fulfillment: _____

3. *Today's Prediction*: _____

Tomorrow's Fulfillment: _____

THE MAGIC OF CHANGE

Your quest for a brighter tomorrow turns in the right direction by looking into that magical action we call *change*.

It's curious that one of the greatest of all human needs is also one that a man resists so stubbornly. Everyone wants to alter his life for the better, yet what a resistance arises when change is proposed! Also, if a man does venture forth, how often he finds that he hasn't made a genuine change at all, but merely an exchange of one poor condition for another. As one man described himself, "I'm like a frantic prisoner looking for escape, but merely switching from one cell to another."

When thinking about changing our future, we must start with the right intentions. If we wish to alter our lives merely to gain a temporary thrill or for ego-satisfaction, we will eventually find it a less

than satisfying move. Or, if the intention is to avoid facing a challenging task, the change will only add to our self-doubt. The person who frequently changes his employment may announce that his intention is to better himself, yet the real reason may be to escape fear of failure on each job.

Correct motives start with self-honesty. We must frankly face the real reason for any shift in the directions we take. The actual motives are often just the opposite of what we fancy they are! The human mind is skilled in self-trickery. We often believe only what we want to believe. We often say one thing and mean another, like the boy with the apple who told his chum, "Okay, we'll divide it equal, just as long as I'm more equal than you."

If we can get at our subconscious motives for changing, we are well on our way to healthy change. If we see that the motive is wrong, we can refrain from the move. But if we can identify the motive as good, we can proceed with cheerful confidence. A "good" motive is one that serves your genuine best-interests.

THE POWER OF AWARENESS

"How," you might ask, "can I be sure that I am thinking clearly? How can I gain greater wisdom for shaping my future?"

The awareness that we are *not aware* is the beginning of greater wisdom.

As an everyday example, you have probably had the curious experience of reading the same paragraph several times while your mind was wandering far away. All of a sudden you caught yourself, you became alertly aware that you were not aware. When that happened, you were able to take control of your future reading. You were able to concentrate on the paragraph, to make it count for something.

So can we become more and more aware of our present actions. By doing so, we empower our future activities.

In my classes I sometimes conduct sessions in self-awareness. They consist of questions and answers which help the class to see the self-serving element in their everyday actions.

Examples:

"Which is the self-serving action—to fight angrily a problem or to solve it through calm reasoning?"

"To solve it."

"Which is the beneficial course—to withdraw from a challenging situation or to win over it?"

"To win."

"Which is the courageous choice—to worry over what others think of you or to live your life as you think best?"

"To live your own life."

SAILING SMOOTHLY FORWARD

Some years ago the Navy vessel *Brooklyn* was cruising smoothly off the coast of New Bedford, Massachusetts. The ship suddenly shuddered, stopped and slowly sank. The *Brooklyn* was the victim of an uncharted rock. Although thousands of ships had passed near the submerged menace over the years, the Navy ship was the first to strike it.

The Navy knew that something had to be done about the hidden danger. What they did was both simple and workable—they went to work with a wire drag, a heavy cable suspended between two boats. It is lowered into the sea and fixed at a certain depth. As the boats move ahead the wire drag catches any rocks or ledges in its path. Once a rock is located and identified, it no longer has power to damage passing vessels.

That is an excellent parallel to a method we can use to make our future life-cruises pleasant ones. By using the "drag wire of awareness," we can locate and identify those subconscious notions that threaten our voyage. By a bit of investigation we can make sure that they bother us no more. The self-aware man can chart any course he likes, and be confident in reaching his port. He is a Columbus to his own future.

Dr. Erich Fromm, in discussing Dr. Sigmund Freud, says the same thing in his own way:

But Freud did not end on a note of fatalism confirming man's utter helplessness against the powers which determine him. He postulated that man can become aware of the very forces which act behind his

back—and that in becoming aware of them he enlarges the realm of freedom and is able to transform himself from a helpless puppet moved by unconscious forces to a self-aware and free man who determines his own destiny.²

THE GREAT SECRET OF SUCCESS!

We change our future by first changing our thoughts. As we saw in Chapter I, this is a truth agreed upon by the great mental scientists of history.

The force of a richer mind cannot be stopped in its eager work of creating a richer tomorrow. "Our actions are accomplished in our thought before they are reproduced outside of us. We are gifted with faculties radiating from a common center—faculties extensive, powerful and improvable by use." (Honoré de Balzac)

Leon D. and I were discussing these ideas when he commented, "That might be just the clue I'm looking for. I've often asked myself why the bad news in my saleswork keeps repeating itself. If I am causing my own scarcity I want to face it frankly. Then, I'm sure, I can do something about it. Right?"

"Right. Think for a moment of a giant printing press, the kind used by a newspaper. Suppose that the editor set up the type to make the headline read *Failure*. That is exactly what would be reproduced in every newspaper rolling off the press. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday you would see *Failure*. Every day would produce the same *Failure*. Why? Because the printing press *must* reproduce that basic type. It has no choice but to follow orders. Even if the editor *wanted* a better headline, or *hoped* for one, nothing would happen. The newspaper must follow the metal pattern set for it."

Leon nodded. "I see. Ours is a *mental* pattern."

"Correct. Now, suppose the editor changed the basic type to read *Success*. That magically reverses the news. Every day of the week would produce *Success*. Nothing in the world could cause it to produce anything else."

² Copyright © 1962 by Pocket Books, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Pocket Books, Inc., from *Beyond the Chains of Illusion* by Erich Fromm; The Credo Series, Trident Press.

"What you are saying," Leon commented, "is that when the mental type is right, everything rolls out successfully."

"Exactly. Think of your subconscious mind as your personal printing press. Whatever kind of mental type you set up, that is the kind of news you will get. If you want successful headlines, compose thoughts of success."

"That's a great illustration. I won't forget it."

"Put it into action. That's the whole idea."

Leon's saleswork spurted upward immediately. He found that by *thinking of himself as successful with every customer* those thoughts reproduced themselves in the form of more sales. It was good news for Leon from that day forward.

You, too, can predict your own bright future.

And see it come true.

THOUGHTS THAT ENRICH YOUR FUTURE

1. Get excited over your future! It can turn out the way you want.
2. The secrets of mental magic enable you to look into tomorrow. This foresight gives you power to shape forthcoming events to your liking.
3. Self-change is your great guarantee of a change in fortune. Work at uplifting yourself.
4. A royal future awaits the man or woman who becomes a mental monarch.
5. Learn to see your world from a higher level of vision. It stretches your powers of prediction.
6. Why should you depend upon the principle of Cause and Effect? Because it can be depended upon!
7. You can make good things happen to you. Employ the secrets of mental magic.
8. Forecast a richer future for yourself, based on the plans found in this chapter.

9. Develop self-awareness. For one thing, it prevents problems from arising in the future.
10. Keep in mind Leon's triumphant experience. Set up your own mental type reading *Success*.

VII

How to Win Your Desires Quickly

WE DON'T DESIRE SOMETHING because it is valuable.

We value something because we desire it.

This is why we must explore the world of our desires. We must understand why the mind searches for certain things. It is the understanding of our wants that wins them for us quickly. Also, equally important, this understanding frees us of certain kinds of desires that cause mental anguish. It helps us to judge between what we really need and what we merely assume we need. As one man commented, "What a relief to find that I didn't *need* half the things I *wanted*." With wise judgment we can fulfill one desire after another and find them not temporary toys but permanent pleasures.

What you *really* want is also what is best for you. And you know—deep down inside you *know*—what is best for you. It may be blurred by unclear thinking or by false feelings of guilt or by some other form of mental tyranny, but healthy desires are always

there, always trying to break through. It's like the mountaineer who lived with his son far back in the ranges. The boy was carefully barred from all contact with girls, even from pictures of young ladies. On the boy's eighteenth birthday they journeyed to town together for the first time. As the boy viewed the wondrous sights a trio of pretty girls giggled past. "What are those?" asked the boy of his father. "Those, son," was the reply, "are life-size mechanical dolls." On the way back to the mountains the father asked his son which one of the wonderful sights he'd like to have most. "I think," the boy eagerly replied, "I'd like one of those life-size mechanical dolls."

THE ENTIRE SECRET

It is always possible for you to attain anything you really need. Declares Ralph Waldo Emerson, "There is nothing capricious in nature. In nature the implanting of a desire indicates that the gratification of that desire is in the constitution of the creature that feels it." In other words, life offers you a checking account with endless funds. But in order to withdraw them you must know that they are there. That is really the only problem for most people, and one which we discuss in other chapters.

What, then, is the first great secret for winning your desires quickly?

Let's introduce it with the story of an English youth named Walter Scott. This young man had a wholehearted eagerness for tales of the days of knighthood. Nothing fascinated him more than to read of dashing knights in armor who galloped from castle to castle, battling villains and wooing fair maids. He happily devoted himself to the single subject of knighthood. He never touched a book about politics or astronomy or archaeology. He crammed his mind only with adventures of daring knights.

His mind became so rich with the subject that he felt the urge to write his own adventure tales. So he did. That is how the young man later became Sir Walter Scott, the famous author of *Ivanhoe*.

His secret of success can be yours, too. You can apply it wherever you wish to win your desires swiftly.

Single-minded purpose.

That is the entire secret.

To the degree that a man is able to concentrate his mental powers on his goal, to that same degree will he succeed. Now, every man has the *potential power* for winning overwhelming success in his chosen area, but he may not be using it in an all-out attack. His powers are divided, spread out too thin, incapable of the concentrated pressure that finally cracks obstacles.

HOW TO DESTROY BARRIERS

Single-mindedness means to concentrate yourself powerfully and enjoyably on the desire you want to win.

To attain this dynamic state, the mind must progressively detach itself from its own contradictions. For instance, a person wishing social success must not also demand that other people behave as he thinks they should. Once this person simply permits people to act the way they are, he is free of mental contradiction and is consequently a more attractive person himself.

Also, the single-minded man must not waste his energies in pointless pursuits, such as anxiety over what others think of him, or in straining to make a good impression. Many people have no idea of how much mind-power they drain away by such useless activities. Later pages of this chapter offer plans for plugging up the leaks in personal power.

Single-mindedness is a beneficial destroyer of all barriers that hamper your progress. When it attacks, obstacles crumble. Procrastination is a typical mental attitude that flees before the wholehearted individual. Procrastination wastes so much time. It's like a man waiting for a river to run dry before daring to cross. But the man who knows exactly what he wants has no such difficulty. He simply goes ahead in *some* way. He may cross over by swimming or wading or flying or sailing, but it makes no difference to him as long as he *goes*.

Confusion is another negative mental state that falls before the single-minded man. Casanova, the great lover, was asked which of his many lady friends he liked best. He replied, "The one I am with at

the moment." Likewise, your concentrated effort leaves no room for confusion.

YOUR VIEWPOINTS

In order to win your desires quickly, you must first understand them. Here is a major principle to grasp:

Whenever a desire arises within you, it is immediately followed by a response, that is, by an *attitude* toward that desire. This attitude will be more or less positive in nature, or more or less negative. You will either react within, "Yes, I think I can achieve that desire," or you will respond, "No, I don't think it's likely to come my way."

Obviously, your mental viewpoint toward a desire has an enormous influence on whether you fulfill it or not. A positive reaction is like releasing an arrow from a bow, enabling the arrow to speed straight for its target. Your positive release sets into motion all your natural powers, such as imagination, persistence, hope. But a negative response creates only a strain. It's like an archer tensely facing his target with drawn bow, but never releasing it. The frustration of desire accounts for much of a man's daily tension. The authors of *Psychology of Adjustment* state it like this:

Frustration, therefore, does not eliminate important wants but only accentuates them. This gives rise to a very annoying experience called "tension." Tension from lack of want fulfillment is perhaps the keenest suffering of mankind. This statement implies that each of us is an expressive and want-fulfilling individual. No one who experiences the gnawing pressure of an unfulfilled vital want can easily deny that man biologically has certain needs and that when their satisfaction is prevented he suffers from this basic violation of nature.¹

THE PLEASURES OF THINKING!

So what we must do is to invite attitudes that fulfill our wants and needs. To do this, first think about a present desire of yours. Now, observe the basic attitudes you hold toward it. Determine whether they

¹ From Mikesell and Hanson's *The Psychology of Adjustment*, copyright © 1952, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., Princeton, N.J.

work *for* the desire or *against* it. Separate the positive ones from the negative. The very distinguishing between the two is bright light.

Finally, encourage the attitudes that favor your desire, dismiss the useless ones.

Let's take an interesting example: Suppose that you want to enjoy your daily thoughts. And by the way, have you ever considered what a new world you would inhabit if you actually and constantly enjoyed your mind? It would be the very world for which you seek!

So, what favorable thoughts can you have toward your own mind? Well, for one thing you can see it as a wonderful instrument for pleasure. When you understand the secrets of mental magic—thinking is fun! If you don't fight your thoughts, when you don't force them into narrow channels, they can fly you away into marvelous worlds. You can challenge your mind to tackle and solve a problem. You can paint a mental picture of the brighter conditions you intend to create. You can search around for self-enriching opportunities.

There are endless pleasures and profits to the person who has made friends with his own mind. The ancient Roman author Plautus summed it up with, "If you have a contented mind, you have enough to enjoy life with."

It has been rightly observed that we get from life in proportion as we give. That rule applies specifically to our desires. We catch them as we first put something into our pursuit. The man who fails to get what he wants is like the rancher who wanted to catch a rabbit, but thought it pointless to place a real carrot in the trap. Instead, he clipped a paper picture of a carrot and placed it inside the trap. What did he catch? A paper rabbit.

Place positive attitudes into your various traps and you will certainly catch positive results.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

People in mental confusion often say, "I would like to think constructive thoughts all right, but I just don't have any. Not only that, but I don't know how to find them."

To such an inquiry I usually reply, "For now, you don't need to know how to find them. All you need do is to realize fully that your present ideas are *not* working. You must recognize the false before you can recognize the true. Otherwise, you will go on attaching yourself to one delusion after another. Be content to admit fully that your present ideas are self-defeating. This is genuine courage. The right way will then make its appearance. Clear thinking is not a matter of finding something, but of losing something. You must lose your illusions. Then, all is well."

This is why problems and failures and difficulties and mistakes are so valuable to us. They *force* us to face the truth. They tell us that something is wrong, *while at the same time announcing that something can also be right*. Every difficulty—such as a thwarted desire—is an opportunity to give up some unrealistic notion that prevents the appearance of our desire.

Objected one woman, "But what will I have left once I give up my illusions? Won't I feel lost, insecure? What can I do with an empty mind?"

"Once a farmer clears his field of weeds, what can he do with it?"

SHIRLEY'S DISCOVERY

Shirley J. was blocked in her desire. Her weedy thinking prevented its growth. She said, "I want to make other people like and appreciate me."

"That's entirely beside the point," I told her.

"What do you mean? Everyone wants to be liked."

"I mean, Shirley, that you are looking at it from the wrong angle. If you think that others don't like you as well as you want, there's a reason why you think that way. And the reason is that you don't like *yourself* very well. So, whenever you are with others you react, 'Of course they don't like me too well. How could they like someone like me? Can't say I blame them.' Really, now, Shirley, aren't these your secret thoughts?"

She smiled. "You're a mind reader."

"Forget trying to make them like you. Work at changing your thoughts toward yourself. Once your personal self-esteem goes up, so will your popularity. You won't have any doubts about your acceptance by others. Your confidence will be based on a simple acceptance of yourself."

"Are you saying that others will like me to the same degree that I like myself?"

"Exactly. Take a look at it right now. Be ruthlessly honest about it. You will see that you get along with others to the same degree that you get along with yourself. Your acceptance or rejection in the social world is caused by your acceptance or rejection of yourself. If you don't like yourself you will feel that others don't like you either. This makes you act guardedly, stiffly, unnaturally, ready to get hurt by a remark or a look."

"Yes, that's how it goes. So it's my thoughts about *myself* that need uplifting?"

Yes. Use the secrets of mental magic for building your self-esteem. Then, you'll be delighted at the way all your social relations fall nicely into place."

"All right. I'll work with it."

Shirley wisely did just that. And she changed her social relations from fair to delightful. She couldn't fail. No one ever fails when he or she works with the truth.

(The relation between self-popularity and other-popularity is such an important idea that we will examine its details in Chapter IX).

VICTORIOUS VIEWPOINTS

Shirley achieved her desire by seeking and discovering a basic truth about herself. And for every desire you may have, there is always a way through. One of your best means of discovery is to ask yourself, "Would there actually *be* a barrier if my mind wasn't creating one?" You will find that there are no barriers except self-made ones. And they can be torn down by correcting our attitudes toward ourselves.

Dr. David Seabury speaks about victorious viewpoints:

Is it true that there are acts which can direct one's way to the top . . . ? As we progress in our research it will show that there are; that the great and near great used these means, instinctively, intuitively or unconsciously—choose which word you will. Their conclusions as to how victory can be accomplished may have differed, but none of them doubted that it could be done.

Of one fact we can be sure: those who won positions of power, who gained recognition, who performed great services for mankind, who sought and found love, who, in whatever their sphere, became fortunate, maintained through thick and thin an affirmative attitude concerning the desires they sought to fulfill.²

THE PIONEER

So, we see that it is our attitude toward our desire that makes the big difference. And there is a special kind of affirmative attitude that I strongly urge you to adopt: *Turn your quests into fun-filled adventures.* I know of nothing that will do more to make your desires come true. Sooner or later, everything comes to the adventurous man.

A pioneer named James Bridger made a famous discovery by adventuring into the unknown. His success supplies a helpful illustration:

Bridger was among a party of Western trappers encamped along the Bear River. It was wild and unmapped country, and nothing was more mysterious than the very river flowing past their camp. Everyone had a different idea as to the course of the Bear River. Excited opinions flew back and forth across the campfire. In order to settle things, James Bridger stood up and spoke out, "I'm leaving. I'll be back to give you some right answers."

The adventurous trapper followed the Bear River as it twisted its way through valleys and mountains. Suddenly, a vast view burst into sight. That was how an adventurous attitude led to the discovery, in 1824, of Utah's Great Salt Lake.

Your adventurous attitudes can make discoveries for you, too.

² David Seabury, *The Art of Living Without Tension* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1958).

CHECK UP ON YOUR DESIRES

It is needful to think clearly toward a desire we may have. To do this, set it under a mental microscope. Try to understand everything you can about it. Ask yourself questions like the following:

Am I making an all-out effort toward it?

What further information can help me?

Do I enjoy my pursuit of it?

How can I make faster progress?

Am I using obstacles for benefits?

Notice that last question, "Am I using obstacles for benefits?" It contains an explosive secret of mental magic. The idea is to *use everything that happens to you as a stimulus for self-advancement*.

A teacher wanted to impress her class with the immense wealth of the world. She wanted it to see that the natural earth is overwhelmingly on our side. She asked everyone to try to think of some natural object that was absolutely useless. As hard as they tried, nothing was found to be without value of some kind. Dry crusts of bread provided food for passing birds. A single rose petal could be studied for beauty and color. And so on.

Likewise, every human condition can be turned into an advantage *once we permit it*.

A member of my lecture audience spoke up, "My muscles are painfully tense. I'd like to loosen myself, to relax. That is my condition. How can I turn it into advantage?"

"The reason you remain physically tense is because you don't stop to become *aware* that you are tense. Interrupt yourself during your day to *notice* how tightly you are holding your muscles. Once you see this, once you are *aware* that you are tense, you can simply let go and loosen yourself. It is your awareness of the condition that really solves it. Practice this self-observation throughout your day. After a while your combination of self-awareness and self-loosening will become a relaxed habit."

Look for the benefits in every condition. They are always there. There is always a supply to every desire.

ENERGIZE YOUR DESIRE

It is a startling fact about many people that they have all the power they need *but are completely unaware of how much of it they waste*. What great things they could accomplish if they would only plug up the leaks of their precious energy!

You have all the power you need for winning all that you need.
Declares the author of *Every Man a King*:

All that you dream of, all that you yearn for and long to be, will be within your reach if you have the power to affirm sufficiently strong, if you can focus your faculties with sufficient intentness on a single purpose. It is concentration upon the thing you wish that brings it to you, whether it is health, money, or position. Constantly affirm that which you wish, hold it persistently in the thought, concentrate all the power of your mind upon it, and when the mind is sufficiently positive and creative the desired thing will come to you as certainly as a stone will come to the earth, when left free in the air, through the attracting influence of gravitation. You make yourself a magnet to draw the condition you wish.³

What must we do to create such a state? Certainly we need not *find* energy. You already have so much present power:

Your thoughts are enormous forces.
The physical body is an aid to attainment.
Your emotions carry you freely forward.
The faculty of speech is a creative power.
Your five senses enrich you every day.

ATTITUDES TO ABANDON

No, it is not the *creation* of energy that needs our attention. We must channel it into constructive *release*. But in order to do this we

³ Orison Swett Marden, *Every Man a King* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company).

must be *aware* that we are wasting those precious powers. *That* will cause us to stop at once, for no man knowingly wastes himself.

Battling unrealistic fears is typical of wasted action. The time and energy spent fighting phantoms could well be employed winning the desire of the moment. Wasted energy is illustrated by the man walking down the street while wildly swatting at the air.

"Why," asked a passing friend, "are you making those useless motions?"

Replied the man as he swatted out, "It keeps tigers away."

"But there aren't any tigers within a thousand miles."

"It works, doesn't it?" beamed the swinging one.

Learn to identify those mental motions that waste your thought-power. As you see them for what they are, you will speedily abandon them. Here are ten typical attitudes that should be cast overboard:

Worry over being misunderstood.

Clinging to false assumptions.

Being unnecessarily serious.

Indulging in self-accusation.

Regretting the past.

Mentally arguing with the self.

Not maintaining a receptive mind.

Being emotional instead of reasonable.

Not making it an interesting adventure.

Getting angry at life.

Let's give that last point the close look it deserves:

An unhappy person rebels against his unwanted condition. He wants to be rid of the things that make up his unhappiness, such as failure, anxiety, weariness. Now, all by itself this rebellion is both natural and healthy. It indicates a feeling in the man that there is another way to live—and he is right.

But here is where he makes his great mistake: As we saw in Chapter I, *he rebels against the wrong things*. He battles against *life*, when he should be attacking *his own false beliefs about life*. He is like a man lost in the desert who wrongly assumes that he must stay there and wearily battle the elements. *What he should battle is his belief*

that he must stay there. Once he actually sees that he *need not remain*, the way out is as simple as walking away.

ACTION POWER!

One man who had found his way out told me, "I used to think that life was a battle between myself and the world. What an eye-opener when I saw that it was really between the truth and my false assumptions. Now, I not only know exactly what I want, but have them."

Some of the letters crossing my desk refer to an idea found in my previous book *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life*. You might apply it to your programs:

When you get mad at life you are misdirecting precious energy. What you *should* rebel against is the phony and unworkable and agonizing *attitudes toward life* that someone planted in your mind when you were too young to know better. You now think that these attitudes are the only ones that exist, because when you know only one thing you know only one thing. But there exists a world of happiness and excitement of which you may not be aware. But you *can* find it. How? By the steady reduction of those false ideas about life that were once drilled into you by fuzzy-minded people.

A river in Brazil was used to carry logs downstream from the jungles to the city. The fallen trees were trimmed, rolled into the river, and left to float down to the sawmill. For several months everything worked out perfectly. All that river's energy served to deliver the logs to the destination. Then, trouble developed. Groups of farmers and engineers dug channels into the river to serve their various purposes. The channels weakened the river's steady flow. As it coursed downward it lost its logs to one channel after another. Less than 50 percent of the timber came through. Then, corrective action was taken. The channels were blocked off. The river no longer wasted its energy. All its logs went all the way.

Let that remain as a mental picture. Let it remind you that you already have all the power you need for delivering your desires to yourself. Your part is to recover all that power. You do it by blocking off every idea or notion that drains you.

RICH RESULTS WILL COME

My hope in presenting all these ideas is that you will work with them until you receive practical results. They will come—have full confidence in that—when you enjoyably persist. It might be a flash of insight that increases your income. Maybe you find yourself abandoning some tiresome action because for the first time you see how pointless it is. Or maybe you thrill to the feeling that a new life is actually possible.

But they will come. You can work alone part of the time, and also with others. Many people tell me that they have been helped by forming groups for the sole purpose of exploring the secrets of mental magic. Others find it profitable to make these studies a part of their church or club or business activities. Some of the best results are reported from groups who gather in the evening at homes of various members.

Chapter XVI supplies details for having a Mental Magic Party.

PLANS THAT WIN YOUR DESIRES

1. There are abundant supplies of everything you need. You find them through SOMM.
2. Maintain a single-minded purpose toward your goal.
3. Examine your attitudes toward your desires. Encourage affirmative viewpoints.
4. Enjoy your mind. This establishes a cheerful atmosphere that invites your desires.
5. Ask yourself whether the barrier to what you want exists only in your mind. This could prove to be a great revelation.
6. Go after your desires with a spirit of adventure.
7. Use everything as a means of self-advancement. Every difficulty can stimulate you to more successful action.
8. Remember that your power is always equal to your need.

9. Become aware of thoughts and emotions that waste your energies. Abandon attitudes that drain your strength.
10. Work energetically with the plans in this chapter until you win your desires. Help others to win theirs by holding a Mental Magic Party.

VIII

What You Should Know About Happiness

PROBABLY, AT SOME TIME or other, you have played the party game that goes like this:

Players sit in a circle. The first player thinks of a short sentence, then quickly whispers it to the next player. The sentence is quickly whispered around the circle from player to player. Then, the final player speaks aloud the sentence as he understands it. There is always a strange and funny difference between the original sentence and its final form. One game started with the sentence, "The soldiers went into battle!" It came out, "The bold girls bent some cattle!"

That is a good illustration of how some people end up with confused lives. The original truth-that-makes-for-happiness gets distorted along the way.

Happily, it need not remain that way. *The truth can never be lost.* It can be distorted or rejected or ignored, but the brightest hope of life is that the truth is ready for the man as soon as the man is ready for the truth. As William Makepeace Thackeray points out, "Our great thoughts, our great affections, the truths of

our life, never leave us. Surely they cannot separate from our consciousness, shall follow it whithersoever that shall go, and are of their nature divine and immortal."

As we regain our full emotional freedom we also reclaim the art of *direct living*, that delightful state we knew in childhood. Children are beautifully spontaneous because a confused society has not yet forced them to be artificial, suppressed, on guard. A child does something because he feels like it. An adult does something because he feels he should feel like it.

HOW TO HAVE FUN!

Let's think together for a moment more about that party game. Now, that last player in the circle is not responsible for having received a distorted message. He couldn't help what was passed on to him. He received it with as much judgment and understanding as was possible.

Likewise, no man is responsible for having picked up false doctrines about himself and his capacities. Most of them were planted in his mind when he lacked discernment, when he was too young to reason, "Let's see now; let me think things through. Is it really true, as I've been told, that I'm at the mercy of fate? Or, do I possess certain inner strengths that place me in command of my own life? Yes, I think I do. So I'll make it my business to find and use my natural powers."

No, you and I are not responsible for having accepted the false when we were too young to *know the difference* between the true and the false.

But every man is responsible for ridding himself of those hoaxing ideas that trick him into unhappiness.

And do you want to know something? Freedom-finding can be a fun-filled game!

PERSONAL FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS

Margaret C. started the counseling session with the simple declaration, "I want to be happy."

"Do you know what happiness is?" I asked.

"No."

"Then how will you recognize it when you see it?"

"I don't know. Everything is so confused."

"When you say that you want to be happy, Margaret, what you really mean is that you want freedom from unhappiness. Freedom is happiness."

"Yes, I can see that. How do I liberate myself?"

"By dropping the chains of unrealistic thinking. When you see things as they *really are*, not as you think they *should be*, you are free—and completely happy."

Margaret found her freedom by using the ideas you will now read about.

Back in the year 1535 a Spanish ship was sailing off the coast of South America when they sighted a strange group of islands. The exploring crew discovered some amazing creatures living there, including giant tortoises. When the news spread about these curious lands—called the Galápagos Islands—other expeditions tried to find them, but failed. The superstitious sailors concluded that the islands moved around to different spots in the sea. The simple fact was, the tricky ocean currents carried approaching ships off in wrong directions. Once this truth was discovered, the islands were located with ease.

This is an excellent example of how the human mind draws false and harmful conclusions through misunderstanding. In this day of advanced science we wouldn't make a geographical mistake as did those sailors, but we still come up with harmful conclusions in our daily mental explorations.

THE GREATEST DAY OF YOUR LIFE

What, to tell the truth, is the thing that wears us out and destroys our happiness? It is the constant clash between *what life is really all about* and what we *wrongly think it is*. As long as we hang onto illusions that contradict reality, we suffer. *There is no other explanation, and any attempt to find one will only result in additional pain and*

frustration. The wise and courageous man is the one who is willing to face the facts of life—as temporarily challenging as they may be—for the sake of his permanent freedom and peace.

Where, then, is happiness?

In the mind.

In *your* mind.

Proof?

Think of something outside your mind, perhaps a person or a possession that used to give you pleasure, but no longer does. That exterior thing is still the same, but it no longer makes you happy. How come? Because your thoughts have changed toward it, because your viewpoints are different.

More evidence?

Think of another person or a possession that had no attraction for you in the past, but that now gives you satisfaction. How come you like it? Again, because your mind holds altered attitudes toward it.

This does not mean, of course, that exterior objects have nothing to do with our states of happiness. It does mean that our mental viewpoints determine whether they are pleasurable or not.

Since you can change your mind, you can change your states of happiness—in ways far greater than you may now suspect!

One man who came for counsel was told, “The greatest day of your life will be when you really see your mind as the cause of your own troubles.”

“Why is that?” he asked.

“Because for the first time you will also really see your mind with the ability to create your own happiness.”

SERVE YOUR BEST INTERESTS

Have you ever wondered why people often harm their own best interests? What is the explanation for such contradictory behavior? The answer is extremely helpful: Take, as an example, the man who constantly meets difficulties with anger. He uses this self-damaging method only because he knows no other course to take; he is unaware of alternatives. But as he grasps a self-helping tool—such as seeing his

problem with a mature mind—his anger falls away as an out-of-date technique. As we grasp the superior, we lose the inferior. As we *really* see our best interests, we serve them.

The ideas we have covered up to this point should make us excited! The mind *can* create happiness. It *is* independent of outside influences. It *will* free us from painful dependency upon fickle circumstances.

Here is how Dr. David Seabury expresses it:

Research in the field of modern psychology has in recent years made a contribution to our health and happiness that should excite us far more than the invention of any of our modern machines. It has made the discovery of how a person uses his mind correctly, and thus how to live with ease. It has proved a fact of greater importance to each individual than all of our modern contrivances put together. Yet like the discovery of the wheel the needed truth was so simple that humans have ignored it for centuries. Especially was this basic wisdom hidden because it depended upon an attitude, and not until recent decades have the attitudes by which people live seemed important.

What is this grand yet simple discovery that can do so much for us? It consists in knowing how true mental power is made available to anyone who knows how to use it . . .

In other words, modern psychology now offers you a way by which you can use your intelligence many, many times more successfully. By so doing you will not only conquer most of the troubles in your life, but achieve the desires that for years you have found impossible of realization.¹

LIFE IS FOR LIVING!

Now that we've covered all this ground about thinking, we come to a truth that at first may seem contradictory. But it actually makes wonderful sense:

Life is for *living*, not for thinking.

But before we can live freely, *our thinking must be liberated*.

Have you ever noticed that the happiest people are those who go about their business casually, spontaneously, almost thoughtlessly

¹ David Seabury, *The Art of Living Without Tension* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1958).

—and yet accomplished much more than those who strain at things? They are happy because they have learned a major secret of mental magic—that of effortless mentality. Their minds have no space to entertain worry over criticism from others or to doubt their personal value. They appear indifferent to occurrences that others interpret as a bother or a threat. In short, they are like a lighthouse in a storm—calmly shining away almost as if the storm didn't exist.

Their secret can be yours, also. You can learn to live your days happily, rather than painfully think them through. As French novelist Honoré de Balzac states, "As soon as a man desires to penetrate the secrets of nature, where there are no real secrets, all that is needed is sight; he can see that the marvelous is the outcome of the simple."

What Balzac calls "sight" is the same thing that a modern scientist of the mind calls "insight" or "understanding."

TRUE HAPPINESS IS EFFORTLESS

One thing we must understand is that thoughts *about* happiness are not the same thing as happiness itself. As we have seen, the peaceful way is something that we must *experience*, almost without thinking about it at all. When you are really happy, do you stop to think about it? No. You enjoyably experience it without being aware of what is going on. *It is only when we are unhappy that we stop to think about it.*

What magnificent conclusion do we reach?

Happiness appears when the mind ceases to fight for it!

The story goes about the cowboy who was having trouble getting his horse to carry him down the road. The animal took a few hesitant steps, stopped, took a few more, halted once more. Asked an onlooker, "Got a stubborn horse?"

"No," explained the rider. "He's so afraid he won't hear my next command he stops all the time to listen."

That is the unfortunate condition of lots of people. They hesitantly stumble forward, when they could just as well make galloping progress. They are so afraid of criticism or of making mistakes that they halt constantly to see whether their actions are approved by

others. In other words, their minds are in a constant tug of war which hampers forward progress.

Notice that unhappy times are accompanied by considerable mental confusion. That can even be stated a bit stronger: Notice that unhappiness *always* involves confused thoughts.

Here we have another valuable clue for finding genuine contentment: Our personal peace increases as we learn to think *clearly*.

THE REWARDS OF CLEAR THINKING

Unless our minds operate with clarity and simplicity, tranquillity will elude us. What do we mean by clear thinking? It means to see the *facts* of a matter, to be aware of its *realities*, and not be swayed by faulty attitudes or unrealistic desires.

The problem is, most of us are satisfied that we *are* thinking more or less clearly. We haven't the slightest idea of how often we mistakenly see things as *we* are, rather than as *they* are. Psychology calls this stunt of the mind by the name of "projection." This means that we project our personal beliefs toward a situation, then assume that what we think is true is actually true—though the exact opposite might be the case. The hostile mind, for instance, is convinced that other people are as hostile as he is—which keeps him in both inner and outer conflict. The clear-minded man, on the other hand, draws no such conclusions. He meets everyone as an individual; he lets each person reveal himself as he actually is, some hostile, some peaceful. That sort of clear thinking in inter-personal relations gives him an easy command.

To be aware that we often mistakenly see the world as we are, rather than as it actually is, is a great step toward the clear-mindedness we need. And what rich rewards there are!

WHY THE U-BOAT SANK

Any false information that we hold in mind is certain to cause trouble. This is such an important idea to remember that I want to tell you about an incident from history that will help implant it.

During World War I the German submarine UC-44 was laying mines off the English coast, hoping to blow up unwary British vessels. But the U-boat hadn't counted on the cleverness of Admiral William Hall, director of British Naval Intelligence. Hall decided to deliver some false—and destructive—information to the commander of the submarine. The admiral broadcast a message, supposedly to his own ships, but which he knew would be intercepted by the Germans. The message stated that the mines planted by the submarine had been cleared away; therefore, any ship could now pass safely through the waters. Although the information was false (the mines were still there), the U-boat swallowed the message whole. As a result of acting upon false information, the UC-44 struck one of her own mines and sank.

What can we do to prevent ourselves from acting upon false attitudes that sink our happiness?

Lots. For one thing, we can use some:

BACKTALK

Whisper: "Your supply of happiness is limited. You can't go beyond it."

Backtalk: "That is a totally false assumption that I don't swallow at all. My happiness increases automatically as my mind finds liberty."

Whisper: "Why not remain miserable?"

Backtalk: "Because contentment is man's natural condition. Even though I need more understanding on this idea, I accept it as absolutely true."

Whisper: "Human nature doesn't really change. Why try to improve yourself?"

Backtalk: "Pure nonsense. Human nature changes all the time, for better or for worse. I intend to change for the better."

Whisper: "You are all alone and helpless in a hostile world."

Backtalk: "Wrong. All the great and natural Principles of Life are on my side. I need only to fully discover and use them."

Whisper: "Making unhappy mistakes is a permanent pattern of behavior in your life."

Backtalk: "Totally incorrect. My mistakes are caused by lack of insight into myself. As my self-understanding grows, my mistakes will fall away more and more."

A PROFOUND TRUTH

It's been said that the best way for a girl to keep her youth is not to introduce him to other girls. Likewise, the best way to keep your happiness is quietly to refuse negative ideas that try to introduce themselves to your mind. Don't let the gloomy lives of other people suggest that gloom is necessary to your life. It isn't at all. Not when you apply the secrets of mental magic.

Nature has equipped certain sea-birds with anti-salt glands that enable them to purify water from the ocean. Likewise, your mind is equipped with anti-gloom devices that enable you to obtain only the good and enjoyable from the world.

Walter B. was a prosperous business executive who habitually came to the point in his office transactions. He came to the point as we talked: "I'll get right down to business. I'm unhappy. I want to change things. How can I acquire happiness?"

"You can't."

"I can't?" he asked in surprise.

"No, and neither can anyone else."

"I don't understand."

"You can't, Walter, *acquire* happiness. But you can *lose unhappiness*. This isn't merely a play on words. This is the profound truth you've been looking for. The only thing that will give you genuine contentment is the loss of discontent. If you will work as earnestly with this idea as you do with a business project, you will make that inner change that you want."

"I'm trying to understand your point, but my mind's hazy. Will you please supply a few details?"

"You see, your unhappiness is caused by unrealistic and self-

damaging ideas that dwell in your mind. For instance, you may have the false notion that other people have the power to hurt your feelings. They really haven't that power, but because you think so, you react as if it is so. So—you get unhappy."

Walter grinned. "You must be a mind-reader. How did you know that I'm sensitive to remarks from others?"

HOW WALTER SUCCEEDED

"Because it's all part of your negative mental make-up. But back to the point. Your false ideas make you see things incorrectly. It is this incorrect seeing that makes you unhappy. You conclude that the problem is in another person's bad behavior or in some exterior circumstance, but it actually isn't—it's in your attitude toward them. Learn to dismiss those false viewpoints. Rid your mind of its distortions. Then you will be peaceful in all situations."

"Let me see," said Walter, "whether I'm following you. You say that I should work at dismissing my false ideas about life. Then, when I'm free of them, happiness is the automatic outcome?"

"You have it exactly right. Think of happiness as a *ridding process*, not as something to acquire. People try to acquire happiness in so many futile ways—buying new clothes or joining clubs or even by trying to think happy thoughts. They fail for the simple reason that a negative mind can only produce negative answers. But when you work at ridding your mind of its negative viewpoints, happiness appears all by itself. Then, clothes and clubs have their rightful place."

When Walter came back for a second conference he again plunged right to the point: "It's still a bit hazy, but I'm on the right track at last. For instance, the other day I was tempted to blow up at a business associate. Then, suddenly, I realized that my anger would prevent the very thing I wanted most of all, that is, to solve the problem at hand. So I choose to calmly talk the matter over with him. Everything cleared up nicely. Now, for the first time, I really see what you mean. By ridding myself of that false notion that anger was useful, I was able to do the practical thing. I'm much happier, believe me."

Walter had caught his first Magnificent Glimpse of the better life.

Summary: Happiness appears automatically as we rid our minds of unhappiness-causing ideas.

HAPPINESS AND SELF-EXPANSION

If there is one essential element for the happy life, it is *self-expansion*. To do something better on Friday than we did on the previous Monday makes us pleased with ourselves. To gain self-insight that makes us less touchy or more cheerful is certain to uplift both our self-esteem and our liking for ourselves.

We can call it *self-expansion* or *release of our inner resources* or simply *growth*, but it all adds up to the same thing: *living more fully and zestfully every day*.

Nothing—absolutely nothing—has the power to make you happier than the daily discovery that you are actually better than you thought you were! And if you really want to know, you are always better than you think you are. (And this is not something that Vernon Howard added to the book just to make you feel good. It's here because it's a fact, and a fact which you can delightfully discover for yourself whenever you choose).

Every man has a natural urge for mental and emotional expansion. To the extent that you express your inner talents, little by little, to that same extent does your happiness glow more brightly. And to the degree that your rich inner self is suppressed and blocked, to that same degree will you feel dissatisfied with yourself.

Here is how Dr. Erich Fromm explains it:

Life has an inner dynamism of its own; it tends to grow, to be expressed, to be lived. It seems that if this tendency is thwarted the energy directed toward life . . . changes into energies directed toward destruction . . . The more the drive toward life is thwarted, the stronger is the drive toward destruction; the more life is realized, the less is the strength of destructiveness. *Destructiveness is the outcome of un-lived life.*²

² Erich Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1941).

HOW TO BUILD SELF-ESTEEM

One evening at a banquet I was seated near several young ladies in their early teens. Throughout the salad course they giggled constantly and amusingly, as only teen-age girls can giggle. Then the girl on my left named Linda was served with a delicious-looking hotly-steaming sweet potato. All the girlish glee at the table concentrated on that particular sweet potato on Linda's plate. Linda herself beamed with cheery pride. What pleased her so much, and what attracted so much attention? Information scurried around the table that Linda herself had grown that potato! In these days when most of us pick up our vegetables at the market, she had done something unique. Through her personal thought and effort she had brought that sweet potato into existence. It was special because it was her creation! Linda had personally proven Linda to herself! Her self-satisfaction was entirely justified: It sprang from her own initiative and self-reliance.

If we depend upon other people or for outer events to give us a sense of self-esteem, we will be worried. We will worry that they will fail us. But if we depend upon the center of strength found within, disappointment becomes impossible. Happiness springing from a simple trust in the self can endure because it is genuine.

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Count Leo Tolstoy, the noted novelist who wrote *War and Peace*, once told a story about a wealthy nobleman and his downstairs neighbor, a tailor. The nobleman was annoyed by the cheery songs coming from the happy worker below. The wealthy man held out a purse full of money to the tailor with the offer, "This money is yours if you stop your happy songs."

The tailor took the money and stopped singing. But after a while he missed the sound of his own happy voice. He returned the money, saying, "I *must* express my happiness."

Any of us can make the same discovery as that tailor. We can see that genuine happiness comes when we have the courage to give up any artificial devices. Happiness is like a glowing lantern covered with

a heavy cloth. It is there all right, glowing brightly. When we remove the covering of misunderstanding, the light leaps out to brighten everything in the life.

Happiness *is*. You have nothing to create. It needs only your uncovering-through-understanding. And that is something you can do any time you earnestly choose to do so.

VITAL TRUTHS ABOUT YOUR HAPPINESS

1. Happiness is never permanently lost by anyone. It can be wonderfully reclaimed through the secrets of mental magic.
2. No one can be blamed for having absorbed unhappiness-causing ideas. But everyone can have the fun of rediscovering his naturally free self.
3. As we really understand what life is all about, a great change takes place. As the mind thinks newly, exterior circumstances change miraculously.
4. Happiness exists, first of all, in the mind. When our mental processes are clear, peace follows.
5. Get excited over your talents for building a better life. You already possess the basic tools—your thoughts.
6. Life is for easy living, not for strained thinking. Seek the insight that makes it easy.
7. To remember a type of thinking we should avoid, remember the story of the U-boat. Clear the mind of false information.
8. Think of happiness as a ridding process. As you dismiss negative thoughts, happiness rushes in to fill the vacuum.
9. Self-expression makes you feel good. Find ways to develop your natural creativities.
10. Depend upon your inner center of strength. It gives you self-esteem and self-satisfaction.

IX

Your Thoughts Can Make You Popular

SCIENTISTS TELL US that the sea contains millions of dollars worth of gold. They have accurately estimated that sea water contains about five cents' worth of gold to every ton.

Someday some genius may work out an economical plan for winning all that glittering gold from the sea. When he does, he will be a pretty wealthy genius.

Something that you have also contains immense wealth: Your personality. Nature plays no favorites. Just as every gallon of sea water has its gold, so does every man possess his inner wealth. It is there, and always has been there, even though the man may not be aware of it.

Once you catch a Magnificent Glimpse of your richer self, there is nothing else you need to do. *Your awareness of its existence is the richness itself.*

A man wrote a newspaper editor: "Last week I lost my wrist-watch, so I placed an ad in your lost-and-found column. Today I found my watch under the sofa. Your paper gets results."

That's an example of the confused kind of thinking which we must avoid in our social relations. We want to discover what really gets results. So let's go on to:

THE GREAT SECRET

The great secret for winning success in any field is this: Find the topmost truth about that field, then give it your wholehearted interest and action.

When it comes to personal popularity, the topmost truth is this:

You attain greater popularity with others as you become more popular with yourself.

This is an absolute and unbreakable law governing friendships. It is the very foundation for being wanted and appreciated. If you had no secret but this one you would have all you need for insuring your popularity.

Let's see why this is so.

The subconscious attitudes that we hold toward ourselves are the same as those we project toward others. We may not be consciously aware of this, yet it is so. If we genuinely like ourselves we will naturally express that self-liking as other-liking—and others like us when we like them! *All inner attitudes express themselves outwardly.* The process might be likened to the waves of a lake. The waves roll outward and backward, back and forth. If the lake's waters are pure, it expresses its purity in both its inward and outward rolls. Likewise, the mind that is at peace with itself expresses that peacefulness in all its outward adventures.

The author of *Every Man a King* explains it like this:

We radiate what we feel and believe, our fleeting moods and our deep-seated convictions. What we think most about and strive to become, we radiate to others in our every letter, in every conversation, in our manner, in our life. Spirit is contagious, and will be quickly perceived or even taken on by those with whom we come in contact. If the mind is in harmony and peace, if it is strong and healthy, we radiate health, peace, and harmony wherever we go.¹

¹ Orison Swett Marden, *Every Man a King* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company).

WHY THE QUEEN REFUSED THE CROWN

In my work I have studied thousands of men and women whom you would classify as being successful. By "successful" I mean they have made full use of their natural potentialities. All their other achievements—such as in business or in being a competent homemaker—were spontaneous outcomes of their successful personalities. For instance, I am thinking of a boulevard merchant who is just about the pleasantest man you could ever meet. He is outgoing, light-hearted, and makes you feel welcome from the moment you step into his shop. The man's commercial success grows swiftly, month after month. Why? Because he is first successful as a *person*. All his good financial fortunes follow effortlessly.

So here is the dynamic secret we have discovered:

Our popularity with others depends, really, on our own self-esteem, on feelings of self-worth. The person who enjoys his own company will naturally project that self-liking wherever he goes. Other people sense it and are attracted to it. Such a person displays likeable personality traits, such as pleasantness and calmness, because *they are the natural parts of the man who likes himself*. What a great secret this is! What time and effort and disappointment it saves.

Let's examine this mental principle as it operates in its negative fashion: The person who disfavors himself finds it difficult to look upon others with favor. He tends to be critical, easily offended. Those self-expressions are hardly popular. Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I, is a good example of such self-defeating behavior. She once refused the crowns of both England and Scotland. Why? She didn't like the way they ran the coronation ceremony!

You need not *do* anything to be popular. You need only *be* someone. Someone who is popular with himself. Then, when you are with others, you will always know exactly what to do and how to do it.

PREDICT YOUR SOCIAL SUCCESS

Chapter VI showed you how to predict your own future success and then make it come true. Well, nowhere can you foretell a brighter

future for yourself than in the world of human relations. By applying SOMM you can be absolutely sure of living in an entirely new world. The phrase "new world" is literally true. It will be so delightfully different that you will wonder whether it is really true. Yes, it is true, because as psychologist William James declared, "The greatest revolution in our generation is the discovery that human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives."

What is this new world of human relations like? The man or woman living in this brighter creation might describe it like this:

"Everything is delightfully different. There is a peaceful relaxation I never before thought possible. The strain of putting on an act before others is gone. I am myself, and content with it. I understand others. I know why they behave as they do. My criticism of them has been replaced by understanding. If they are unkind, I know it is because they are frightened—like I used to be. No one can hurt me in any way. My self-esteem is rooted in myself; it is no longer at the mercy of an unkind word or glance. People like me. They respect me. But—and here is a strange discovery—it is not as important as I thought it would be. I am at ease with myself, and neither praise nor blame can add to it or take it away. My life makes perfect sense at last. My world is different, yes, because I am different."

If you have not as yet experienced this bright world, you can do so. And I am not talking about anything fanciful—in this book we are always practical. There is not a single line of prophecy in the previous paragraph that cannot be personally true of you. The secret is to empower yourself with the secrets of mental magic.

CLAIM YOUR INNER WEALTH!

It's really not difficult to discover the secrets of personal charm.

We all know what we like in other people. And we realize that their attractive qualities are the same ones that make us appealing.

We know that the attractive person is cheerful, self-confident,

pleasant to be around, and so on. The identification of these winning traits is not the problem at all.

What we must do is to venture *beyond* mere identification. After all, these are mere descriptions. Our purpose is to turn them into personal qualities that serve us in the home, at the office, wherever we go.

The first step is to see that they are mental attitudes. What else, since everything that we are and do begins as a thought?

Personality is the expression of the way we basically think.

Change our basic thinking and we change the kind of personality we express.

Think cheerfully in private and we act cheerfully in public. Be content with ourselves and that contentment will show on our faces. Know that there is no reason to be afraid of anything and others will sense that we know it.

Where can we start altering those mental patterns that will re-make our personalities?

With self-knowledge.

Someone once asked me, "What has self-knowledge to do with personal popularity?"

"Everything."

"How?"

"If you don't understand that you have an abundance of inner wealth, how can you claim it? You must understand that it is there, even though it's as yet unused."

If a man has not had a glimpse of his richer self, he obviously makes no effort to claim it. People who ignore their nobler natures might be likened to the continent of Australia. It was discovered back in 1601, and explored frequently by adventurers from many lands. But because no one realized its value, no one bothered to claim it. Not until over 150 years later did Captain James Cook take possession in the name of England.

Self-knowledge gives you a Magnificent Glimpse of your richer self. From that time on, you possess your brighter personality.

THE SELF-DIRECTED PERSONALITY

In spy thrillers you sometimes see a scene going like this: Agent X, who is about to parachute behind enemy lines, stands before his commanding officer. The C.O. pulls a \$100 bill from his wallet and rips it in half. He hands a half to Agent X with the instructions, "Take this. When you meet the agent with the matching half you'll know he's Agent Z. The two of you will work together. Your combined skills will bring about a successful mission."

Every person is something like that one-hundred-dollar bill. If a man's personality is without value it is only because he is still torn apart from his wealthy self. Psychology usually describes such a man as being "alienated" from his real personality. But as he gets together with himself, as his various values combine, he becomes a whole personality, rich in attractiveness. His personal wealth is instantly recognized by those whom he meets.

Such a person is self-directed. He clearly knows what he wants. He has no hesitation going after it. He doesn't submit his desires to others for their approval. He knows what course is best for *him*. He sees that he cannot submit his thinking to anyone else and still retain his self-esteem. He knows that to surrender his right to think is to surrender both his individuality and his happiness.

A single woman was telling me about her troubles at home. She lived with her married sister and the family. "I don't like it at all," she said. "I have no privacy. I can hardly call my life my own. But my sister thinks I'm better off living there."

"She also thinks your rent is handy, doesn't she? And she likes the way you help around the house?"

BUILDING PERSONALITY-POWER

"Well, of course, as long as I'm living there I feel it's my duty to help." She then repeated all the reasons her sister and her husband had given her for staying in their home.

"All right," I said, "you've told me what *they* think. Now, what do *you* think?"

A quizzical expression flitted across her face. She seemed curiously startled that there might be a difference between *their* ideas and *hers*. Her expression seemed to say, "For the first time I see that *my* desires are the vital ones." She said aloud, "I think I ought to get my own apartment."

She did, and that began a new era of popularity—with both herself and with others. She was directing her own life.

Dr. Sidney M. Jourard states:

The real-self directed person is the healthy personality . . . The person affirms the value and worth of his real self. He trusts his real self as the best guide for his own conduct. Consequently, his behavior is a true expression of his real self. He knows his real needs, his own values and ideals, and strives to satisfy the needs in accordance with his own values.²

Use this secret of mental magic for building your personality power:

1. Start your day with the intention of watching the *results* of your various thoughts and actions.

2. Notice the kinds of thoughts and actions that resulted in genuine satisfaction; also note those that proved unsatisfactory.

This will deepen your insight into yourself. You will see that it really is your own thoughts and actions that make your day whatever it is. But most exciting of all, you will catch a Magnificent Glimpse of your own power to make every day a triumphant one.

And that will give you more self-esteem.

And *that* will make you more attractive!

THE STORY OF CINCINNATUS

When our minds express maturity and power we need never wonder whether people will want us and seek us out. The genuinely strong individual is always in far less supply than demand. And by "strong individual" we mean the person who has found that wealthy inner self we are discussing.

² Sidney M. Jourard, *Personal Adjustment* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958).

The ancient legend tells about Cincinnatus, who was such a strong personality:

A breathless messenger raced into Rome with terrifying news: the Roman army was trapped by its enemy, the Aequians.

"If our army is lost, Rome is helpless before the invaders," wailed the people. "How can we save ourselves? Who will lead us out of our peril?"

"Cincinnatus is the only one who can help us," cried a Roman senator. "We must go to him; ask his aid."

"But he now lives in peace on his farm," came the objection. "Besides, he has no authority in Rome."

"Then we will give him all the authority he needs," was the reply. "Without his wisdom we are lost."

The Senate sent a delegation to Cincinnatus, who agreed to take command. As he entered Rome he saw despair and confusion. But his calm strength soon rallied the people. He then led a quickly formed army to the rescue of the trapped forces.

On the battlefield, Cincinnatus ordered the attack, then led his men to swift victory over the Aequians.

On returning to Rome the jubilant people wanted to make Cincinnatus their king. He gently declined, saying that his sixteen days as ruler of Rome were quite enough. He explained, "I'm pleased to be my country's deliverer, but I have no need to be its dictator."

SOMM develops such a personality—one that is needed, sought out, followed, and admired.

YOUR RICHER SELF

After I'd given a talk on human relations a man from the audience questioned, "You mentioned personal maturity several times. Why all the emphasis? What's the practical value in being mature? Why can't I just live my own life the way I want and skip things like self-understanding and self-growth? What's to stop me from living my own happy life as I see it?"

"There's nothing to stop you. But don't overlook one vital fact. Without maturity there is no happiness. The two are inseparable. Of

course there may be lots of events in your life that you mistakenly identify as happiness—like running around and doing exciting things. But beneath it all the haunting despair is still there. Have you noticed that? Please don't make the mistake of thinking of maturity as some sort of lofty religious or moralistic teaching. It's nothing like that at all. It's an intensely practical way of life. Maturity is mental money; the more you have the more genuine joy you can own. That's what I mean by maturity. It means you have found your real self and are happy with its riches."

When seeking to understand ourselves, what is the important thing to remember? It's the *purpose* for which we seek self-knowledge. The purpose is not to scold the self or to be upset by anything you find. The healthy motives are to bring up to conscious awareness your deep-down drives and desires, to correct self-harming attitudes, to discover and employ hidden talents, and to become free of conflict and despair.

Any person who makes this his intense intention will surely find his richer self. And, as we have seen, this personal treasure chest is attractive to others. Just one of its many gems is the appealing trait of loyalty, of which Dr. Meerloo writes: "In general, we can say that the person who is honest with himself and shows a minimum of self-deceit, the man who exhibits a stable structure of character, the person with genuine maturity, is most true to himself, and, as a result, most loyal to others."³

We need not labor to be liked. We need only uncover the Richer Self—the Self that is attractive to both ourselves and others.

HOW TO PERFORM A MIRACLE!

I want to tell you a story about President Lincoln. It spotlights a vital truth about human personality.

The President once appointed General Joseph Hooker as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Lincoln told Hooker to go ahead and win military victories that would bring the Civil War to a rapid

³ Reprinted by permission of The World Publishing Company from *The Rape of the Mind* by Joost A. M. Meerloo.

close. General Hooker, who was not a very modest man, made some extravagant claims. For one thing, he boasted that he would soon capture Richmond, the Confederate capital. Later, while Lincoln was reviewing the Army, Hooker turned to him with the confident declaration, "Sir, when I take Richmond . . ."

The President interrupted by saying, "General, please remember that your first objective is Lee's army. Once that obstacle is out of your path, it will be easy enough to take Richmond."

Here again we meet a basic truth for winning our objectives the easy way. To review it: *success is always awaiting our arrival*. Our part is to remove those mental blocks that stand in the way. And we *can* remove them. President Lincoln wanted Hooker to see just where intelligence and energy had to be directed, that is, to the destruction of Lee's army. Likewise, we must direct our intelligence toward the destruction of false ideas that bar our path. If we think that two and two make five, we must rid the mind of that wrong idea if we are to come to the truth about it.

Remember, a false idea *is the obstacle itself*. Once it crumbles, the way is clear. Experiment with this. Your life will change so dramatically that you will think a miracle has occurred. And it has.

Let's now see how this connects with personality-power.

HELEN'S NICE MAN

In counselling with Helen W., the mental obstacle was plain enough. We had to discover what she *really* wanted, as opposed to what she *thought* she wanted.

Helen kept telling me how attractive she was to men. "I catch their eyes," she said, "and I know it."

I have found that an abrupt question is often the best way to get through a mental barrier, so I asked Helen: "Which do you really prefer—a nice man in your life or your stage performance?"

"I'm not sure what you mean."

"I have no doubt but that you are attractive to men. But you are using this attractiveness to play a role. You think, 'Well, I guess I have power to interest any man I like, so I can afford to be distant and cool.

I like to keep them guessing.' But underneath it all, Helen, you are very much afraid, aren't you? You are afraid that no man wants you. Your little dramatic performances are designed to convince yourself that you are attractive. But every day when the play is over you are in despair."

"Yes," she said softly. "That's a good description. How did you know?"

"That's unimportant for now. What we want to do is make you an honest woman. So tell me, which do you want? Do you want to continue in your despair or do you want a nice man in your life?"

She smiled. "I'll take the nice man."

"Good. Now we can get somewhere."

And we did. Rather, Helen did. She became aware of a trick of the human mind going like this: Whenever we fear we cannot attain a certain goal, we set up various defenses, for instance, a pretense that we don't really want it. But that pretense is the very barrier to fulfillment of that desire.

Helen found her genuine personality. It was just what one man—living in the same apartment house—found appealing. Helen had found the nice man she wanted all along.

Use these secrets of mental magic to find what you want in the world of people.

THE DIAMONDS OF PERSONALITY

We have so many misconceptions as to what makes a person popular. Sometimes we think another person is popular with us, when in reality we are merely attracted by exterior glitter. We soon grow weary of the man or woman who has only a surface personality. But we never tire of the person who is inwardly wealthy; in fact, he becomes more attractive to us day by day.

The most popular personality trait of all is to be a real person. Everyone senses the strength of the man who dares to be himself. Anything that is unnatural is wrong. It is wrong not in any moralistic sense, but because it wrongs the unnatural individual. It robs him of all the wealth found in his genuine personality. It's like throwing

away the diamond and showing off the case it came in. We must become diamond hunters.

Some of the diamonds any man can find in his natural personality are:

A clear mind.

Daily enthusiasm.

Self-confidence.

Productive use of time.

A feeling of quietness.

Creative actions.

Alertness to opportunity.

Self-liking.

Pleasurable emotions.

A sense of security.

WEALTHY LIVING

Nothing is more painful or pointless than trying to maintain a surface personality. Half of human tensions are caused by attempts of *appearing* to be someone, instead of actually *being* that someone. A businessman with this problem described it like this: "You know how it is with a big bridge, maybe like the Golden Gate in San Francisco. A bridge like that needs a crew of painters who do nothing but repaint it, year after year. That's my endless chore, too. I'm always painting things over to make me look good. If there is a way out of this tiresome task, please tell me."

"The way out is to examine ourselves as we actually are at the present moment, and not run away from whatever we see. *This* is courage—to see honestly what is really there, and not pretend otherwise. When that happens, a miracle also happens. I cannot describe this miracle to you, for truth cannot be communicated from one human being to another, but you can *experience* this great change. That, after all, is what we want. We desire to *live* the real self, the wealthy self within."

There is a children's game involving the backward spelling of the names of players. A girl named Grace is called *Ecarg*, while a boy

named Roy becomes Yor. As soon as a player identifies himself by straightening out his name, he advances a step in the game. So it is with the game of life. As we find our natural selves we need not worry whether we will be popular or wanted or liked. Naturalness is always popular.

POPULAR THOUGHTS FOR YOUR REVIEW

1. There is glittering gold in your personality. It needs only your discovery.
2. The great secret of social popularity is to be popular with yourself. The more you like yourself, the more others like you!
3. Through the secrets of mental magic you can predict an exciting social future for yourself. And you can watch it come true.
4. Your personality is an expression of the way you think. Uplift your thinking and a brighter self appears effortlessly.
5. Remember the illustration of the \$100 bill. It helps build Self-Directed days.
6. Let the story of Cincinnatus inspire you. You can be a commander in your own way.
7. Make it your intention to find your Richer Self. It attracts others.
8. Get mental obstacles out of your path. Notice how that technique helped Helen win her objective!
9. The man who lives naturally lives with ease. Anyone can find this easy life.
10. Put the ideas of this chapter to practical use. Let them work for you.

X

How to Find Lasting Security

LUCILLE W. WAS PUZZLED. "I often wonder about a feeling of security. Can it really be attained? I doubt it."

"Why," I asked, "do you assume that security can't be yours?"

"Well," she replied with a vague gesture, "I can't explain it exactly, but I just feel it's not possible."

"Have you ever had other feelings that later turned out to be contrary to fact?"

"Sometimes."

"Then why do you doubt that security is possible? Why not consider that you might be holding some false assumptions toward it? Why not consider that it just might be possible after all? Personally, I *know* that you can be free of all anxiety, but this truth can't be communicated from one person to another. But I can help you explore; I can help you find the truth for yourself."

"Yes, I'd like that."

"Where do you feel anxious in particular?"

She smiled. "All over. But mostly, when it comes to pleasing other people. I want others to like and accept me. I often do things I really don't want to do, just so I'll feel wanted."

"But it doesn't last, does it? After awhile you're just as anxious and lonely as before."

"Yes, the comfort wears off. That old haunting feeling of being adrift in a scary world comes back again. What can I do?"

"For one thing, you can stop sacrificing your integrity by doing things for people just so they will like you."

"Will that help?"

"It's a perfect start. In order to find your genuine security you must have courage to abandon false actions."

"Yes, I see what you mean. So, in spite of what I now think, it is really possible to live without anxiety? I see so many people going around pretending to be happy. I know they're not, and I think they know it too. So, can I really live without being afraid?"

"You can be entirely free of fear."

"I believe you. I'll start with that much."

THE VALUE OF SELF-STUDY

The greatest miracle on earth is the miracle of a changed life. And that is the miracle experienced by Lucille W.

You, too, can see miraculous changes by applying the principles of this chapter. They are the very ones that carried Lucille to her new world of daily peace.

Where do we start?

By examining the mind itself. By discovering how it works. By finding techniques for changing it. By releasing its natural forces. By exploring our mental world with eagerness and expectancy.

One time, during a class, I suggested that everyone begin such a program of self-study. Someone objected, "But isn't it unhealthy to constantly look at myself? Doesn't it lead to vanity and self-consciousness? What I'd like to do is the exact opposite—to *forget* myself. You have no idea what a big bother I am to myself."

That last sentence brought laughter from the class. As it quieted I replied, "Of course you want to be free of yourself. But in order to set yourself at liberty you must first find out how and why you are imprisoned. That is the only purpose of self-observation—to discover ways to mental freedom. To neglect self-study is like a prisoner-of-war who suspects he may be able to break free but neglects to investigate the possibilities. Your intention is what counts. Go into self-examination with the intention of understanding yourself. Self-understanding is self-freedom."

This led to the question, "What do you mean by self-freedom?"

THE EXCITING TRUTH

"I mean, freedom from negative reactions to whatever happens in your daily life. Has it ever occurred to you what an entirely different kind of day it would be if these negativities were absent?"

"By mental negativities do you mean things like envy and resentment and bitterness?"

"And disappointment and frustration and hopelessness. How would you feel if they were all gone?"

"Great!"

"Let me tell you something that you might think fantastic. The fact is, you can actually live such a wonderful life. As I say, you might not believe me at the present moment, but just wait until this class gets deeper into things. I assure you that you will begin to suspect that there is a different way of living than what you now experience. This suspicion is a Magnificent Glimpse. Once you get it, nothing can prevent miracles of self-change."

"How come?"

"Because of an unbreakable law of psychological growth. A genuine Magnificent Glimpse means that you have reached the point where the truth within you finally becomes a bit stronger than error. You are at the 51 percent point. From then on it is impossible for you to ever regress. You won't go back because you see, finally, that it is the truth that sets you free. Once seen, always seen. This gives you an intensity, a drive, an eagerness to find more truth."

"That's exciting."

"There is nothing more exciting than the truth."

A UNIQUE SYSTEM

Zen, that intensely practical Eastern philosophy, offers a unique method for self-study. It urges non-interference with the thought processes. It advises us to sit back and watch our thoughts as they pass across the mind, much as we would watch a movie. Just as we wouldn't climb up on the stage and attempt to interfere with movie scenes, we shouldn't try to force our thoughts into what we think they should be or into what we want them to be. We should quietly observe them, without moral judgment, and with neither condemnation nor approval. Also, much like watching a movie, we shouldn't close our eyes to scenes that startle or disturb us, but merely observe them as they pass by.

This quiet watchfulness builds a clear understanding of the mind. It heightens our perception of reality. We come to see things as they really are, not as our tricky minds used to distort them.

All this leads to a calmness, to a new feeling of security—in ways that we might now believe impossible.

What we must do, really, is make friends of our thoughts. As we come to know them, as we stop resisting, as we come closer, a remarkable thing happens: We see them for what they really are—the best friends we've ever had.

During the days of sailing ships a Dutch trading vessel was on a peaceful voyage to the West Indies. One portion of the voyage required that it pass through pirate waters. The anxious crew finally sighted what they dreaded—strange masts on the horizon. The sailors urged the captain to make a run for it, but that calm officer answered, "Let's take a closer look." His judgment was wise and profitable. The distant vessels proved to be a friendly group that escorted the Dutch ship safely to harbor.

We can do likewise. By not running away from thoughts that at first appear frightening, we will find them to be safe and friendly.

TWO FAMOUS PHILOSOPHERS

The receptive mind often receives helpful insight at unexpected times and from unusual sources. Such a Magnificent Glimpse of a higher level of living can flash into the mind while walking down the street, while waiting to fall asleep, maybe while chatting with friends. But it always comes to the waiting mind. The man who is ready to receive fresh truth never fails to receive it. The happiness of life is just as eager to find us as we are to find it.

At one time two famous men lived in the town of Concord, Massachusetts. One of them made a statement that impressed the other. The one receiving the impression later wrote, "Henry Thoreau made, last night, the fine remark that, as long as a man stands in his own way, everything seems to be in his way."

That is how a helpful truth came from one famous philosopher to another, from Henry David Thoreau to Ralph Waldo Emerson.

We can be practical philosophers too, gathering just as much mental wealth as we choose. And once gained, it can never be lost. It is a golden rule of the mind that once a man becomes aware of the superior life he never wants to go back to the old. And he never does, for a truth once seen can never disappear. It always operates within the man and for the man. It's like once having observed a colorful sunset: Its beauty is permanent to your inner vision.

Our persistence will guarantee our reward. When the historic Lewis and Clark expedition finally won their way to the Pacific Ocean, their Magnificent Glimpse was expressed:

"That ocean, the object of all our labors, the reward of all our anxieties. This cheering view exhilarated the spirits of all the party, who were still more delighted on hearing the distant roar of the breakers."

THE SACRED WELL OF MAYA

How can we get a clear picture of the human mind? What will illustrate its vast riches, ready for our claim? Most importantly, how

can we find and enjoy these mental treasures that give us lasting security?

In writing this book I wanted to find a single powerful illustration that would answer these vital questions. I wanted one that would make a profound and permanent impression on the mind of everyone who read it. It took several months to find just the right one, but it was a well-rewarded search. We have the perfect story to help us:

The man was Edward Thompson. The time was the last century. The place was the Yucatan jungles of Mexico, at the site of the ancient Mayan ruins.

For years Edward Thompson had been fascinated by tales of this vanished civilization. Finally, he left his New England home and journeyed down there to see what he could find. As he and his Indian guide jogged on horseback through the tangled jungle, an exciting plan entered his mind: Upon reaching the Mayan city of Chichén Itzá, he would center his search around the Sacred Well. There, somewhere in its depths, he felt he would find the answers to this highly-advanced people of so long ago.

His guide's voice broke the silence. "There! Ahead of us, Chichén Itzá!"

Thompson gasped, stared ahead in frozen fascination: Magnificent temples . . . powerful pillars . . . silent pyramids . . . stone carvings of the Feathered Serpent, the Mayan god.

But it was the Sacred Well that drew Thompson. He swung from the saddle and raced for it.

It was much larger than he had supposed. From rim to rim it was about 200 feet. Lying down at its edge he peered into the dark waters some 60 feet below.

Thompson was a man of instant action. He called to his guide, "We'll start digging at once. Go get workmen and equipment."

TREASURE!

As the dredging bucket dipped into the black depths, Thompson didn't know two things: He didn't know exactly what he would find

down there. And he wasn't sure how soon he would find anything. But those were unimportant compared to what he somehow *knew*—he *knew the treasures were there*.

At first the dredges brought up nothing but mud, leaves, common rocks. Thompson was tempted just a bit to wonder whether his work was in vain after all. But, being a courageous explorer, he stuck to the task. Day after day he crouched at the edge of the Sacred Well, watching for signs of Mayan treasure. Days passed. Weeks. Still, nothing but debris. More work. More waiting. Still nothing . . .

One morning Thompson was examining the contents of a bucket freshly hauled from the dark depths. Out of the muddy waters he picked out a curious-looking object, yellow in color and ball-shaped. His hands trembled with excitement as he turned it over for close examination. Then, shouting triumphantly, he tossed it into a nearby fire. Immediately the air was thick with a rich fragrance. Thompson smiled and sighed. He realized that he had made his first rich discovery. The object was a ball of *pom*, an incense used by the Mayans in their religious rituals.

Now, the jubilant explorer prophesied, nothing could prevent him from finding greater treasures. He realized that he had caught his first Magnificent Glimpse of forthcoming riches.

His prophecy came true. A steady stream of wealth swung up from the Sacred Well. Every day brought to light relics that told tales of ancient glory. First came colorful vases, intricately designed incense burners, copper tools, axes and arrowheads. After that the waters yielded golden bells, beautiful jewelry of green jade, glittering ornaments of every description.

The treasure from the Sacred Well changed Edward Thompson's life in dramatic fashion. In every way, he was a richer man.

YOUR ENJOYABLE POSSESSION

Personalize that story by seeing your own mind as a Sacred Well. Also, picture yourself as the adventurous explorer who dares to investigate it. By doing so, a number of significant facts emerge about you and your mind. For instance:

1. You are mentally rich at this very moment.
2. Your riches may be undiscovered as yet.
3. You need never doubt your inner wealth.
4. Your Magnificent Glimpse keeps you excited.
5. The persistent adventurer always finds wealth.

But what about personal security, the object of our present search?

We need only to realize:

Security is a state of mind.

And nothing else.

By discovering your mental riches—by really discovering them—security becomes a new and wonderful experience to you!

Personal security becomes the enjoyable possession of the person who earnestly seeks until he finds. And you can find it.

Dr. Erich Fromm makes this dynamic declaration:

If the individual overcomes the basic doubt concerning himself and his place in life, if he is related to the world by embracing it in the act of spontaneous living, he gains strength as an individual and he gains security . . . The new security is dynamic; it is not based on protection, but on man's spontaneous activity. It is the security that only freedom can give . . .¹

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

Let's see how these ideas connect with *time*.

A government official once told me, "I used to kid myself that tomorrow would automatically be happier. I've stopped all that. I know that unless I'm happy in the here and now I won't be happy tomorrow. After all, the kind of *person* that we are on Monday is what determines our kind of Tuesday. We kid ourselves into thinking that mere passage of time makes a difference. It doesn't. It's the changes we make in ourselves today that make the difference. We human beings will do almost anything to avoid facing the fact that *we* create our tomorrow. Time changes nothing unless it's preceded by mental

¹ Erich Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1941).

change. As I said, I've stopped kidding myself. I've made some inner changes. And you know, I'm happy every day."

That was the observation of a highly intelligent man; one who sees life-principles with clarity. That is what intelligence actually is—seeing that the facts of life are the securities of life.

In talking with anxious people I find that they share a common loss—loss of faith in the present. They long for past pleasures or for hazy future rewards. To them, today is distasteful and something from which to escape. Such people are avoiding the only time area that can give them everything they need. That area is the active *now*. Whether they are aware of it or not, the *now* is the very magic they seek.

On the other hand I've found that people who are psychologically free have a delightful friendship with the present. By taking action in the here and now they attain their desires quickly. They have no interest in waiting and hoping for some vague "better tomorrow." *They find and enjoy today everything they want in tomorrow.*

"Then let us live today," says German philosopher Friedrich von Schiller.

Confidence in yourself supplies power for making today count for something. Self-confidence collapses time; it makes your dreams come true in the here and now. That is why the ideas of Chapter III are especially helpful to you.

YOUR HIGHER VIEW

In Chapter VI we used the illustration of a man looking out the window of a 15-story apartment building. Let's use it again, this time with a cast of two men. One lives on the top floor, the other down on the third floor. The upstairs tenant calls down to the other, "You ought to come on up here and see the fine sights. The mountain view is magnificent. Come on up and enjoy this wonderful view."

But the man on the third floor scorns, "What kind of nonsense are you giving me? There are no magnificent mountains out there. Why, I can see for myself that there's only a few scrubby bushes outside my window. What better evidence is there than my own eyesight?"

Where that third-floor man gets tricked is here: While his eyesight is correct as far as it goes, *it is still severely limited. He falsely assumes that what he can see is all that there is!* And no amount of argument or logic or attempts at persuasion will convince him otherwise. Logic can never penetrate a mind that clings to a *false assumption* and refuses to explore the *facts*. Unfortunately, such a man lives in an unnecessary state of misery, desperation and frustrating limitation. His main problem is that *he does not as yet suspect that there is a way out*. He has not as yet caught his first Magnificent Glimpse of the superior life which can be his.

It is totally unnecessary for anyone to live on the third floor.

How does all this connect with our search for genuine security? Like this:

The only lasting security is in the truth itself. The truth about life dwells on the top floor. The greater our distance from this top-truth, the more we live in trembling doubt. But, as we grow upward with the aid of natural laws, we gradually close the gap between the false and the true. We grow to see, maybe with some surprise at first, that the very reality we once scorned is the very security we sought. We might be surprised at this, but we are also delighted.

GO INTO ACTION!

Let's talk for a bit about personal courage. Let's see how it connects with personal security.

Who is the genuinely courageous man? He is the man who finally acknowledges that his present ideas about life are not working out. He observes that the promises of these ideas are not matched by practical performances. He sees that he is just as unhappy, just as trapped, just as anxious and confused as he was before he adopted these ideas.

That man's honest acknowledgement is his courageous answer to the call of inner truth. That call, which he has ignored so long, is now insistent, and because he is tired of suffering, he listens at last. *That* is genuine courage—to listen to the truth, as temporarily upsetting as it may be. After a while it no longer upsets; it gives peace.

At this point I want to once more pause in this book to have a personal word with you, the reader. The last few paragraphs you have read are not merely some philosophic ideas of mine. They are not just fancy phrases intended to make you feel better. You and I have no time for that sort of thing. These ideas are practical. You can work with them to make actual changes in your everyday living. If that is your wish—to make changes that you can actually see and experience—then these ideas are for you.

Now, back to our man on the third floor. We know a few things about him that he doesn't know: We see that he is cheating himself out of the higher life, *but he doesn't know it*. His scorn and his disbelief make perfect sense to him, for after all, how can you possibly see something that you can't possibly see!

How, then, is he ever going to make it up to that magnificent view?

By *action*. By deliberately acting against his false viewpoint, by deliberately defying it. He must have the heroism to leave the so-called security of that lower floor. He must dare to venture upward, *even while doubting and trembling*.

What he doesn't know as yet—and what will come as a heavenly surprise—is that the very steps he feared to tread are the very ones leading him up to the heights!

YOUR NEW LIFE

A man once asked me, "How will I know when I've reached this higher state of thinking?"

Reply: "When you reach it, you won't ask that question. You will *know*."

When any person—for instance, you, the reader—attains a loftier mental elevation, he is a different person. He is actually a *different person*, not merely someone who hopes he has changed or even believes he has changed. He *knows* that he is a new man. He is able to see the difference between mere change in outer circumstances and the dynamic change within himself. He used to think that by changing outer conditions he could improve inner conditions. Now he is wiser. Now

he sees that life operates on a principle of First Things First. He understands that by placing his inner growth first, all outer riches are added to him.

This inner elevation is excellently described by Dr. Fritz Kunkel:

Life once more pivots around the real center as it used to do. . . . Gradually our whole vision of life is revised; our emotional attitude towards people and circumstances is transformed. . . .²

Dr. Kunkel has described a person who caught his Magnificent Glimpse of another life—the *real* life of genuine happiness and security.

HOW TO STAY ON COURSE

As we previously discovered, our growing glimpse of a more secure self can come down a number of avenues. Nature is eager to help us break through the shell of our timid self. Being wiser than we are, she takes the initiative, and asks only that we don't resist her leadership. This thought was superbly expressed long ago by Aristotle: "Wise men have an inward sense of what is beautiful, and the highest wisdom is to trust this intuition and be guided by it. The answer to the last appeal of what is right lies within a man's own breast. Trust thyself."

Life itself will teach us everything we need to know, if only we will let ourselves go and live. Live *freely*.

Teach us everything we need to know? Of course. Every man's mind has a built-in compass for correction. Like a wise sea captain, we can glance at the compass, notice that we are off course, then guide the ship back to where it should be.

To carry the compass illustration a bit farther, imagine that you have an actual compass in your hand. Notice that its needle points true. This is its natural condition—to point true direction. Now imagine that various pieces of metal are placed near the compass. They cause the needle to swing around to false positions. But when the in-

² Fritz Kunkel, M.D., *In Search of Maturity* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943).

terferences are removed, the needle once more points out the right way.

The human mind is like that. In its naturally free state it is entirely accurate, dependable, steadfast. It points true. It flies off into false directions only when we permit outside influences to distract it.

We have already identified many of these harmful distractions, such as worry, anxiety and needless complications.

THE EASY LIFE

Asked someone, "Why is life so complicated?"

Because an individual has permitted complications to enter his life, perhaps without realizing it. But by watching the corrective compass of his mind he can simplify his life amazingly. For one thing, he finds himself staying free of problems in the first place; therefore he doesn't even need to take corrective action. All of us can think of things we used to do that caused trouble, then, because we saw that we were responsible for it, we ceased causing it.

A tornado is wild because it is complicated. It is made up of air masses of conflicting temperatures. But as its inner elements become reconciled with each other, the tornado ceases.

So can we become reconciled with ourselves, and find peace.

Use your mind to uncomplicate your mind. Learn to live easily and simply and naturally. There is always the direct way to do anything, and you can always find it. A scene from a play showed a man and a woman who were having a minor disagreement.

Asked one, "What can we do?"

Replied the other, "Couldn't we just be nice to each other?"

Picture two men taking turns at a piano. One of them plays harmoniously, drawing from the piano all its beauty and power. The other man strikes only discord and confusion from the very same piano. Hearing the two men, you would not blame the piano. You would logically observe that the difference lies in the men before that piano. The first one plays according to the established principles of music; the other one violates them.

Life is like that. It cheerfully invites, "Learn to play in accord

with the principles of harmony, and I will give you all beauty and power and peace.”

FOR YOUR LASTING SECURITY

1. Realize that it is really possible to live securely.
2. A sense of safety comes with self-understanding. Maintain a program of self-study.
3. Be watchful of your mental processes. Become acquainted with thoughts of all kinds.
4. Remember the adventure of Edward Thompson. Know that your mental riches can change your life dramatically.
5. Remind yourself that security is a state of mind. Nothing can disturb you unless you permit it.
6. Enjoy your life today!
7. Don't assume that your present level of living is all that there is. SOMM can reveal much higher and happier ones.
8. Act out the plans of this chapter. Security follows.
9. Place your inner growth first. You will then see marvelous changes in your exterior affairs.
10. Remember that your mind has a built-in compass for correction. Learn to trust and use it.

XI

Mental Magic Solves Your Problems

WHEN DON AND PHYLLIS CAME for counsel, they stated their problem like this:

"If there is one thing of which we are absolutely sure, it's that there's something wrong somewhere. Too many daily difficulties. Too few solutions. Is there a way out?"

"There is."

"Can we find it?"

"You can."

"Then, please, we'd like to talk it over."

This chapter will reveal the secrets of mental magic that freed Don and Phyllis from daily distress. Their success is typical of hundreds that I have seen—and which can also work for you.

A television show the other night featured a pair of comedians who were stumbling around a haunted castle in search of pirate's treasure. Comedian A raced into the hall to scream to Comedian B, "Something spooky's going on down in the dun-

geon. When I went down there I heard someone booming on a big bass drum."

"Nonsense," scoffs Comedian B. "There's no one booming on a drum. Get back on down there and look for the treasure."

A few minutes later the frightened man is back upstairs with terror in his wide eyes. "I tell you," he yells, "someone's down there booming on a big bass drum!"

"And I tell you," comes the impatient reply, "that it's all in your imagination. Get back to work."

The scared Mr. A. races back for the third time, screeching, "Someone's down there booming on a big bass drum!"

"All right," his partner agrees, "I'll prove what a jumpy rabbit you are. Come along." They descend the stone steps together. As they enter the dungeon, Comedian A casually strolls over to a big bass drum and starts booming away. He looks up and innocently remarks, "See? I told you."

YOUR FROSTED CAKE

That humorous anecdote carries the first problem-clearing secret discovered by Don and Phyllis:

We must look to ourselves to discover just how we may be unknowingly causing our own difficulties. By seeing that false viewpoints may be in back of them, we then give ourselves a great opportunity for self-correction!

People sometimes ask, "If I am unknowingly causing some of my difficulties, how can I *stop* hurting myself?"

There is a major secret of mental magic that goes like this: As a person really becomes aware that self-defeating behavior *is* self-defeating, that very awareness leads him to effortlessly drop that behavior. *No man ever knowingly destroys his own best-interests.* To state the same secret in positive fashion, as a person becomes aware that self-enriching behavior *really* does contribute to his advancement, he is led by that very knowledge to perform *more* of those self-enrichments.

When, for instance, a man really sees that emotions such as envy and resentment are self-damaging, he soon loses all desire to be envious

and resentful. And this is the *only* method by which he drops them. A hungry man in sight of dessert no longer has interest in crusts of bread.

Too many people live off the dry crusts from the lower shelf of the cupboard, when they could just as well raise their vision and have frosted cake on the shelf above.

A man can abruptly cease from his problem-causing actions any time he really chooses to do so. There is nothing outside the man to prevent him. Neither is there anything at all within the man which bars his way, *once he clearly realizes that fact*. Whether we know it or not, we are free. But we must realize it in order to experience it. People imprisoned by self-damaging behavior of any kind—perhaps worry, depression, hostility—are like an American soldier of World War II. He was imprisoned in a seemingly escape-proof cell. Though the door was closed, giving the appearance of imprisonment, the guard accidentally left the lock open. Seeing this, the American walked out and away.

And so can any man use the key of his mental awareness to walk out of his troubles and remain permanently away from their causes.

YOU CANNOT FAIL

Robert Peary, the discoverer of the North Pole, told of a curious experience he had while adventuring in the frozen lands of the Arctic. On one occasion he believed himself to be travelling toward the North Pole at the rate of ten miles per day. Glancing skyward to get his bearings, he was hit by a shock. He discovered that he was actually going *backward* at the rate of twelve miles per day. He soon found the reason. He was drifting backward on an immense ice floe.

Many troubled people are like that. They assume that they are making progress, but never stop to check the accuracy of their assumptions. How can a man check up to see whether his thinking is correct or not? There is one test that never fails, but we must be courageously honest with ourselves when taking it.

The supreme test is whether or not we are actually growing a bit happier and a share more problem-free each day. Why is this a

fool-proof test? Because whenever we are operating in harmony with realistic thinking we *cannot fail* to show the fruits of that healthy thinking. If we are not making progress, our assumptions toward ourselves and toward our life need a second look. If progress is definite, then we are clearly going along with the never-failing secrets of mental magic.

What happens to the daily problems of the man who thinks the way he should? Well, for one thing, they just don't happen as often any more. Another value is his ability to clear away his difficulties with far less strain. In other words, problems cease to play a dominant role in his everyday activities. Instead, he has a life-affirming day. He turns challenges into opportunities. He takes everything with an ease that he never before thought possible.

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR WORLD!

Maybe you remember those delightful lines from Robert Loveman's poem, *April Rain*:

It isn't raining rain to me,
 It's raining daffodils;
 In every dimpled drop I see
 Wildflowers on the hills.
 A cloud of gray engulfs the day
 And overwhelms the town;
 It isn't raining rain to me,
 It's raining roses down.

In these cheery verses we see the expression of a triumphant mind. It didn't at all see the rain as a problem, but rather as a *condition*. If you will see a particular event as a *condition*, rather than a problem, you will find it magically changes its appearance before your eyes. How is this possible? Because our world is largely what our minds make it. Change the mind—and presto!—you change your world. And this is not some mystical statement that Vernon Howard included in this book to make you feel good. Whether you know it or not, this is a forceful fact that can change your days dramatically. Balzac states it like this: "Your invisible and mental universe and your visible and physical universe constitute one and the same."

Never think like this: "Here is a problem. I wonder how badly it will hurt me?"

Always think like this: "Here is a condition. How can I turn it into an advantage?"

Never fear a problem and never fight it. Always take advantage of it. There is an advantage there, and you are perfectly capable of finding it.

SEE YOURSELF AS FREE

Let me tell you of an amusing historical incident that illustrates your personal power of using a difficulty for self-advancement. It happened at the naval battle of Jutland during World War I. Headquarters of the British Fleet were anxious to locate their own warships, but in the confusion of battle were unable to find them. They hit upon the clever idea of letting the enemy do their work for them. The British tricked the Germans into sending some secret messages back to Germany. When those enemy messages were decoded they revealed the locations of the British warships!

Never acknowledge any difficulty as having power over you. In truth, it hasn't. If something has you down it is because you unknowingly and innocently consent to it. Don't consent. Quietly and effortlessly see yourself as free from the problem. Once your mind grasps this fact—and it is a fact—all is well. If there is then some action which you should take as a result of your higher vision, then you will know exactly what to do. No painful choice will confront you. A mind that is free of its own confusions always knows just what to do. And what it does is always right.

So this is what we must understand about ourselves: We get into trouble because we make false assumptions. When those false assumptions clash with the truth, we have painful problems. A man might assume that he can leap over a ten-foot chasm, but if he fails to make it, his erroneous thinking is his downfall. What could he do in *place* of assuming? He could get the facts of the matter, maybe by measuring the chasm or by making some practice leaps on solid ground.

THE STORY OF FLORENCE

The most damaging of all false ideas are those that we hold toward ourselves. Never accept as final any weakness you may find in yourself. Don't be so sure that you are permanently trapped by fate. Never believe that life must continue in distress too deep to tell anyone about.

Asked Florence E., "Why do I have to pay so much for a mistake I made a few years ago? It was a love affair. I became foolishly involved with the wrong man. Now it seems that all of today's grief stems from that one blunder. Why must I be hounded by my past?"

"It need not bother you in the slightest. Not when you really understand."

"Understand what?"

"That you are permitting that affair to whisper false assumptions toward yourself. You feel you are worthless. You blame yourself. You hate your supposed weakness. You think that other people scorn you."

"That's just about it. I dislike myself."

"So your real problem is your self-dislike, and not that past affair. Your actual burden is the self-blame that you carry around day after day. Not only is it a problem in itself, but it creates other difficulties."

"How?"

"Self-contempt is a painful pressure. In order to release that pressure you express it in hostility. That's why you blow up at people; it's why you are sometimes critical and unkind. And that behavior, of course, is bound to harm your daily relations with others."

"Yes, I know. It goes on and on. I don't know what to do."

WHAT FLORENCE DISCOVERED

"It is the destructive attitudes that you hold toward yourself that you must understand. Don't permit that past event to paint dark colors over your present. Let it fade away. Cut self-dislike from your mind, ruthlessly and utterly. You owe no apology to anyone for whatever happened yesterday."

"Are you saying that I shouldn't submit to the tyranny of my own false thinking?"

"Exactly."

If Florence was anything, she was persistent. She kept after those ideas until they made sense to her mind. That's why she was able to report back, "What amazes me most is how we permit our minds to trick us. We haven't the slightest notion of how much we surrender our intelligence to false ideas. For the first time I really see how much I can do for myself."

"You mean you like yourself?"

"Yes, but as you once pointed out, it's entirely different from what I thought it would be. I don't even think about whether I like myself or not; I'm peacefully unconcerned with it. I now understand that that is what we call self-acceptance."

"And it is also what we call mental freedom."

THE POWER OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

"Why," you may ask, "do we cling to these harmful opinions and beliefs and ideas about ourselves?"

Because we lack knowledge of our rightful freedom. Because we resist self-knowledge. Aldous Huxley points out: "If most of us remain ignorant of ourselves, it is because self-knowledge is painful and we prefer the pleasures of illusion. As for the consequences of such ignorance, these are bad by every criterion . . . Bad because self-ignorance leads to unrealistic behaviour and so causes every kind of trouble for everyone concerned; and bad because, without self-knowledge, there can be no true humility . . ." ¹

Remember, whenever you meet any kind of challenging condition, you need not adopt a harm-causing assumption toward it—therefore you need not turn it into a problem. Through self-knowledge, by getting at the truth of the matter, you can think clearly and safely.

¹ Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1944).

NEVER MENTALLY RESIST A PROBLEM

Maybe you remember the story about the carpenter who joined his co-workers for lunch. He opened his lunch sack and scowled, "Peanut butter sandwich! Why does it always have to be a peanut butter sandwich?" The next day the same scene took place, with the carpenter complaining loudly, "Another peanut butter sandwich!" On the third day it was the same story, with the carpenter scowling, "Would you believe it—another peanut butter sandwich!" A friend asked, "If you don't like peanut butter sandwiches, why don't you ask your wife to fix something else?" The carpenter shrugged and said, "Who's married? I make my own sandwiches."

That's a good introduction to the point: *Never mentally resist a problem.* That carpenter was fighting the fact that he was causing his own difficulty. And that's why it persisted day after day. Had he calmly faced his own involvement he could have taken intelligent corrective action.

Non-resistance toward a difficulty is one of the greatest of all powers that you possess for dissolving that difficulty. It has been proclaimed to mankind throughout the ages by the wise teachers who understood the secrets of mental magic.

First, let's see what we mean by resistance. We oppose a difficulty when we get angry at it, when we are critical or upset or afraid. Self-blame or feelings of guilt are part of resistance. *All* negative feelings constitute opposition.

Now let's see why we shouldn't resist: When we emotionally oppose a problem we distort it, we cannot see it as it actually is. Opposition causes us to see the difficulty not as *it* is, but as *we* are. Resistance causes us to interpret things personally—and incorrectly. And it is incorrect interpretation that leads us to act in mistaken ways that only increase the burden.

THE PEARL

Imagine yourself standing before one of those self-distorting mirrors you find at amusement parks. If you believe in the distortion that you see, distress occurs. But what would happen if you calmly realized that the reflection is a distortion? Then you would go on your way at peace with yourself; you would have no problem.

And before we go on, let me say that all this is not something impractical or merely philosophical. It is wonderfully serviceable to your everyday living. Experiment with it and you will see what I mean.

The solution to a problem is never in escape from it. It is always within the difficulty itself, just as a pearl is hidden in the oyster. This is what we must see and act upon. "Truth is always present; it needs only to lift the iron lids of the mind's eye to read its oracles." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Carl H. was wise enough to stop fighting his problem and, instead, to understand it. His easy-going observation cleared it up like magic.

"It's my rough relations with other people. That's my problem. You see," he explained, "my business requires my dealing with all sorts of people—employees, salesmen, customers. Frankly, there's too much conflict. Sometimes a meeting ends in an exchange of open sarcasm. Other times we both go away secretly burning. Where's the answer?"

"Right there in the conflict itself. More specifically, it's in your attitudes."

"How is that?"

"Honestly, now, Carl, aren't you sometimes afraid that the other man is going to take advantage of you, or that he's trying to show you up, make you look foolish? And doesn't that make you hostile?"

BE A DETECTIVE!

Carl finally saw through his own touchiness. He understood that his conflicts were encouraged by his own negative viewpoints. Then he saw that he could adopt viewpoints that promoted peaceful atmos-

pheres. And that's what he did.

Later, I asked, "Carl, how come your relationships are no longer a problem to you?"

"Because," he smiled his reply, "I am no longer a problem to myself."

Benjamin Franklin became a skilled scientist and world-famous statesman because he had the habit of asking why things happened as they did. This happy habit enabled him to penetrate the secrets of success. The question "Why?" can work just as magically for you. It is a *creative* response. It never resists the lesson found in a problem. It helps you to determine the right causes that produce right effects. It certainly puts your power of curiosity to work for you.

So ask yourself why certain events happened as they did. Determine the part you played in their development. Be a detective. Such careful investigation will not fail to give you more self-insight and increased self-power.

"The best way to come to the truth being to examine things as really they are, and not to conclude they are, as we fancy of ourselves, or have been taught by others to imagine." (John Locke—English philosopher)

CHALLENGE YOUR POWERS

Before we get into the main idea of this section, please read what Dr. David Seabury has to say about the inner strength possessed by everyone:

No therapy is more important than to remind ourselves of this dynamic strength, and thus to learn to use it more constantly. A firm conviction that this reserve is there suffices to bring it into action in many lives.

After nearly half a century of clinical practice, during which time I have had to deal with every sort of human problem, I can say—and say it emphatically—that this center of courage and quiet strength is latent in everyone, and that a belief in this fact is an essential attribute of all helpful therapies.²

² David Seabury, *The Art of Living Without Tension* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1958).

People often tell me, "Mr. Howard, I know I'm supposed to have faith in my inner strengths, but *how*? In the name of logic, how can I believe in something that I don't believe in?"

You *can't* trust something that you don't trust. And it's folly to try.

But you can *discover* your greater self. And then you will have no problem whatsoever in believing in yourself.

What's a good place to start?

Self-challenge!

There is nothing like it for releasing before your eyes your vast inner resources. As a for-instance, take your money-making activities. Why not turn them into creative adventures, especially the *problems*. Yes, you can even have fun with difficulties if you make the wise move of identifying them as interesting challenges. A survey made by a Wall Street firm proved the value of fun-filled work. One conclusion showed that it makes financial prosperity 75 percent more certain. Sir Thomas Lipton, the famous tea merchant, had this motto on his desk: *Work is my fun*.

Self-challenge creates self-belief. Self-belief leads to self-success.

HAVE A SENSE OF ALTERNATIVES

What do we mean by a *sense of alternatives*?

We mean that you think and act as if there is an alternative to a problem-filled life. You are justified in thinking in that manner, because the alternative really exists. The alternative to a problem-filled life is a problem-free life.

A farmer isolated in the Idaho hills drove his truck to the city once a week. He traveled on a bumpy dirt road. For two years he did it the hard way on that road. One day he wondered whether there might be another road not so rough. There was. For those two years he could have gone to town on a new high-speed highway.

The farmer's sense of alternatives led him to freedom from bumpy trips. Likewise, can your sense of "something different" liberate you from bumpy journeys.

Whenever you are on your way toward anything at all, remem-

ber that there is a superior way to do it. This includes the way you live your daily life.

Develop your sense of alternatives by reminding yourself that there is:

A better way.

A simpler way.

A faster way.

A happier way.

A pleasanter way.

Uncomplicate your mind. Glance around for the much simpler alternative. Tell yourself, "I realize that anything that is complicated is wrong. I approach every situation with simplicity and directness."

KEEP IN PURSUIT OF SOLUTIONS

The mystery surrounding emotionally-induced illness was solved because Dr. Sigmund Freud was a solution-minded man. The American Red Cross was founded when Clara Barton broke through one obstacle after another. William S. Burroughs faced dozens of complex mechanical questions, but his answers to them added up to the invention of the first modern adding machine.

The point? Concentrate your attention on solutions. Write down a long list of possible answers to your perplexities. Include even those that seem unlikely to help. Next, plunge into action with as many as you can.

In other words, be *solution-minded*.

It's really surprising how many people are not. Instead, they are anxious-minded or timid-minded or hopeless-minded. There is no need for any of us to live in those distressing states of mind. No need whatsoever. They have power over us only as we mistakenly *attribute* power to them. When you stop attributing power to a negative thought, that is the moment its power vanishes.

You will remember the Law of Ready Supply that we covered in Chapter II. Well, it applies perfectly to our present discussion. In other words, solutions exist *before* you have need of them. You need

never create an answer to any perplexing question; *you need only be aware that the answer presently exists*. Think of something that once bothered you, but which you solved. Notice that the answer simply *appeared* to your mind, as if out of nowhere. You might have exclaimed, "Why, it's all so obvious! Why didn't I think of it before?"

Actually, the answer didn't appear from nowhere. It was there in the depths of your mind all along. You simply struck the right key that released it, just as a pianist strikes the key that sounds the musical note he wants to hear.

Keep in pursuit of solutions, and forget everything else. That is how they appear before you, often suddenly, but always delightfully.

SECRETS THAT SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS

1. Discover whether a present difficulty may reside in your mental viewpoint. Change the viewpoint and the problem vanishes immediately!
2. Become aware that our basic problem is faulty thinking. "Men are tormented by their own opinions of things, and not by the things themselves." (Michel Montaigne—French author)
3. Test your thinking habits. Ask whether they add to your daily peace of mind. If not, change them with the secrets of mental magic.
4. Identify every so-called problem merely as a condition. Then realize that your mind has power to turn that condition into an advantage.
5. Remember how Florence solved her problem. Duplicate her success in your own way.
6. Never, never, never mentally resist a problem. Rather, seek to understand it. Watch it disappear!
7. Look for the pearl in every problem. It is always there.
8. Ask yourself why difficulties arise in the first place. It gives you wise insight for preventing problems from arising.

9. Don't assume that the bumpy road is the only way to travel. Use the ideas of this chapter for discovering the open highway.
10. Be solution-minded.

XII

The Miracle Way to Release Tension

GEORGE L., A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN, came to sigh, "Nothing works. I mean, when it comes to frazzled nerves I can't find permanent relief. Sure, I can break the pace temporarily by taking a trip or watching a ball game, but it all seems so futile. Once my escape is used up I'm right back where I started. I'm like a prisoner of war who constantly escapes only to find the outside world just as frightening as prison. Isn't there something better than all this? Someone told me that you have a workable system. I'd like to talk it over. Do you really have something special?"

"It's special all right, but it belongs to whoever wants it."

"So what do I do?"

"You need do just one thing about your tension."

"And that is?"

"To really understand it."

"Oh?"

"Have you noticed, George, how much confusion is in-

volved in your tension? You don't really understand what it's all about. Oh, you may see a surface cause, such as office pressures, but have you ever looked deeper than that? Have you ever asked why you *react* so tensely to those office pressures?"

"No," he smiled. "I just blow up."

"If you could only see it, you could change your thinking to where blowing up is entirely foreign to you."

"You mean by doing what you said—by understanding myself? All right. I'll go along with that. Just give me a start in the right direction."

We had several sessions in which we went into George's need for self-insight. For one thing, he began to understand his actual motives for doing things, as opposed to those motives he assumed he had. Also, he saw how his inner insecurity led to angry outbursts. As his overall insight deepened, his tension nicely relaxed.

He told of one occasion when he became anxious over a telephone call promised him by a businessman, but which failed to come. He originally thought that it was the possible loss of financial profit that disturbed him. But he decided to look deeper into his reaction. To his surprise he found out that money had nothing at all to do with his disturbance. Rather, it was that he felt ignored and slighted by the other man. In other words, his self-esteem had been wounded.

George's understanding then took a gigantic leap. He asked himself, "Is my self-esteem *really* at the mercy of everyone who fails to keep his promise? Or is that a false assumption on my part?"

He found out. And that was *that*. George reached that higher level of thinking where *he* controlled his reactions. Office pressures no longer had any power over him. He was a free man.

USE YOUR SOMM

When it comes to any type of tension—anxiety, nervousness, worry—there is a simple fact of life you should remember: You need not experience them.

This is a fact. Even if a man disbelieves it, the wonderful fact remains. So never mind whether or not you fully grasp this truth; it will come in time to whoever persistently inquires.

Nervousness occurs, as George discovered, whenever we meet a realistic situation with unrealistic tools of thought. Our nerves achieve their normal state of relaxation as we learn to think clearly, in harmony with natural laws.

Stated differently, few things are more tiring than the thought that we are helpless puppets, helplessly jerked this way and that. It is an incorrect thought that we must leap aimlessly about at the command of a sudden desire or of an insistent emotion.

The reverse is also true. Nothing pleases us more than the realization that we are *not* at the mercy of life, but rather *under as much protection as we allow ourselves to be*. The important thing is not a tense situation that we may meet during our day, but the quality of the thought with which we meet it. Tension is not an object or a thing or a power—it is a reaction within an individual. And an individual is able to react peacefully. SOMM can guide him here.

YOUR GLIMPSE OF GOLD!

A mining company in the days of the early West faced a serious problem. It was losing too much of its gold to road agents who held up their stagecoaches. They finally hit upon a clever scheme. The gold was melted down into the shape of cannon balls. Each ball of gold-colored black—weighed 700 pounds. The trick fooled the bandits all right; the gold went through to its destination. But on one occasion it almost worked too well. When a shipment of the golden balls arrived at a railroad station, an army sergeant mistook them for military ammunition. They were saved just in time by a mining official. No doubt that official had nightmares of golden cannon balls zooming over the heads of warring Indians and back into the hills once more!

That story is a fine reminder. It can help us see that the only obstacle to be overcome is lack of knowledge about our rich inner natures. Once this is done—and it can be done—all forms of tension and anxiety fall away. When a man catches a glimpse of the gold within himself he no longer worries about his value. He *knows*. But it is an entirely different kind of knowing than he assumed it would be. It is something entirely *new*.

A man wouldn't paint the outside of his house in the hope that it would make the living room furniture more comfortable. Neither should we try to make exterior changes in our life in the belief that they actually change our natures. We find our richer selves by working with our inner selves.

Professor James C. Coleman points out:

Many of these attempts at self-enhancement result in real self-improvement, but because of the importance we attach to improving our worth in other people's eyes, the means we choose may improve our attractiveness to other people without actually changing us "inside" or improving our capabilities. Some psychologists find the source of much of modern man's anxiety in precisely this problem: in trying to develop the traits and behavior and appearance that will please other people, we are often untrue to ourselves . . . We are afraid to be ourselves and to grow in the directions our inner natures dictate.¹

THE ROAD TO THE TRUTH

Our progress is assured once we abandon what we *mistakenly think* is right and reach out for what is *actually* right.

Let's illustrate this with a motorist wanting to reach some pleasant destination, say Mexico City. As he drives along he comes to a fork in the road. Looking up he sees a sign with an arrow pointing out the correct road to Mexico City. But suppose he remarks, "No, I don't like that fork. I want the other one to take me to Mexico City." So he gets out of his car and twists the sign so that it points to the wrong fork. Returning to his car he rubs his palms in self-satisfaction and explains, "There! That's the way *I want* it to be. Now I can enjoy my trip."

But, of course, he doesn't. He soon gets lost down the wrong road. He also painfully feels all the frustrations and irritations that go with his lost condition.

But, happily, he need not be permanently lost. He can correct his own painful situation. How? Where can he start? *His very distress is his clue for coming back to the right road.* It can force him into facing his error. With a bit of self-honesty, plus the abandonment of pride, he

¹ Reprinted from *Personality Dynamics and Effective Behavior* by James A. Coleman, copyright © 1960 by Scott, Foresman and Company, Chicago.

can reason, "Well, now, it looks as if my ideas were self-defeating after all. They've led me into nothing but trouble. But there is something I can do about it. I'll just spin around and get back on the right road. I may have temporarily lost myself through wrong thinking, but I can also find myself by clearing my mind."

No sensible motorist would dream of twisting a sign to suit his own petty preference. Yet in their mental journeys many people unknowingly do just that—to their daily distress. Any person finding himself down the wrong road need only *become fully aware that something is wrong*, then determine to make the correction. Such a man will not fail to find his journeys increasingly peaceful.

The roads of life are clearly marked. We need only to find and follow. Some people think that by sacrificing their beliefs and opinions that they are sacrificing their individuality. The exact opposite is true. What we must sacrifice are our mental illusions. By doing so we find our genuine individuality. This is what the Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen meant when he said, "So to conduct one's life as to realize oneself—this seems to me the highest attainment possible to a human being."

We must want the truth more than we want anything else.

Is all this merely some sort of philosophy that you are reading in a book? Not at all. It is something you can personally turn into everyday ease.

TURN OFF THE SWITCH

I once entered a grammar school classroom just as a frantic scene was going on. In the absence of the teacher, a large fan was blowing dozens of papers off her desk. A hailstorm of papers fluttered all over. The children scrambled noisily about, trying to collect them. A few seconds later the teacher returned, glanced around in dismay, then flipped off the fan's switch. "Why," she sighed to the children, "didn't you turn it off?"

One of the girls giggled, "We didn't think of it."

I suspect they were having too much fun to think of it, but do you notice a resemblance between that scene and the way some people

live? It's one frantic chase after another in a vain attempt to collect their lives into some sort of order. But the scattering never seems to end. They have neglected, of course, to do the one essential thing: *Turn off the mental switch.*

One branch of medicine deals with the prevention of ill health, rather than its cure. So should one area of your life work at preventing tension from arising in the first place. We can do this by turning off the mental switch, by not permitting our lives to be scattered by people or events.

"I'll go along with that," someone may agree. "So how do I turn it off?"

To do this we will call into service a pair of major secrets of mental magic. We have already met them in previous chapters. The first is the law of Cause and Effect.

YOUR ENRICHMENTS

We could spend the rest of this book in discussing the peaceful benefits of this law. Among its enrichments you find . . .

- . . . it guides you toward a brighter future.
- . . . keeps you at ease in all situations.
- . . . gives you a steadfast self-confidence.
- . . . sharpens your money-making talents.
- . . . supplies a lasting inner cheerfulness.

Tension is caused largely by mental uncertainty. Living in harmony with the principle of Cause and Effect dismisses that uncertainty. You can rest assured that your correct causes will automatically supply correct results. You can afford, as one man phrased it, to "Think easy."

At the battle of Talavera the Duke of Wellington instructed his officers, "When the French forces reach that grove of trees, attack. As for me, I'm going to take a nap." He did just that. The British won the battle.

The Duke of Wellington performed his part by setting up the

requirements for victory. That's why he could calmly sit back and let victory roll his way.

You, by doing your part, can likewise sit back and relax. Your part is to understand and cooperate with this powerful principle. As part of your study program in SOMM, review the law of Cause and Effect as covered in Chapter VI.

HOW TO LIVE LIGHTLY

A second technique, covered in Chapter IV, will greatly reduce tension. Actually, it can be stated much stronger than that. We can accurately say that the abandonment of false responsibility creates a lightness in living you never dreamed possible.

To illustrate:

When Uncle Eddie came to live with the Miller family it was trouble without end. Uncle Eddie loafed around the house, complained about the food, and borrowed the family car whenever he chose. Finally, one evening, Mr. and Mrs. Miller had a minute to talk things over. Mr. Miller told his wife, "You know, dear, it's only because I love you so much that I put up with your Uncle Eddie."

Mrs. Miller's eyes widened with astonishment and dismay. "My Uncle Eddie," she gasped. "I thought he was *your* uncle!"

We put up with pressure situations because we don't understand them. And one of the first things to understand is that we need not let them disturb us.

Perhaps it is another person whom we believe to be the cause of our nervousness, maybe a member of the family or a friend. Now, just *where* does the tension exist? In that other person? No, of course not. The only place it *can* exist is *in our own mind*. By seeing this very clearly we can work in the correct area, that is, with our own thoughts. We need neither oppose that other person nor defend ourselves from him. No other person on earth has power to disturb you unless you unknowingly give him that power. Withdraw your permission! Do it quietly, peacefully, but do it definitely. And keep it to yourself. No longer surrender your integrity and individuality.

MENTAL DETACHMENT

I was discussing these ideas with a woman who made this comment, "Somehow I feel that what you say is true, yet it's so hard to grasp. There is someone in my life who is very unkind. I would like to apply your ideas, but don't know how. Can you make things clearer?"

"Let's see what we can do. Imagine, for the moment, that this unkind person is totally unknown to you, I mean, suppose you don't even know of his existence; he lives a thousand miles away. More than that, you have never met him. Now, he might still be an unkind person, but you would have no mental connection with him. Your mind would be free of his unkindness. Now, in that state of mind, would you still be distressed?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I see your point. It is my *thinking* that connects me with him. My distress is in my mind, not in the man."

"Did you ever stop to think that the basic connection you really have with another person is purely mental?"

"That's startling, when you come to think of it."

"And clarifying."

"What will be my condition once I grasp all this?"

"A state of peaceful freedom."

"You have experienced that state yourself, haven't you?"

"Yes, I know it can be done. There is no failure to the person who penetrates this secret of mental magic."

She found freedom from that unpleasant condition through the special secret of *mental detachment*.

YOUR WEALTHY INHERITANCE

Whether we are aware of it or not, we are in command of our own lives. But to experience it we must first mentally see it. A Seattle man went without his inheritance of \$20,000 because he didn't know

of it. Once he was aware of the wealth awaiting him, he lived out that wealth.

If only a man could see how rich he is! What a fantastic life he would lead!

And it is something that can be done. By you.

Take paper and pencil. Write down those situations and individuals that impose upon your time and energy. Realize that you owe nothing to any situation which burdens you. Note those names on your list and begin a program of mental detachment, and, where possible, physical detachment. Make it your business to stay clear of complicated and nerve-racking things that don't really belong in your life. You know what they are. Detach yourself, perhaps a bit at a time, but do it. This is not selfishness on your part; it's an awakening.

Everything starts and everything ends with self-understanding. Writes Dr. Meerloo:

The true purpose of psychology, and especially of its mental health branch, is to free man from his internal tensions by helping him to understand what causes them. Psychology seeks to liberate the human spirit from its dependency on immature thinking so that each man can realize his own potentialities . . . It is based on the premise that when man understands himself, he can begin to be the master of his own life . . .²

The truths about ourselves are often surprising, but always beneficial. As an example, a factory employee objected to his noisy working conditions. He felt that he couldn't do his best work with so much unnecessary racket. But because many of the other employees didn't seem to mind, he wondered what was wrong with *him*. In reading a book of psychology he made a comforting discovery: A well-adjusted personality objects strongly to pointless noise. The less mature person isn't bothered so much. That bit of self-knowledge made him feel much better about himself.

² Reprinted by permission of The World Publishing Company from *The Rape of the Mind* by Joost A. M. Meerloo.

UNDERSTANDING TENSION

It may seem a strange statement to you when I say that most people don't really understand the tensions in their lives. Yet this is unfortunately true. If a man *really* grasped them, he would be free! People assume that they *understand the tension* when in truth they only *experience the pain* of that tension. Understanding is quite another thing. It is the seeing of the causes of anxiety, the perceiving of mental states that keep it alive, and finally, the release of the anxiety itself. It is much like the relief you might have at seeing a complete painting on the wall, after having seen only a small part of it.

In other pages of this book we have seen that no man ever *consciously* harms himself. He gets hurt by his actions because he bases them on false ideas. This applies to tension. If a man were really to see what damage his anxiety is doing, he wouldn't stop until he freed himself. Self-damaging behavior ceases the moment a man really sees it as self-damaging.

Suppose that a toy manufacturer planned to produce a new toy to retail for one dollar. But upon investigation he discovered that it would cost two dollars to make. Seeing that it was unprofitable, he would abandon it at once.

We must be just as utterly practical with the attitudes we manufacture in our minds. If a man sees that his ideas and assumptions and beliefs are unprofitable, he can also see the folly of producing them any longer.

The problem is, such a man usually fears that there is nothing else beyond his wrong ideas. *He mistakenly thinks that what he has seen is all that there is.* So, to protect his mind from insecurity he desperately clings to the old, habitual and tense ways of thinking. Their familiarity gives him an *illusion* of comfort only; deep down he is still distressed.

HOW TO FLY AWAY!

A children's story tells about a swan who lived in a small pond. It was a confining pond with little pleasure and no variety in scenery. Every morning he paddled his rounds, wondering why he even

bothered. It was hardly, he thought, worth the struggle. He considered the idea of finding something better, but he had been told a few things by the other unhappy swans: "Be satisfied with what you have," advised one. "It isn't much, but it's all we've got," remarked another. "Whether we like it or not," added a third, "this is the world."

One morning the unhappy swan awoke with a startling thought. He was a swan. *And swans can fly!* So away he flew. He found a wide, beautiful lake. His friends followed.

In our own way, we can also fly away. We need only to catch a Magnificent Glimpse of our power to do so.

Here you must understand three vital truths about your mind: Although it cannot *see* anything above its present level . . . it can daringly *go* beyond its present level . . . and then it will *see* and *understand* that new level.

CHOOSE IN FAVOR OF YOURSELF

It is the genuinely courageous man who dares to turn his back on the old and strike out for new and unknown ideas. Somehow he senses that these new ideas—as temporarily strange as they may be—are the keys to the world he seeks.

What it all amounts to, really, is to choose in favor of the *self*, not in favor of continued distress. This is what the great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard had in mind with his famous phrase to "Choose oneself."

Back to our original point, we are on the right track when we see the self-harm caused by self-tension. So as a practical experiment in relaxation, clinch your fist tightly and hold it for a moment. Notice how it ties you up, physically, mentally, emotionally. Your energies are unable to do anything constructive. Now, relax your fingers completely. You are now free to direct your attention and strength to some beneficial task.

Let this serve as a reminder. Whenever you feel tense, remember that you are robbing yourself of valuable energy. Be fully conscious of it. That very consciousness will help work a miracle of understanding—and release.

THE WORLD MAKES SENSE

An unchanging law of the mind is its unceasing urge for freedom and individuality. Inner conflict arises whenever the mind's normal self-expression is thwarted by its own illusions, unrealities, negativities.

Tension is caused by unlived life.

Peace enters as we learn to really live.

Everything changes wonderfully for the man or woman who chooses himself. Here is a glowing description of such a person as given by Dr. Fritz Kunkel:

Much unconscious, unexpected material will come to light. . . . Destructive tendencies will give way to newly discovered creative capacities. Our unlived life, thus released from its prison, wants to be lived.³

The world makes sense at last to the person who finds himself. It's like a man driving through a tunnel with the radio on. While inside that tunnel he can't get music from any station. No matter how hard he tries, regardless of the direction he turns the dial, he can get nothing. Everything is jumbled, senseless, irritating. But as he clears the tunnel to emerge into the light, everything opens to him. He can tune in any station he likes and hear beautiful music.

HOW TO BE FREE

One wonderful thing that happens to such a man is his new set of values. By this I mean he clearly sees the difference between what is really necessary to his happiness and what is not. What he previously thought was absolutely essential to his welfare now becomes trivial. His insight into triviality enables him to cast off half his burdens. For example, he may have thought it needful to always be in the midst of some exciting event. This attitude kept him running wearily around looking for thrills. But his more mature mind now sees

³ Fritz Kunkel, *In Search of Maturity* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943).

that the most exciting adventure on earth is the development of his personal powers. His insight into triviality supplies enormous relief from running around.

The idea is illustrated by the young man assigned a lesson in astronomy. His task was to determine which planet was the larger, Earth or Mars. After struggling for an hour with pencil and paper he wrote on the lesson, "Earth is larger, but it really doesn't make that much difference."

For hundreds of years scientists had wondered what was the maximum depth at which life could dwell beneath the sea. At some deep areas the water pressure amounted to more than seven tons on each square inch of a sea-creature's body. In a deep-sea expedition off the Philippine Islands some scientists made a startling discovery. They found sea-creatures living there in perfect comfort. How were they able to stand that tremendous pressure? Because their inner systems matched the water pressure. Because they were in their natural state, it was the same as if the pressure was non-existent.

At this very moment you are fully equipped to be free of both internal and external pressures. Author Douglas Jerrold brightly announces, "Nature designed us to be of good cheer."

MIRACLE METHODS TO REMEMBER

1. Learn to understand your tensions. Insight is a great aid to relief.
2. Your mental reactions to daily events make the difference between peace and anxiety. Study your reactions.
3. You find your richer self by working with your inner self.
4. Remember the story of the motorist traveling to Mexico City. Let it guide your thinking.
5. Practice at turning off the mental switch.
6. Realize that tension is a state of mind. And you have power to change your mind.
7. Self-understanding gives you control over your life.

8. Every man has the ability to fly away to a higher and brighter level of living.
9. Choose in favor of yourself.
10. The world makes more and more sense to the person who uses SOMM. For one thing, tension vanishes.

XIII

How Your Mind Attracts Prosperity

ONE DAY A MINING PROSPECTOR named Edward Doheny was walking down a street in Los Angeles. Doheny had an inquiring mind and alert eyesight. That's why he gazed curiously at a passing wagon carrying a load of sticky tar. Doheny knew that tar was formed when underground oil seeped to the surface and thickened. His eyesight turned to insight: If there was tar, there was oil . . . if there was oil, there was wealth . . . if there was wealth, there was opportunity.

Doheny called out to the driver, asking where the tar had been found. He was told that it had been scooped up from the nearby *Brea* tar pits. Doheny investigated the sticky area, then called in a partner and went to work. It wasn't long before he had dug straight into a gigantic pool of oil. It eventually yielded more than 70 million barrels. That was just the start of a fabulous oil empire.

Edward Doheny's Magnificent Glimpse led him to a financial fortune. And so can anyone, by using SOMM, glimpse a far

superior financial future. The purpose of this chapter is to give you those secrets.

MONEY-MAKING PRINCIPLES

What do you suppose is the greatest single factor that determines a man's financial level?

By all tests it is his *mental personality*. This mental state is made up of judgment, alertness, decisiveness, a sense of daring, and other characteristics. Every money-making act springs from the total make-up of his mind. And each act will be as valuable as the creative thinking behind it. A man's money-making talents are not something apart from his general mental make-up. A lamp brightens everything in a room to the degree of its own brightness. So does a man's mental power illuminate every area of his life, including his finances.

To make more money, make more of your mind. Maybe that is such a simple rule that it is often overlooked. If you feel that you have been overlooking this natural principle, you need do but one thing: Take advantage of it from now on.

Take two men, both desiring to increase their incomes. The one who enthusiastically throws SOMM into action will not wait long for new prosperities. *Natural principles cannot fail*. In one way or another—often in a delightfully surprising way—something special arrives. But the man who neglects SOMM will do things the hard way, not realizing how much he is missing. A natural principle cannot serve a man who won't permit it to work for him, any more than we can satisfy hunger by refusing to eat.

A METHOD FOR EXPANSION

Let's examine, for example, the principle of Mutuality. It is the basis for every satisfactory financial transaction in the history of mankind. The more ways you can find to bring Mutuality into your business, the more business you will have.

What is it?

Mutuality is the blending of your commercial values with the values of other people. It is an exchange of goods of one sort or another.

It is an overlapping of interests for mutual enrichment. A merchant sells a product and earns a profit. An inventor creates a new machine and collects royalties. An actor supplies entertainment and receives his paycheck.

Simple? Of course. Practiced? Only to a limited degree by many people. Lack of clear thinking toward this principle often creates a barrier. (We will take up this problem in later pages.) If you feel that this might be a barrier to you, start breaking through right now by asking yourself the stimulating question, "How can I expand the principle of Mutuality?"

I am thinking of a boulevard merchant who uplifted his business 15 percent by using this idea. He gives his customers more than the usual pleasantness, extra attractive window displays, and so on. They, in return, make it mutual. They give him more business than they give to his competitors.

Actually, there are hundreds of ways to bring more Mutuality into your business. An alert mind can find and apply them.

When natural principles mix with personal power, things happen! So let's next examine this idea.

THE CURIOUS POWER

As a good example, take the mental force we call *curiosity*. A man could select this power alone and let it guide him to greater achievements. I personally believe it to be one of the most neglected of our mental powers. There is a constant urge in the human mind to know more, to explore beyond its present borders, to seek answers. When curiosity is used constructively it leads to right answers. When joined with sincere intentions it becomes an overwhelming force in your favor.

An Arizona clergyman once printed a list of 300 "sins." He was swamped with requests for it, no doubt from people who wanted to make sure they hadn't missed anything! But curiosity can be channeled a bit more constructively. What you should do is to connect it with your financial goals. See how many ways you can find to win them, how efficiently you can operate, how many new techniques you can use, and so on.

A manufacturer in Kansas City makes profitable progress by continually searching out the weakest link in his chain of operations. Simply by isolating this area he sees clearly what must be done to strengthen it. You can do likewise, whatever your business may be. Get curious over the single weakest point in your financial affairs. Isolate it. Concentrate your entire attention and effort into making it a strong point. Then, take the new weakest point and do likewise. Your entire level of efficiency will rise rapidly.

Curiosity is just one of the dozens of mental forces that produce \$\$\$\$\$. You can select and employ many others with equally profitable results, for example:

Knowledge

Flexibility

Self-confidence

Persistence

Experimentation

How amazing is the human mind! It can be wonderfully receptive to everything that is good for us. Just as each drop of rain raises the level of the entire lake, so does a single truth uplift the level of your inner self. That is why everything you have read so far in this book helps you in your financial affairs. A *clear* mind and a *cheery* mind and a *calm* mind all play their enriching role in your daily business.

FIND THE SECRET CODE

During World War I the German government had a spy ring at work in Mexico. The secret agents were sending their messages back to Berlin in a new and baffling code. It was the task of the American experts to break the code and read the messages. After some skillful deductions, the U.S. agents concluded that the Germans were basing their code on the words in a certain dictionary. They made an intense search for that particular book. It was finally located in front of their eyes—on a shelf in the Library of Congress! That dictionary provided the United States with valuable military information.

Let that story remind you that financial secrets are not really secrets at all—not to the man who finds the right code-book. We have seen in other chapters that all truths about the mind are really very simple. It is our wrong use of the mind that complicates things.

Perhaps you ask, as did one man, “Can you suggest a simple and practical codebreaker that I can use in my business tomorrow morning?”

Answer: Discover ways to dig more gold from a certain phase of your business. In other words, *make more of it*. Even if you think you have already exhausted its value, give it a fresh, close look. Start by selecting any department of your business that you like, such as your advertising, purchasing, your personality, anything at all. Now, think alertly toward it. Just as you might wander around a meadow with a relaxed alertness, wander around that area. Examine it carefully. Look for hidden elements. Finally, let your receptive mind come up with ways, even little ways, to make it even richer. *Make more of it*.

I have suggested this simple business truth to thousands of businessmen. I cannot think of a single one who didn't report benefits of some kind or other. It sometimes came in a saving of time and energy, maybe in a method for keeping customers satisfied, perhaps in reduction of costs.

A candy salesman told me of his rich find like this:

“I remember at your lecture how you emphasized those four words *make more of it*. My first thought was that I already was doing everything I could, but I started thinking it over. Then, an old and established account was turned over to me for service. For a few weeks I took care of it in the usual way, with the usual fair results. Then, one afternoon, after getting the usual order, something flashed through my mind. It was those four words, *make more of it*.

“Well, I did just that. I turned around and asked the manager to increase his usual order by \$50. He shrugged and nodded. That was all there was to it. From that day on I've inspired myself with those four magic words.”

What can you do in your own business? The same. *Make more of it!*

TWO VALUABLE ACTIONS

A businessman goes through his day with two different kinds of action: 1) Mechanical action, and 2) Personality action.

Let's define these terms, starting with *mechanical action*. Suppose you are in saleswork of some kind. A mechanical technique would be to let the prospective customer handle the product with his own hands. This is a mechanical or physical technique which plays its part in the sale. The customer's physical contact with the product establishes a personal relationship with it. He now feels, in a way, that the product is *his*. He wants to keep it; he doesn't want to give it back. One automobile salesman specializes in the "feeling" technique. He asks the women to run a palm along the smooth upholstery; he invites the men to feel the tough rubber tires.

That is an example of a mechanical action in business. It is easy to remember and apply. It has a certain value in saleswork.

But if mechanical action is worth \$, personality action is worth \$\$\$\$\$!

YOUR BUSINESS PERSONALITY

A personality action is one that springs from inner character, from the mental self. It is concerned with what a man *is*, not with what he *does*. Take our automobile salesman again. His pleasant and helpful manners are far richer qualities than his mechanical techniques. When customers come into an automobile showroom they may have little knowledge about the car they want to buy. They may feel helpless, worried that they won't get their money's worth. So they want to be assured that they are in good hands. If the salesman's personality supplies that assurance, they will want to do business with him.

In the business world as in anywhere else, the greatest success-factor is the mental personality of the man. It is the greatest attraction on earth.

Observes the author of *Every Man a King*:

Success is not dependent solely on our earnest affirmation, on our self-confidence, but also on the confidence of others in us; but this confidence is very largely a reflection of our own, the effect of our own personality on them. Our own attitude of mind is therefore the means to produce this confidence in others. Your earnest affirmation is contagious. It affects every one with whom you come in contact, especially those whom you must master, whether as a teacher, as an orator, as an attorney, as salesman, as merchant, as possible employee, or in some other way. There is something that seems almost magical in the way a confident air influences other people. If you adopt or acquire it, you will be surprised to see how soon it will radiate to others, increasing their confidence in your ability . . .¹

THE STORY OF BROWN BEAR

A practical-minded business executive and a nursery tale about a Brown Bear. You might think that that is a strange combination, but it's even stranger than that. The executive told that nursery tale before an audience of several hundred businessmen. It went like this:

"Once upon a time Brown Bear was ambling through the woods, when he suddenly felt hungry. He looked around for some lunch. He searched down this way and up that way, but saw nothing good to eat. Then, Brown Bear smiled. He saw *two* lunches. One of them was a cluster of luscious-looking berries at the top of a low bush. The other was a cluster of luscious-looking berries at the top of a tall bush. Brown Bear cheerfully went after the berries on the low bush. He strained and struggled and moaned and groaned, but the berries on the low bush were inches too high above his head. So, because he was hungry, he did something else. He stretched up on his big brown legs and ate the berries on top of the *tall* bush."

That story was, of course, an unusual way of presenting several valuable ideas to the audience. Foremost among them was this powerful point:

Whenever you are blocked at a certain level, free yourself by reaching for a higher one.

¹ Orison Swett Marden, *Every Man a King* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company).

This is so exciting a plan that many men don't stop to think of it. But why not? In other words, whenever you run into a business blockage of any kind, free your mind to think of something *above* that blocking level. By-pass it in favor of a superior plan of action. Don't battle with a lower level, but, like Brown Bear, stretch above it.

ACT UP!

Let's see how a man named Lawrence Frank freed himself upward.

Frank and his partner, Walter Van de Kamp (of Van de Kamp's Holland Dutch Bakeries) had a restaurant. Called Lawry's, *The Prime Rib*, this Beverly Hills Restaurant had a unique feature: the simplest menu in town. When the waitress passed the menu to a diner, it could be read in seconds. It offered just four items—prime rib, salad, a vegetable, and potatoes, baked or mashed.

But Mr. Frank and Mr. Van de Kamp ran into a puzzle. By mutual agreement it was their most pressing problem. They needed a seasoning, one capable of bringing out the best in their entree and salad. They looked around, gathered available samples, tasted and tested. None were quite right. All lacked the exact flavor and zest. "We need a special seasoning," they concluded, "but can't find one. So what do we do?"

At this point Lawrence Frank did something. He freed himself *upward*. Experiments in the kitchen of his own home resulted in a flavorful combination of salt, spices, herbs. Called *Lawry's Seasoned Salt*, it was the first in a new line of exciting consumer products.

Lawrence Frank used that blockage at a lower level to create a whole new business. It's known today as Lawry's Foods, Inc., of Los Angeles.

Any time you feel blocked at a certain level, ask yourself the creative question, "Why not free myself *upward*?" This secret of mental magic supplies surprisingly rich results. It releases the mind from the present level and replaces it with a vision of a much higher state. Experiment with it for yourself. In other words, *act up*!

YOUR GREAT ADVENTURE

Recently, at an art exhibition, I saw a remarkable table made in mosaic design. It was built of thousands of pieces of wood of various colors and shapes. The wood had been collected from dozens of far-away places, including the jungles of Honduras and the mountains of New Zealand. The builder of that table remarked, "The great adventure was to find the dozens of people who would send me a bit of wood from their country."

I have found that the men who make the most money are those who have a similar sense of adventure toward their business. They enjoy the challenge. They have a zest for collecting new customers. They have fun seeing how efficiently they can manufacture and distribute their products. They don't see their business affairs as a monotonous duty, but rather as an opportunity for healthy self-expression.

As an executive of an insurance firm told me, "There is far too much seriousness in the business world of today. You see worried and grim faces when you should see sunny smiles. I don't mean that you should go to the opposite extreme and become frivolous or careless. There is a third state that springs spontaneously from the man who has found himself. Such a man is light-hearted but not shallow, relaxed but not negligent. That is the kind of man I like to work with—one who enjoys his work because he enjoys *himself* at work!"

Anyone can use the secrets of mental magic for finding this kind of state for himself. It is man's natural condition, and where business is a pleasure. And that, interestingly enough, is where you win a greater abundance of the world's material goods. How come? Because a free mind is a creative mind.

HOW TO HAVE FUN

Dr. Albert Ellis and Dr. Robert A. Harper make this pointed observation: "*. . . man can live the most self-fulfilling, creative, and emotionally satisfying life by intelligently organizing and disciplining his thinking.*"²

² Albert Ellis, Ph.D. and Robert A. Harper, Ph.D., *A Guide to Rational Living* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961).

And one way of owning this self-satisfying life is to make your material business your mental pleasure. Rosa Bonheur, the famous French artist, used this principle to win world-wide fame. She decided to specialize in animal paintings. In order to study her subjects she took enjoyable trips to zoos and farms. She even kept her private zoo which included lions and deer. All that enthusiasm couldn't fail to create some magnificent paintings. One of them, the gigantic *Horses Threshing Corn*, shows ten life-size horses! Her eagerness for her work finally brought her the French Legion of Honor.

You can call it enthusiasm or fun or self-satisfaction, but whatever you call it, include it!

As children we used to play an outdoor game that had two groups of players standing on opposite sides of a high wall. A ball was tossed back and forth over the top of the wall. Players on the receiving end never knew just where and when the ball would shoot over—and that is just what made it so much fun. We had a good time just being out there, alertly interested in the challenge, and using our natural abilities for making the catch.

Business success should be like that. If we are out there playing the game, enjoying ourselves, the ball will always come our way. And, by being alert, we can make some interesting catches.

But best of all, we will have fun.

HOW THE MIND CREATES SUCCESS

I once had a business conference with several officers of a large corporation in Los Angeles. While talking things over, one of the men told us his own success story. It is one of the most fascinating stories I have ever heard. It perfectly illustrates the power of a mind rightly used.

"Several years ago," he began, "I was out of work. Prospects for finding the position I wanted were dim. The worst part of the situation was my own mental attitude. I was worried, discouraged, loaded with self-doubt. Oh, I made the rounds every day, filling out applications and going for interviews, but without enthusiasm. I realized that my negativity showed; that it hurt my chances. But I didn't know what to do about it. I was mentally in the cellar, and that was that.

"One evening, after another dejecting round of the town, I felt like getting out of the house. Normally, I would have found some sort of entertainment, but a notice in the paper caught my attention. It told of a lecture on the subject of mind-power. I'd read a book or two on the subject, but hadn't gone into it very deeply. Anyway, I went to the lecture.

"That speaker said something that changed the entire course of my life. He advised that we should act as if we already had what we wanted. On the way home I started thinking about it. I asked myself, 'How would I act and feel if I already had a well-paying position?' Well, for one thing, I would march up to every interview with full confidence in my abilities. I would act cheery, relaxed, happy. My personality would tell the prospective employer that I was a capable and reliable person. How come I could feel so confident? Well, because I *already had* a good position; I was merely seeking a change. In other words, *I wouldn't really care whether he hired me or not!*

MENTAL MAGIC

"I tried it. For the next three days I assumed the mental state of already having the position I was seeking. I tell you, it produced an amazing change in the way I went after things. I was unafraid, completely relaxed. I actually *enjoyed* tracking down that work. What a feeling! It wasn't long before I had three job offers, every one of them just right for me. You can call it a mental trick if you want, but *it worked*. I like to think of it as mental magic."

Mental magic? Of course. And based on established principles of thought which he may not have realized. Both Eastern and Western religions have long taught this ability of the mind to go beyond itself, only they might have called it *faith*. Modern psychology would analyze the principle to come up with this conclusion: "He set aside his negative conditioning long enough to let his natural self-confidence break through."

But whatever you call it, it works. You can apply it to your various situations. When you assume the state of mind of already having

that which you seek, here is what happens: *It changes your attitudes, which cause you to act in a way that delivers desired results.*

A man always does the best he *assumes* he can do. But what he assumes he can do is always less than what he *can* do. By removing those self-limiting assumptions—by the above system—he finds himself both thinking and doing what he previously considered to be beyond him.

YOUR PURPOSE IS \$\$\$\$\$

The story goes about the Frenchman who taught a collie to talk. Realizing the immense value of a talking dog he brought it to the office of a television producer.

"Here is the most amazing animal the world has ever known," the Frenchman enthused. "I have taught him to recite some French love poems. Listen! You will hear the marvel of the ages!"

The producer listened with astonishment as the remarkable collie recited one poem after another. As he finished, the Frenchman smiled. "There! You have heard this amazing creature. Now, let's talk business."

The producer shook his head, "Sorry, but I can't use him. After all, how many people understand French?"

That producer was missing the entire point, wasn't he? Because his mind had wobbled off into triviality he couldn't see the value of that marvelous collie!

I bring this up because it will help plug a leak in escaping dollars. It is surprising how many people waste their talents by attending to trivialities instead of the business at hand. The real villain behind these distractions is the inner and personal problems of a man. Like bubbles in a glass, his inner pressures keep popping to the surface to confuse his purpose. I once attended a sales conference of bakery executives. The discussion kept wandering away from the point, but the man in charge must have had lots of experience with that problem. Every so often, whenever necessary, he would speak out, "Remember, gentlemen, we are here for one purpose only—to sell more cake." That

simple reminder was enough to bring the meeting back to efficiency.

Watch for this mind-wandering whenever you conduct business with other people. Notice how often and how easily the original purpose slips aside. Your watchfulness can help steer it back to the right track.

USE YOUR ACTION POWER

Keeping other people purposeful is only one small part of this valuable idea. What about our own mental meanderings? Here is where we can score some new financial hits. Let me give you three solid steps for sticking to your financial goals.

1. *Know exactly what you want.*
2. *List all possible ways to get it.*
3. *Plunge into right action with these ways.*

Success becomes a certainty to the man who persists with these three steps. Little by little he will see changes, improvements, a gain here and a bright idea there. He may have to revise his thinking or alter his plans, but that is really the whole idea. The abandonment of unworkable actions makes way for right ones.

What, by the way, is right action? Many people have benefited from the definition given in *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life*. In this book I define right action as anything that contributes practical value to you. In business, the gathering of fresh information is right action. So is the display of a pleasant personality. Working with a definite plan is right action.

The last point deserves a few details. One businessman, a general contractor, has a unique idea for self-advancement. It might be called the *Ten Percent Plan*. He explains it like this: "Suppose I'm working out some newspaper advertising. I concentrate my mind on making it ten percent more effective. For instance, I'll make it ten percent larger, or maybe I'll make it ten percent easier to understand. It's surprising how quickly the mind comes up with these ten percent improvements. And they pay off."

You need not expect perfect action of yourself. All you need is

to do the best you can for now. Adventurous action—which we discussed previously—is an enjoyable aid. You should be like the man who couldn't find the perfect girl but thought it was lots of fun trying.

SPECIAL POINTS FOR YOUR PROSPERITY

1. To make more money, make more of your mind. Its creative forces are the foundation for all financial fortunes.
2. Expand your use of the principle of Mutuality.
3. Your personal power of curiosity can be channeled into money-making activities. Let it work for you.
4. Select a definite phase of your business. Make more of it.
5. Remember the value of a rich personality.
6. Whenever you feel blocked at any level, free yourself upward. Remember the success of Brown Bear.
7. Turn all your money-making activities into interesting adventures. Have fun!
8. Stick to your financial purposes. Let nothing distract you.
9. Know that you can always achieve far more in the financial world. There are no limits to the man who employs the secrets of mental magic.
10. Use your action power. Go into right action and more \$\$\$\$ is certain.

XIV

Inspiring Answers on Mental Magic

THE OTHER DAY I stepped into a travel bureau to inquire about a proposed trip. My only problem was the abundance of colorful booklets on the wall racks.

I asked the manager, "Do you have something about Ojai?"

He immediately selected and handed me the exact booklet I needed. It answered all my questions.

Likewise, all the guides we need for our various journeys toward a better life are freely available. But we may need to know which one best serves a present adventure.

That is why you will find the questions of this chapter of special value. During the question-and-answer periods of my lectures they appear among the most-often-asked. Let the answers serve as guides to your destinations.

"You say that we should work at changing ourselves, rather than try to alter our exterior world. But will this make our daily life in the practical exterior world any different or any better?"

Not only will self-change dramatically transform your daily

world of practical living but it is the only thing capable of creating such newness. If you wanted new furniture in your home you wouldn't merely rearrange the old furniture; you'd toss it out and go get an entirely new set. Unfortunately, many people are merely rearranging their mental furniture while under the illusion that they are getting something new.

It is the new life we are after, not a wearisome rearrangement of the old.

Here is the objective: We are not seeking to change the exterior world in which we live; we are seeking a new mental world for ourselves. A different mental world is the only goal; when this happens, all else follows wonderfully.

Have you ever read a book, set it aside, and several years later read it again? You probably exclaimed to yourself, "Why, that's strange. This book is entirely different from what it used to be. I can hardly believe that it's the same book." What has happened? Obviously, it is the very same book. Every word is exactly what it was before. But *you* have changed. Your attitudes and viewpoints are new; therefore *you react differently* to those very same words!

The same thing happens when you see the world with your new mind. You still go about your daily affairs, but because you see them differently, you react to them in a fresh way. *This new mental reaction is your very new world!*

Please don't think that all this is something mystical or impossible. There is nothing more practical. There is nothing you could add to your life that would do more for you. It will transform and renew everything in your exterior world, including your business transactions, your relations with the opposite sex, your social life—*everything* will be new.

If you don't believe it, you try it. Then you will believe, or rather, then you will *know*. The proof is yours for the experimenting.

THE CONQUEST OF LONELINESS

"In spite of everything I do to escape the nagging pain of loneliness, it is still there. How can the secrets of mental magic solve this difficulty?"

Your study of mental magic will show you what loneliness really is. It is your understanding of the condition that dissolves it once and for all.

Loneliness is caused by your separation from your Real Self. The Real Self knows nothing of loneliness, any more than the sun knows anything about darkness. You get lonely because you are a stranger to your own thoughts and feelings. Loneliness is a coming face to face with the one thing that frightens you most—your own self.

Self-understanding dissolves loneliness.

Have you ever noticed how loneliness is always there beneath the surface of your mind, even when surrounded by lots of people and by gay activities? No matter how loud the noise, you can always hear it. The reason you cannot escape from loneliness is because—in your present state of separation from your Real Self—loneliness is part of *you*—and you can't escape yourself.

One woman expressed it like this: "No matter how much fun I'm having at a party, I always have that vague lurking of despair. Then, when the orchestra plays the final dance of the evening, the anxiety bubbles up to where I want to weep. I know that in just a few minutes I'll lose all these distractions and be face to face with my emptiness."

Exterior distractions are always ending or changing. That's why we can't depend upon them for inner security, for lasting comfort. Those happy states come only from daring to depend upon the totally dependable powers of the Real Self. When that happens, we think in a new way toward ourselves, and there is never any more loneliness.

This is clearly explained by Dr. Maurice Nicoll:

Because the Kingdom of Heaven is within a man, he can only get contact with it internally. The way is in himself, not outside. He can experience flashes of another consciousness, moments of entirely new meaning, which show that a higher level exists in him. They are moments of this light . . . For his mind must slowly be prepared in order to change because this higher level is different from a lower level and so the thoughts belonging to a lower level are not of the same order as those of a higher level. Something new must be formed in his mind to receive "light"—so he must gradually come to "think in a new way" . . .¹

¹ Maurice Nicoll, *The New Man* (London: Vincent Stuart, Ltd.; New York: Hermitage House, Inc., 1951).

FREEDOM FROM THE PAST

"I have feelings of guilt and regret toward my past mistakes. How can I be free of this mental self-punishment?"

By concentrating your attention and energy on today's self-development.

The ancient city of Babylon required that travelers supply the correct daily password in order to enter. One morning it might be "Chariot" and the next day "Harvest." Those using the day's password gained immediate entrance; those using the old one were stuck outside the gate.

Likewise do we need to approach each new day with today's needed actions—those that are realistic, energetic, hopeful. Yesterday's experiences should be dismissed as having no significance today—for they haven't. The only connection we have with the past is a mental one.

Many people find it difficult to break this mental connection. Their problem is that they are still needlessly identifying themselves as being "bad" or "shameful" because of past experiences. Quite often they are unaware that they are doing this. In one case like this I asked the inquirer:

"Think back for a moment to when you were a child."

"All right. I'm thinking."

"Did you then do things that were impractical and self-defeating?"

"Yes, of course. All children are bound to act like children."

"Do you now believe that it was bad or shameful for you to act like that?"

"No, not bad or shameful at all."

"Why not?"

"Because a child is merely acting out his immature nature. He has no ability to act above his present level of understanding."

"All right. Why not give yourself the same tolerance? Why not see your own mistakes of a few years ago in the same light? Stop identifying yourself as being a bad or shameful person and merely see yourself as someone who acted without much mature insight. There's nothing bad about that. In other words, never see yourself a guilty

person, but only as someone who lacked practical understanding. That simple switch will free you. It will also enable you to grow rapidly in self-insight."

"That's exciting."

"Every truth about life is exciting."

THE QUESTION OF COMMAND

"My main discomfort is the feeling that I am at the mercy of people and conditions. Will SOMM dissolve this distress?"

Of course. Inasmuch as these secrets are based on the realities of life, they will dissolve *every* negative emotion.

Remember:

Nature has made no provision whatsoever for the permanent housing of negative emotions within you. Our misconceptions give them an *appearance* of attachment, but no such connection exists in reality. Correction comes through right thinking. We must learn to see things as they *actually are*, not as we *falsely think* they are. As you come to see this, bit by bit, negative emotions fall away bit by bit. You then feel toward people and conditions in an entirely different way. This happens because *you* are entirely different. You are actually a new person.

This new self is in complete command of people and conditions. But—and this is important to remember—it is a different kind of command than you supposed it would be. It is neither aggressive nor dominating. It is quiet. *You command the condition by clearly understanding it.* This clear understanding is the only genuine control, and the only one you need. It consists of a detached observation of the condition, entirely apart from fear or anxiety. You see that there is really nothing to fear, therefore, nothing that needs an aggressive command on your part. In other words, you command without commanding at all!

We try to control something aggressively only when we fear it. But when we reach a higher level of consciousness we are no longer afraid, so we don't seek command. And that is when we command completely.

Many people feel themselves at the mercy of life. Much of the material in this book offers corrective steps. One of them occurs in the next chapter in the section entitled *The Conquest of Depression*.

UNDERSTANDING THE HOSTILE MIND

"We see so much anger and resentment and hostility in everyday contacts with people. What is the cause and cure of human hostility?"

Hostility is the reaction of a frightened person. His angry aggressiveness is the only response he knows to something he believes to be a threat to his self-esteem. His hostility is an attempt to preserve a self-image he has of being a certain kind of person. Take a man who has a self-picture of himself as being socially popular. Such a man will feel a degree of hostility when he is rejected or ignored—for instance, when he doesn't receive an invitation to a party. This lack of an invitation disturbs his self-image of being wanted and liked by others. His mind will then seek to lower the painful pressure by attacking those whom he believes are unappreciative of him.

The human mind can be compared to the sea. When the sea is stormy it batters not only the ships upon the sea itself but lashes out with its waves at piers and homes on the land. The hostile mind, likewise, not only harms itself but, because of its pressures, strikes out beyond itself to hurt other people. The calm sea, having no turmoil, harms neither itself nor the land. The peaceful mind, having no turmoil, lives in tranquillity with both itself and other people.

The hostile mind is simply one that is not free of its false assumptions about life. We will get along best with angry people when we understand this. A cruelly aggressive person has no idea of the unconscious forces that compel him to hurt others. Somewhere along the way he has absorbed the false notion that anger and resentment are necessary to his psychological survival. He need *not* employ them as defenses, but he simply doesn't know it. He lacks awareness of the truth. As long as he clings to this unreality, he will continue to act hostile, harming both himself and others.

But freedom is certain to the earnest seeker! A man can liberate

himself not only from hostility but from every other harmful emotion. Such liberation is one of the aims of SOMM.

Read this encouraging summary of Dr. Erich Fromm: "But being driven by forces unknown to him, man is not free. He can attain freedom (and health) only by becoming aware of these motivating forces, that is, of reality, and thus he can become the master of his life . . ." ²

YOU HAVE TWENTY-FOUR SERVANTS!

"I regularly set time aside for my home study of SOMM, and also attend classes. But how can a busy person find extra time so as to advance with maximum speed?"

You have twenty-four servants who quietly aid you every single day. Each hour, regardless of how busy you may be, is a faithful servant to speed your progress.

This is one of the most exciting of all the secrets of mental magic. *It works for you*, even though you are unaware of it. It's like the airplane that speeds you forward through the skies, whether you are thinking about it or not. Once you get started, there is *no* time when it doesn't serve you with more power, deeper insight, increased ability. You see, the truth cannot possibly stop working for the person who has wholeheartedly invited it; it never takes a vacation from you. It really can't leave you; *it is part of you*.

The point is this: Your hourly experiences are the very best teachers you have. The great market place for gathering your greater good is in your daily events and experiences. We learn about life from life itself. Everything is valuable; every contact with life gives you more of life.

The daring exploit of an American naval hero pictures the point:

Officer A. Whipple once disguised his ship as a British gunboat and sailed into the middle of a British Fleet of warships. Each night he captured an enemy ship and sent it to an American port. That heroic

² Copyright © 1962 by Pocket Books, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Pocket Books, Inc., from *Beyond the Chains of Illusion* by Erich Fromm; The Credo Series, Trident Press.

officer didn't see each enemy as a threat, but rather as an opportunity! Likewise, our elevated attitudes can see nothing as a danger, but everything as a chance for greater achievement.

Every hour is your best hour. How come? Because you make it so!

WHAT ABOUT RESULTS?

"I have just started studying SOMM with you. When can I expect to see practical results in my daily life?"

The best thing about results is that you need not have the slightest anxiety over them. Not the slightest. They are not your responsibility at all. They are up to the truths within you that you are beginning to release.

Remember, practical results *come to you*. Once your false mental concepts go, your practical good arrives all by itself. I often wish in talking things over with people that we could spend our entire time with this one idea. It is that important. It is so necessary that we catch a Magnificent Glimpse that betterment comes—it just comes—to the receptive mind. And once having arrived in the mind, it expresses its richness over every area of practical living.

Give your attention to the various secrets of mental magic: Like persisting in your search for your richer self. Like making an enjoyable adventure out of your studies of SOMM. Like understanding the ways of your mind.

Let's take an example of that last point.

Every once in awhile a troubled person will challenge me, "It's all well and good to talk about peace of mind, but please give me one good reason why I should be happy?"

I reply, "Please give me one good reason why you *shouldn't* be happy."

At this point a strange thing happens. A baffled look appears in their eyes. For just a split second they are caught off guard. *They are without a true answer*. A moment later, when they have had time to search their memory for habitual responses, they give me many reasons for their unhappiness. All of them relate to a distressing exterior condition.

I try to show them that there is no *genuine* reason for their grief. If they didn't *think* they were unhappy, they wouldn't be.

An oversimplification? Not at all. As we have already seen, an unclear mind is always involved with unhappiness. By understanding the mind—by seeing through it—we detach ourselves from its negativities.

When will your practical results arrive? You will have them within a few days or weeks, depending upon your own state of receptivity. If you let them come rapidly, they will do just that.

HOW TO CLEAR AWAY CONFUSION

"You have gone into the problem of mental confusion, but I'd appreciate more detail. Will you please discuss it?"

You have just taken the first step toward mental clarity by recognizing your confusion. Many people are not consciously aware of their mental fogginess. They feel the painful *results* of their condition but fail to trace it back to its source in their own mind. They wrongly assume that it's the world that's all mixed up.

Become increasingly aware of how easily the mind distorts things. Awareness of confusion is half the battle. Notice how the human mind evades what it doesn't want to face, how it hastily explains and excuses and rationalizes. Especially notice its odd logic:

Al: What is the shape of the earth?

Ed: I don't know.

Al: Well, what is the shape of your girl's earrings?

Ed: Square.

Al: No, I mean the *ones* she wears on Sunday.

Ed: Round.

Al: So what is the shape of the earth?

Ed: Square on week-days and round on Sundays.

"How," you may ask, "does insight into my own confusion help me to think clearly and realistically?"

Remember the adventure of Edward Thompson in Chapter X?

When he saw that the Sacred Well was filled with accumulated debris he worked at clearing it away. When that was done, he found pure treasure. Likewise, when we are consciously aware that we have accumulated mental debris, only then will we realize that it must be removed. Once removed, clarity is ours.

Do not be afraid to be confused. It is an indication that you are heroically challenging false concepts. And do not be afraid to be without an answer to something that puzzles you. Worry over an unanswered question often leads to a desperate settling for any answer that gives temporary comfort. But if that answer is not based in truth, you only intensify your worry. If you will bravely remain without an answer long enough, the truthful one will come to you spontaneously, just as the right wind comes to the waiting ship.

A CHALLENGE!

"You have urged us to challenge our false assumptions. Why isn't it better to forget false ideas and go in search of the truth?"

When we say we are searching for the truth we are implying that we already know what it is, that we know what we are searching for. But if we already know the object of our search, why are we still searching?

We can find what is true only by abandoning the false. If I insist upon driving down a highway that *doesn't* take me to my destination, I will never find the right one. I must leave the wrong to find the right. We *know* what the false is; we know it because we suffer from it. Anger is a painful emotion. Envy is a tormenting thought. Revenge is a guilt-producing act. These are false ways of living that can be dissolved by challenging their hold on us. By honestly facing the realities of life today, we can avoid being shocked by them tomorrow. The dissolving of negative emotions—false emotions—is something that can actually be done. You don't have to believe that this is so. You need only start challenging.

The human problem is that man thinks that his assumptions are facts. He doesn't know the difference. So, then, taking these false assumptions as facts, he proceeds to live by them. But because they are

false, he lives miserably and anxiously. An earnest effort to separate the true from the false is the beginning of the new life.

Man must challenge his assumptions, no matter how long held or deeply entrenched. *He must force them to prove their practical worth.* If he persists, if he refuses to let them bluff him into staying, he will gradually find himself free.

An acquaintance of mine has a rock on his living room table. If you try to pick it up, you are surprised. It lifts as lightly as paper. That's exactly what it is: a cleverly constructed paper rock that looks like the real thing.

Anyone who assumes that that rock is the real thing will waste a certain amount of energy in picking it up. But once it has been challenged, once you see it as false, you no longer bother with it: you save your strength.

Likewise, we save our natural life-energies when we see the difference between the true and the false.

YOUR POWER OF ATTENTION

"I realize the value of daily persistence in applying the secrets of mental magic. How can I keep myself fully motivated?"

The story goes about the man who spent one hundred dollars to have his family tree looked up, then spent twice that much to have it hushed up.

That man was obviously attending to the wrong thing. But we can do better.

Correct attention will keep you motivated as you adventure with your secrets of mental magic.

Give your mind over only to those thoughts and feelings and plans that are genuinely beneficial. And forget all else. Be 100 percent in favor of your own progress.

Think it through for a moment. Come up with ideas and plans that are worthy of your attention. There are hundreds of good ones. Select those that will do the most good for your present target.

Examples of constructive programs:

1. *A definite reading schedule.*
2. *Handling other people tactfully.*
3. *Abandoning unrealistic ideas.*
4. *A daring attitude toward life.*
5. *Understanding the emotions.*

Why does attention to such programs keep you motivated?

The answer is exciting!

Because they return definite rewards. Because you can actually see and feel and enjoy the rich results.

The case of Ellen C. proves the point. Her difficulty was connected with point 5—that is, she didn't understand her emotions. But she correctly gave it her attention. She said, "Something puzzles me. Why is it I'm never happy with what I get? I think I want a raise in pay or a new home or an expensive dress. But once I get them I'm surprised to find that I'm really no happier than before. Why does the thrill wear off so soon? How come they don't really satisfy?"

I explained, "Because you really don't want that new home or raise in pay. What you really want is a raise in self-esteem. You are using these things as substitutes for self-worth. But nothing outside yourself can supply it. Self-worth comes from within. It grows as you learn about your inner values. Start by understanding that much. Give it your attention. Then you will find lasting self-esteem."

And she did.

HOW TO REALLY LIVE!

"I have heard you speak many times, and feel that new stirring within, just as you predicted. Will you please summarize your ideas, so I might study them even more closely?"

Try these stops and starts:

Stop waiting for action . . . start making things happen.

Stop rigid thinking . . . start open-mindedness.

Stop hiding despair . . . start discovering happiness.

Stop accepting confusion . . . start clearing your mind.

Stop regretting the past . . . start enjoying the present.
 Stop fighting problems . . . start understanding yourself.
 Stop condemning your life . . . start living your days.
 Stop accepting everything . . . start examining ideas.
 Stop covering up errors . . . start correcting yourself.
 Stop complicating life . . . start freeing your mind.
 Stop feeling helpless . . . start using your powers.
 Stop being grim . . . start enjoying everything.

Do not assume that these ideas are difficult to put into practical operation. They require attention, yes, persistence, certainly, but strained effort, no! You don't need to *struggle* with them, but rather *join forces* with them. They are natural principles that already know what to do for you. Let them do the work! They will never fail you.

Suppose that some warm afternoon you are sitting on your front porch enjoying a cool breeze. Then imagine that someone walks up to you and says, "From now on you are responsible for this breeze. It is up to you to keep it going."

You would probably smile and reply, "Why, you know that that is impossible. No human being is responsible for any natural force. This cool breeze operates all by itself. All I need to do is place myself in the way of its cooling power."

That would be intelligent thinking on your part. And you are just as wise when you take the same attitude toward the secrets of mental magic.

You have no responsibility for making them go. They go all by themselves. All you need to do is place yourself in the way of their rich benefits.

PERSONAL FREEDOM

"I am intrigued by the idea of inner liberty of which you speak. Will you please explain what you mean by personal freedom?"

Nothing complicated. I simply mean a relaxed and easy-going inner condition that makes everything enjoyable. For instance, everyone wants to enjoy a social occasion, like a party. But many people are

anything but free at one. They are restricted by their self-consciousness or worry that they won't make a good impression. These anxieties often produce artificial behavior, play-acting, like laughing at a joke just because everyone else does. This role-playing creates more tension, results in self-disrespect, and robs one of his individual integrity. Most of all it hampers freedom of enjoyment.

The solution is not to go to the other extreme and act in a dull way. A man merely has to act like the only person who can keep him at ease—himself.

There are many other areas of freedom to be gained through studying SOMM. Anyone can liberate himself from self-condemnation, nervousness, panic and so on.

"Why," you may ask, "don't more people live in their natural state of enjoyable liberty? Why are there so many mental prisoners?"

Answer: Because they don't know that they are already free.

Picture a man tied to a rope about ten yards long. The other end of the rope lies in the shadow of a post, but is not tied to the post. The man looks back and *assumes* that he is tied. It is a false assumption, *but he doesn't know that it is*. Consequently he remains in his restriction and in his despair.

If he will only look more closely, he will see that he is free.

In this book we have called this close look by many names, including *awareness, insight, self-understanding, mature thinking, Magnificent Glimpse*. They all mean the same thing—personal freedom.

INSPIRING ANSWERS FOR REVIEW

1. Change your mind and you change your world! That is the entire secret of mental magic.
2. Loneliness and every other negative feeling can be dissolved through self-understanding. Study yourself!
3. Remember, nature has made no provision for the permanent housing of negative emotions within you. Develop right attitudes and negativities fall away.
4. Use every experience as a means of strengthening yourself.

Every day can give you a bit more power, additional insight, greater enjoyment.

5. You have no responsibility for creating good results. When you go into action with right causes, right results come all by themselves.
6. Don't be afraid of any mental confusions that may arise as you venture forward. They are perfectly normal, and will fade away in time.
7. Challenge your assumptions toward life! If they are not giving you practical benefits, abandon them.
8. Turn your attention only to constructive programs. You will then receive constructive rewards.
9. Your mental self is a great ally. "Upraise the self by the self; the self is the friend of the self." (Bhagavada Gita)
10. You are, at the very moment of reading these lines, completely free to live cheerfully and pleasurably. Use the secrets of mental magic to discover this freedom.

XV

Good Things Will Come to You

AS YOU FINISH YOUR FIRST READING of this book, you may be wondering about something. You may want to know more about its benefits to you. This is a healthy inquiry that will be answered in this chapter.

As author, I have aimed at giving you a Magnificent Glimpse of the superior person you can be. Once this glimpse occurs, miracles of self-change begin. As we have seen, the Magnificent Glimpse consists of a sudden flash of fresh insight. *It is the awakening of the Real Self within you.*

Yes, miracles begin. We need only to get our false selves out of the way, to let ourselves be empty and receptive. The cup that is emptied of its old contents is the cup ready to receive the fresh.

We need not strain at creating these miracles. We need only permit the all-powerful truth to flow through us.

To encourage your own Magnificent Glimpse, I want to give you, in this chapter, a greater taste of that superior life. I want

to show you how the secrets of mental magic will change and enrich *everything*.

Let's start with:

LIVING WITH LIGHT

Many people who study these principles for richer living come to our classes with interesting observations. Here are three of them:

You have given me something of enormous value. I don't fully understand it as yet, but I'm on the way. It might be described as a sort of inner glow; something warm—and different. You might say that I am living with a kind of light that I've never known before. A definite experience is taking place.

My main goal in life has always been to be a successful businessman. It still is. But I have recently found, thanks to mental magic, another objective. I want to find myself, to sharpen my mind, to build an inner prosperity as well as an outer one. I have achieved professional success. I will also win the other kind. I have caught what you have described as the Magnificent Glimpse.

Practical! When I first began my studies of mental magic I thought it was a form of mental mysticism. It could be just that, I suppose, because some amazing things have happened in my daily living. Things are really moving my way. My home life, for instance, has a tranquillity never known before. You might be interested in hearing that my neighbors and I are organizing a Mental Magic Party. We look forward to some exciting times!

THE TRUTH AT WORK

What are the forces behind these practical changes?

The very ones you have been absorbing all along!

You can, like these people, expect to win the same fine results as you go along.

As a matter of fact, the truth has already begun its fine work within you. At this point in your reading you have already started to make good things happen. They start within you, then in time, show themselves in outer prosperity.

The growth process goes like this:

Imagine yourself in a dark room, seated before a typewriter. Suddenly, you wish to learn to type, so you go ahead. Because of the darkness your first efforts are uncertain and awkward. But that doesn't bother you; you realize that you are doing the best you can for now. So you persist. Gradually, the room becomes lighter; you see the typewriter keys more clearly. Your accuracy increases. Then, more light and more accuracy.

Finally, as the room becomes fully lighted, you take full command of the typewriter. Then, anything you type comes out well.

The same with life-growth. As your mind becomes enlightened, so does your world. Then, everything you do comes out well.

Is this something mystical? Well, you can call it that if you like. But it's practical mysticism.

THE CONQUEST OF DEPRESSION

"I know that I don't understand myself very well," stated one inquirer. "So could we please talk it over? It would help if we take a single negative emotion and put it under the microscope. I think this would be a good start toward understanding all my negative feelings."

"Do you get depressed now and then?"

"Yes, I'm emotionally up and down."

"Would you like to search out that particular emotion, to see what we can find?"

"Yes, that would be fine. Why do I get depressed?"

"Because you do not really see it as an utterly useless and wasteful emotion."

"Really?"

"Really. I will explain that in a moment, but first I want to ask you a question. What do you think *causes* these feelings of despair?"

"Oh, lots of things. Family problems. Scary headlines. Worry over finances. There's no end to things that make me gloomy."

"Tell me something. Exactly *where does this depression exist?* In these exterior things or in your own mind?"

"Well, since you put it that way, it's in my mind."

"Then, if it's in your own mind, you must be *permitting* these

exterior events to depress your mind. You are subconsciously consenting to their entrance. So, now we come to the big question: Why do you *permit* exterior conditions to depress you?"

"I really don't know."

"It's because you are getting a certain pleasure out of your gloom. You use it as a justification. You think, 'Well, since I'm depressed, there must be good reason for it. Therefore I have a right to feel sorry for myself, to be hostile to the outer world, to make insistent demands.' As long as you justify your depression, you will never see how it is tricking you out of genuine happiness."

"So what must I do?"

"Once and for all, see how utterly useless, how impractical, how harmful it is to get depressed. Once you *really see this*, you will have absolutely no further use for it. All negative emotions serve an unhealthy need. Get to know them as unhealthy and that is all you really need to do. No man keeps eating a sour apple once he tastes its sourness."

"I have at least an idea of what you mean."

"Stick with it. Let it turn into an actual experience."

FREEDOM FROM DISTRESSING DECISIONS

There is a law in one of our states governing two trains that meet at a crossing. It decrees that neither train shall go ahead until the other has passed! An indecisive mind finds itself in the same impossible fix.

Have you ever noticed how many decisions you must make during your day? And ever notice how many of them stop your mental train in its tracks? One woman told me, "The most frustrating problem I have with my mind is in making it up!"

SOMM gives you freedom from distressing decisions.

How?

Because one happy secret of mental magic is that it gives you insight into your mind. It enables you to understand it. It is insight into your own mind that frees you from all painful thoughts, including distressing decisions.

Let's see how this works:

Suppose your television set develops trouble. If you don't understand the mechanics of the TV set you must make several annoying decisions. Should you replace a tube? Or is there a loose connection in the wires? Does the aerial need adjustment? In other words, you are forced into making decisions—which may turn out wrong—because you don't understand that set.

But what if you made a study of its mechanics? Suppose you learned just how everything works. Then, you would never again be whirled around by conflicting choices. *You would know what to do.*

It is the very same situation with the mind. We run into conflict only when we don't understand it. That is why self-study is so important. The enlightened man never has to choose when it comes to his own best interests. Because he understands his mental set, he also knows what to do with it.

This is one of the most relaxing of all rewards that SOMM will pay you.

YOUR NEW LIFE WILL APPEAR

Any person who chooses to do so can experience miracles of change within himself. If he will proceed with SOMM with persistent self-honesty he will not fail. And he need not be strong at the beginning. More than that, he need not even know what to do at the start. His only requirement is that he begin his earnest quest in whatever way he can, no matter how small or blundering it may be. He need only be willing to start just where he is and as he is.

Eventually, to his own surprise, such a persistent man discovers why it was not necessary for him to be strong at the start: He finds that his strength was not really his own strength after all; it is the truth within him that flows through with power, just as electricity empowers a motor by running through it. The man finds that his relaxed *willingness* was the starter button that turned on the life-changing forces.

Is all this merely something that makes nice reading but which has no effective application to daily life?

I assure you that it is not mere speculation or guessing. Speak-

ing personally as your author, I no longer have any time for vague theories that leave us still hungry for the truth.

If it is not mere theory, then what is it?

It is the living Truth that any man in any condition can actually *experience for himself*.

The greatest tragedy on earth is that a man fails to realize that he can really exchange his False Self for his Real Self. As we become aware we are *displaying a False Self*, rather than *living the Real Self*, we are beginning to be wise. It is the start of a fantastic personal transformation.

One woman asked, "Will you please describe in detail this inner transformation? I would like to feel it more deeply."

"I wish words could convey the feeling of this miraculous change. But it is something that you must—and can—experience for yourself. I know that it is perfectly attainable. I want you to know it also. I could describe the beauties of the Grand Canyon to you, and you would understand my words. But the *inner experience* could not be conveyed. But if you travel to the Grand Canyon for yourself, you can live its beauty for yourself."

Professor Paul Tillich's description of the Real Self is superb:

Then one has the astonishing experience of feeling reunited with one's self, not in pride and false self-satisfaction, but in a deep self-acceptance. One accepts one's self as something which is eternally important, eternally loved, eternally accepted. The disgust at one's self, the hatred of one's self has disappeared. There is a center, a direction, a meaning for life. All healing—bodily and mental—creates this reunion of one's self with one's self. Where there is real healing, there is the New Being, the New Creation.¹

DEFINITE DIRECTION

A speaker recently offered his audience this interesting idea:

"If you ever feel dismayed at lack of definite direction in your self-advancement program, flash this mental picture before you: Picture a leaf dropping into the edge of a stream. Its first swirling move-

¹ Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955).

ments are somewhat confused, without definite direction. But as it heads more and more into the central currents, the confusion is replaced by swift advancement. The leaf had to start from the edge, but that start is the very thing that insured final success!"

This illustrates a bright benefit you will receive from your persistent pursuit of SOMM. You gradually but surely gain a sense of direction. You have a clearer and clearer idea of where you are going. For one thing, you no longer accept something as true merely because other people say that it is. Because your self-trust grows, so does your daring; you dare to challenge every idea suggested to you. You see that you are never required to accept as true anything that you have not personally proved to be true. You want the facts, the truths, the actualities, because you realize that they alone lead to happiness. You no longer let other people tell you who you are. You are beginning to see who you are. You are finding your genuine self. And what a relief!

In other words, you have a definite sense of direction. You have caught a Magnificent Glimpse of where you want to go. You may still hear distracting voices, but you no longer turn aside to listen. You know *for sure* that you are on the right track at last, and all is well.

One man who discovered this restful secret of mental magic came back to tell me, "You know, Mr. Howard, for the very first time I feel at home in the world."

YOUR FUTURE SUCCESS IS CERTAIN

One idea about your future needs emphasis. It is *why* you can expect it to be a brighter one as you go along with SOMM.

Why? Why, because your right mental aims of today *must* reveal themselves tomorrow in right results. Not only is it necessary for natural principles to reward your efforts but they must do so *increasingly*.

A humorous incident in one of my classes illustrates the importance of having right aims. I asked one man to impress his mind with the need for heading in the right direction. I requested that he bring to class the next evening a single sentence that would describe his right intentions. He did, by reciting, "Mr. Howard, it is my aim

and purpose and intention and objective and target and desire and determination and resolve and goal to perform right mental acts.”

Let's discuss your *increasingly* better tomorrow.

When it comes to mental magic, the rich get richer. (By riches we mean anything beneficial—happiness, more energy, restful sleep, financial gain, anything at all that is good for you.) This is an unbreakable law that works in behalf of anyone who persists in uplifting himself. Any small amount of wealth that you gain tends to grow into greater wealth. What is behind this principle? It connects closely with the Magnificent Glimpse. As a person sees something superior to his present state, he likes what he sees. His healthy self-interest then urges him to try to see more. Then, having glimpsed that new superior state, he plunges ahead once more. He is like a gold miner who finds that the farther he works upstream the more gold he discovers.

Any time you feel the urge to find more inner wealth, act it out in constructive ways, such as those mentioned throughout this book. That will take care of tomorrow. Your riches will certainly increase.

This special secret of mental magic makes you an accurate prophet of your future, something like these lines by Alfred Tennyson:

For I dipt into the future,
Far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world,
And all the wonder that would be.

SINCERE EFFORT IS ALWAYS REWARDED

Many people who study these plans are somewhat anxious because they don't see immediate results. They wonder whether their time and energy are wasted.

If, during your own studies, you ever wonder the same thing, I have good news for you:

No well-intentioned work toward a richer life ever goes unrewarded. The law of cause and effect will see to it. You need only put right causes into action; effects are automatic. Your results may not be observable at the start, but that is only because they have not had time

to mature. It is much like planting some beet seeds. You don't have to see them in order to rest assured that they are growing upward. All you need do is plant them and forget them.

Don't hesitate to accept the truth that your inner self will grow all by itself. Once you have a flash of insight—even a tiny spark—you can and should forget it, just as you forget the beet seeds. Your inner nature knows what to do; it asks only that you leave it alone to work out its own wisdom. You cannot *think* yourself into a taller stature. You need not mentally struggle with the truth that sets you free. The truth is above human thought. It simply *is*. It exists entirely apart from your thinking processes. It no more depends upon your mind than does the beet seed.

Life is for living, not for thinking. To live freely, we must liberate ourselves from negative thought.

Incidentally, do you see how all this connects with previous ideas about getting ourselves out of our own way? As we rid the mind of negative concepts, the liberating light breaks through.

No, you need not worry whether you are making progress or not. If you really want it, *you are now making it!* The next section adds more to this idea.

YOU CAN WATCH YOURSELF CHANGE!

At the start of their studies with SOMM people often asked me, "What evidence will I have that I am actually making progress? How will I know that I am experiencing the inner changes of which you speak?"

This is no problem at all. If you are really open to the ideas that we are discussing, you will answer those questions for yourself. Just as sure as the morning sun, you will *observe* yourself changing. You will see that something unusual is going on because *your behavior itself starts to change*. By behavior I mean the ways you think and feel and speak and act.

As examples, you are a bit calmer in the face of a problem. Daily life is less confusing and more purposeful. You don't get upset or irri-

tated nearly as often as you used to. That vague feeling of being oppressed and threatened slowly dissolves. You begin to see yourself as a new kind of person, for instance, as one who is not at the mercy of unkind people or unexpected circumstances. You are wiser, much wiser, in handling your own emotions. That dreadful drive to get somewhere or to be someone begins to fall away; you are content to be where you are and who you are.

You start depending upon yourself in a new and exciting way, for you have caught that Magnificent Glimpse of the strong self within. Your trust of yourself gives you a sense of security that cannot be shaken by passing assertions of other people. You see—with peace and satisfaction—that the truth was already within you, waiting only for your welcome.

In short, *everything* changes. Everything within you and around you is fresh, colorful, exciting.

We can know the inner nature of a tree by observing the kind of fruit it produces. Likewise, we can watch with positive fascination as these fruitful products make their appearance in our new nature.

We need not change through our own strained effort.

It is the flow of truth that changes us.

We need only make it welcome.

THE POWER OF ASSOCIATION

Some botanists once made a study of two islands in the Pacific Ocean, separated by 500 miles of sea. They made a curious discovery. A beautiful flower that originally grew only on island A, now flourished on island B. The explanation? As ships stopped at the port of island A, a few flower seeds were blown onto the decks. When the ships paused at island B, the seeds were blown onto their new home.

That is a good example of the power of association in the botanical world. But it can be just as beneficial in your program of self-advancement.

Your reading of SOMM is an enriching association. These ideas are the kind that change the life. Any earnest connection with the truth will have its invigorating effect. This is always the case, not

merely because Vernon Howard says so, but because the principles of life never fail.

Here are twelve special thoughts about your mind that you can associate with right now:

1. Keep your mind simple and uncomplicated.
2. *Challenge it to greater achievements.*
3. Never accept worry as a necessary state.
4. *Make a pleasurable study of your mind.*
5. Permit it to be flexible in its outlooks.
6. *Accept its vast powers as a fact.*
7. Let your mind work with relaxed alertness.
8. *View your mind as your loyal ally.*
9. Don't load it with burdensome notions.
10. *Help your mind grow in knowledge.*
11. Turn it loose in creative expression.
12. *Enjoy it!*

You can read words written on a piece of paper because the pencil leaves part of itself on the paper. Likewise, your association with healthy ideas is certain to leave a healthy impression upon you.

YOUR GREAT OPPORTUNITY

After talking with a woman about a very special idea for her personal growth, she wrote:

Dear Mr. Howard:

I don't have words to tell you how much this idea has meant to me. It has placed me on a solid platform for the first time in my life. Thank you so very much for telling me about this great opportunity.

I want to tell you about this idea.

Imagine yourself among an audience hearing a lecture on self-improvement. Imagine that the speaker says, "You need not put up with pain and frustration any longer. There is a way out. And you can find it."

That would excite you, wouldn't it? It would arouse your hope

and revive your expectations. How come? *Because somewhere, deep down inside, every man senses that he need not put up with unhappiness.* Somehow he feels that there is a way of escape, and that correct searching will find it.

The point is this: *The truth is always recognized by the human mind.* It may be rejected by someone who fears that it will break down his tightly-held illusions, but still he recognizes it. The very fact that a man gets upset or angry at the truth is perfect evidence that he recognizes it. There is lots of wisdom in the familiar proverb that it's the truth that hurts.

What, then, is our great opportunity?

This:

Whenever we find ourselves upset or hurt we should welcome it as a fine opportunity for self-advancement. The truth about ourselves, regardless of how shocking or painful it may be at the time, is the wonderful path to freedom. It has always been, and it will always be, the truth that sets us free.

TOTAL POWER

Of all the good things that come along with SOMM, none is more satisfying than the full use of your inner powers. A happy man could well be defined as one who employs himself to full capacity.

But here is the vital point to remember: To make full use of our inner forces *we must first become alertly aware that we are not presently doing so.*

As we saw in previous pages, no man ever knowingly wastes his energies. He engages in power-draining activities because he doesn't see that he *is* wasting himself. He lacks insight between self-defeating and self-advancing action. Now, because all kinds of action—favorable and unfavorable—take energy, he wastes powers that could very well be put to productive use.

The famous Wells Fargo company spared no effort to track down bandits who held up its stagecoaches. On one occasion they chased a bandit for several weeks, to finally catch up with his stolen treasure

chest in an Oregon forest. The chase cost Wells Fargo \$10,000. They recovered from the chest a single ten-cent piece.

Wells Fargo was probably justified in investing all that time and energy, because of other factors, like their reputation. But there is never a single good reason why a human being should drain himself in profitless pursuits.

Try to become aware of every thought and emotion and action that really does nothing for you. (In our classes we have found that negative emotions cause the most waste; emotions like false pride, touchiness, impatience.) Your very awareness will cause you to toss them out as worthless. And with their departure, comes full power.

GOOD THINGS WILL COME

In my previous book *ACTION POWER: The Miracle Way to a Successful New Life*, I told about a secret servant that works for every man's benefit. It delighted many readers. This beneficial source-for-good is called by the curious name of *serendipity*. It silently works alongside every man who dares to plunge into right action.

Serendipity means that you discover a treasure of some kind while on the track of something else. It is a surprising prize that appears from an unexpected source. For instance, a newspaper story recently told of a real estate agent who was showing property to an attractive businesswoman. She not only liked the property, but also the agent. They were married. Serendipity had brought them together.

Serendipity is just one of the many good things that come to the man or woman who goes along with the secrets of mental magic. All we need to do is to place ourselves in the path of benefits. They will then come to us.

Here is an interesting anecdote from history that shows how a relaxed receptivity produces creative power:

One evening a famous American poet was sitting by his fireside. His mind was at ease, thinking of nothing in particular. He was simply enjoying the warmth and quietness. All of a sudden, at the stroke of midnight, an exciting thought flashed through his mind. Why not,

he asked himself, write a poem about the schooner *Hesperus*? The poet picked up his pen. It came alive with inspiration. The poem wrote itself.

Later, he told of the interesting experience: "It was three by the clock. I then went to bed and fell asleep. I felt pleased with the ballad. It hardly cost me an effort."

That was how Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote his famous ballad *The Wreck of the Hesperus*. His secret power was his quiet receptivity.

The progressive life can be likened to a man walking down a country road just before dawn. As you stroll along you are surrounded by beauty and color that you cannot as yet see, that you don't know is there. But as you continue forward the dimness fades away, the light of dawn appears. Now, as you glance around, you are delightfully surprised at all the beauty of it. And now, because you are in the light more and more, it is more and more yours to see and enjoy.

If you will walk forward, it will appear before you, to dazzle and to delight.

GOOD IDEAS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Remember that SOMM gets right to the point. Let it serve you with all-around prosperities.
2. You can take full command of any condition in life. The first step is self-command.
3. Don't permit negative emotions to bluff you. You need never submit to them.
4. The enlightened mind is free from making distressing decisions. With this secret of mental magic as your guide, you always know just what to do.
5. Your goal is to experience life personally, not merely to think about it. You can have this exciting experience.
6. Your future success is as certain as your desire to make it so. Simply do what is necessary to do today, and your richer future follows.

7. You can actually observe yourself changing! This is absolute proof that SOMM is working within you.
8. Associate only with cheerful and constructive ideas. They will leave a favorable impression upon everything you do.
9. Deep down inside, every man senses that he can be free of an unhappy life. This is the call of truth that every man can heed and follow.
10. The good things of life want you as much as you want them. With a receptive mind, let them come to you.

XVI

Your Adventures Into Mental Magic

THIS CHAPTER PLUNGES YOU into some especially exciting adventures with mental magic!

You have three power-packed sections:

Section 1: YOUR SPECIAL SECRETS

Section 2: HAVE A MENTAL MAGIC PARTY!

Section 3: 100 GUIDES TO MENTAL MAGIC

All three adventures can lead you to miraculous discoveries of self-enrichment. So let's advance together, starting with:

SECTION 1: YOUR SPECIAL SECRETS

While exploring the ideas in this book you are sure to come across some special ones. You will find that certain plans impress you as being just right for your personal progress. For instance, you might be inspired by a plan for brightening your personal attractiveness. Or you might get excited over an idea that makes your business more profitable.

This section is designed to retain these special secrets in your mind. So whenever you run across one of them, write it down in one of the blank spaces provided. The very act of listing it deepens the impression. You can note the idea exactly as worded in the book, or you can rewrite it in any way that looks best to you.

Review these specialties from time to time. Let your mind absorb them completely. After all, they are *yours*. This sort of practice magically changes them from mere ideas into personal powers—powers that win your desires.

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SECTION 2: HAVE A MENTAL MAGIC PARTY!

What is a Mental Magic Party?

It is the gathering together of men and women who wish to make self-improvement an enjoyable adventure.

What is its purpose?

To use the secrets of mental magic for enriching daily life in the home, at the office, in social affairs, in every department of living.

What good results can be expected?

There are abundant prosperities for those attending a Mental Magic Party. Some will find themselves with a much happier family life. Others are delightfully surprised at the growth of their self-confidence. Many will discover practical techniques for increasing their financial fortunes. Still others find themselves solving their personal problems with remarkable speed and ease. Everyone will certainly uplift himself into greater happiness and contentment. A Mental Magic Party is *practical*; you can enjoyably observe actual enrichments in your daily affairs.

You, the reader, can be valuable in your own community by having your own Mental Magic Party. You can organize it yourself, or play a helpful role as one of its officers.

Here are six basic steps for making the most of your own study group:

1. *Attracting members:*

Start by informing your friends, acquaintances and associates of the Mental Magic Party. You can form the group around members of your club or church or community organization. Any kind of a start

is a good one. Remember above all, *everyone is vitally interested in self-improvement!*

2. *Your meeting place:*

A study group can gather together in homes of various members, in church quarters, wherever is most suitable for your particular situation. In my own work here in Los Angeles we have found that some of the best results come from groups of a dozen or so people who meet once a week in various homes. As practical benefits appear in your group, the mounting enthusiasm may mean a move to larger quarters!

3. *Time:*

Set definite schedules for your meetings. Once a week is a good choice. Evenings and weekends best serve the convenience of most people.

4. *Publicity:*

The more the merrier! Your local newspaper will gladly run a news story. Perhaps your public library will provide space on its bulletin board for your announcement. If your group is connected with a church or club, your minister or club president can help you spread the word of this beneficial program. Search out and use all available aids to publicity.

5. *Your Mental Magic Party:*

The leader of the group, whether yourself, a clergyman, or whoever, directs the program. He uses his own copy of *Secrets of Mental Magic* for presenting the ideas that he personally feels are especially helpful. As another interesting part of the program, various members report personal benefits gained from reading their own copy of the book. Also, a question and answer session provides stimulation and enrichment. The whole idea is to share benefits and experiences won from exploring these secrets of mental magic.

6. *The Mental Atmosphere:*

We have given this program of self-advancement the name of Mental Magic Party. It is called a *party* for a very solid psychological reason. The idea is to provide a mental atmosphere of relaxed cheerfulness. The science of psychology points out that light-heartedness

makes one more receptive to helpful ideas. An easy-going mind has a superior ability to absorb and understand enlightening truths. So keep the atmosphere light-hearted and adventurous. Make it an enjoyable Mental Magic Party!

SECTION 3: 100 GUIDES TO MENTAL MAGIC

Here are 100 helpful guides for your instant use. Let them direct you to the exact secret you may need for today's knowledge and strength. You can make it an interesting adventure by selecting one at random, then follow it as your special guide throughout the day. Select a new one for the next day. Your use of these accurate guides will not fail to increase your power as a mental magician.

1. To understand the opposite sex: *see* page 62.
2. For a secret of mental magic that guides your daily adventures: *see* page 26.
3. Whenever you feel that you are carrying too many burdens: *see* page 49.
4. If you want something to believe in: *see* page 3.
5. How your understanding of happiness brings it to you: *see* page 113.
6. To discover four secret words that work wonders: *see* page 36.
7. For some attitudes you should dismiss from your mind: *see* page 97.
8. To discover the true meaning of security: *see* page 134.
9. Whenever you feel blocked in your money-making efforts: *see* page 176.
10. If you want to understand and dissolve feelings of depression: *see* page 201.
11. Why you should be a detective: *see* page 150.
12. For some exciting ideas for living in a new way: *see* page 195.
13. For good ways to build a more attractive personality: *see* page 120.

14. To read an illustrative story for keeping on the right road:
see page 159.
15. Whenever you want to know why things happen as they
do: *see page 78.*
16. How to relax while discovering the secrets of mental magic:
see page 7.
17. If you want more fun in life: *see page 103.*
18. How to make fascinating changes in your relations with
the opposite sex: *see page 60.*
19. To read about your wealthy self: *see page 122.*
20. For the perfect illustration of the vast riches of your mind:
see page 132.
21. For a valuable principle that aids your money-making ac-
tivities: *see page 171.*
22. Whenever you want some secrets for making good things
come to you: *see page 211.*
23. Why there is never any need for distress: *see page 153.*
24. If you want to know the most important thing to do with
the opposite sex: *see page 67.*
25. Whenever you want to achieve more success in any area:
see page 39.
26. If you want a way of life that stays exciting: *see page 28.*
27. How to clear away confusion and have a clear mind: *see*
page 192.
28. To test your daily progress: *see page 144.*
29. For eleven magic words that can transform your life: *see*
page 54.
30. Whenever you want to make predictions that come true:
see page 80.
31. How to enjoy your mind: *see page 91.*
32. For exciting truths about your Magnificent Glimpse: *see*
page 12.
33. To discover twenty responsibilities that don't belong to you:
see page 47.
34. To read some cheery news about your personal rewards: *see*
page 206.

35. How to become more aware of the truth that sets you free: *see page 163.*
36. Whenever you want a glimpse into your future: *see page 74.*
37. To read 12 aids in becoming a mental magician with the opposite sex: *see page 68.*
38. Whenever you want to dismiss loneliness: *see page 185.*
39. How Virginia made a magical discovery: *see page 77.*
40. For the most valuable secret of mental magic for becoming popular: *see page 116.*
41. To build practical attitudes that dissolve tensions: *see page 165.*
42. For two valuable aids that earn \$\$\$\$\$: *see page 175.*
43. To discover the greatest day of your life: *see page 104.*
44. Whenever you want to banish self-doubt: *see page 39.*
45. To make your life both secure and simple: *see page 140.*
46. For three interesting stories about successful people: *see page 20.*
47. If you want to guarantee a lovely love life: *see page 61.*
48. For a fascinating story about a magic kingdom: *see page 52.*
49. For an exciting description of the new person you can become: *see page 207.*
50. To turn everything that happens to you into an advantage: *see page 96.*
51. Why you should turn your attention to what you want from life: *see page 51.*
52. How to make every day an enjoyable adventure: *see page 135.*
53. To discover the turning point in your life: *see page 10.*
54. For a basic secret of mental magic that guarantees personal happiness: *see page 106.*
55. Whenever you want to get into self-enriching action: *see page 99.*
56. To read a valuable definition of personality: *see page 118.*
57. For the secret of attracting the opposite sex: *see page 63.*
58. How to change and command circumstances: *see page 22.*

59. Why you should bring curiosity into your financial affairs: *see page 170.*
60. Whenever you want to encourage yourself toward building a richer tomorrow: *see page 85.*
61. How your world can make more sense: *see page 167.*
62. If you ever doubt the practical gifts of the secrets of mental magic: *see page 185.*
63. Why you should not let problems bluff you: *see page 146.*
64. Whenever you feel the need to live more lightly: *see page 162.*
65. For inspiring ideas that turn your life into an exciting adventure: *see page 95.*
66. To gain a higher viewpoint of life: *see page 136.*
67. For a surprising truth about your happiness: *see page 110.*
68. To read about a secret code that earns money for you: *see page 173.*
69. If you want an accurate definition of love: *see page 71.*
70. For some of the natural diamonds of your personality: *see page 125.*
71. If you want every hour to carry you forward to greater achievement: *see page 190.*
72. To discover what you should rebel against: *see page 4.*
73. Why you should work at expanding your mental attitudes: *see page 112.*
74. For one of the great secrets of mental magic for solving personal problems: *see page 149.*
75. To realize the vast wealth of your mind: *see page 17.*
76. Whenever you want to get obstacles out of your way: *see page 90.*
77. How self-knowledge increases your forcefulness: *see page 148.*
78. To read a deeply practical illustration about your power of prophecy: *see page 76.*
79. If you ever doubt that you can build a new world for yourself: *see page 8.*

80. How to take your rightful command of conditions: *see* page 188.
81. For a great truth about your power of awareness: *see* page 83.
82. If you want to catch a glimpse of the gold residing in your Real Self: *see* page 158.
83. How Betty H. changed her life: *see* page 48.
84. For a story that you can apply to your own flight to freedom: *see* page 162.
85. If you want good news about your love life: *see* page 64.
86. Whenever you want to see some magnificent changes in your world: *see* page 145.
87. For a major secret that changes your future magically: *see* page 75.
88. Why you should direct your own life: *see* page 120.
89. How your mental personality creates financial prosperity: *see* page 171.
90. If you want to understand why people are unkind and hostile: *see* page 189.
91. If you want something to get excited about: *see* page 130.
92. How clear thinking aids your life with the opposite sex: *see* page 66.
93. For some vital facts about your attitudes toward yourself: *see* page 147.
94. To discover the beneficial purpose of self-study: *see* page 129.
95. For a delightfully surprising fact about tension: *see* page 157.
96. Whenever you want to accurately predict your social success: *see* page 117.
97. For an enlightening story about some treasure seekers: *see* page 65.
98. To remind yourself of your limitless mental power: *see* page 23.
99. If you want to know about the powerful truth that sets you free: *see* page 48.
100. For some valuable ideas about your new life: *see* page 138.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vernon Howard occupies a unique position in the world as a popular author of self-improvement books. More than two million copies of his dynamic books have been sold and translated around the globe.

As a teacher and lecturer he attracts vast audiences who receive fresh hope and inspiration. One grateful member of his audience sums up, "There is something clearly different about hearing Vernon Howard speak. You feel that something new and fascinating is happening to you."

Vernon Howard lives in Los Angeles where he lectures, teaches classes, and guides thousands to a richer and more exciting way of life.

(continued from front flap)

the next few minutes, a golden stream of revelations will pour into your life . . . a flood of glittering truths that will make your deepest, grinding problems fade away—and in their place, quite suddenly, the *answers* will become crystal clear!

- This book will set your imagination aflame. It will introduce you to the incredible force of MIND POWER . . . a force which, when you understand its clear, simple principles, *guarantees* that every tick of the clock will carry you one step closer to the wealth, position and influence God meant for you to enjoy.

From this moment on, you begin testing the wonder-working techniques of MENTAL MAGIC on every untrained corner of your mind! And you'll do it in a dynamic, positive way that will break through ALL mental barriers, *organize* your powers, and place them forever at your beck and call.

In this book you grasp the infallible key to success. THE TEN GREAT SECRETS OF MENTAL MAGIC spotlight for you a new method for crystallizing thought images into their material duplicates. In other words, a technique for *thinking* things into your life—*making* them come true—through MIND POWER alone!

Even better, you will trace these TEN GREAT SECRETS to their origin. You will take an adventurous journey to the Sacred Well of the mysterious Mayans.

Here you will see how material goals

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(continued from back flap) arise from airy nothing. How a man—one single man, a speck of humanity on this teeming globe—writhing in the pit of abject poverty, was suddenly catapulted into a million-dollar fortune by the amazing “power within”!

And you will see that “luck” had nothing to do with it. He made his luck through the Power of Mind. Mind Power made his fortune!

SECRETS OF MENTAL MAGIC

by Vernon Howard

First in a trickle . . . then in a flowing stream . . . then
in an onrushing flood . . . untold riches will come surging
your way when you discover—

The Exciting Truth About Your Mind
The Ten Great Secrets of Mental Magic
Your Power of Self-Confidence
Freedom from Tiring Responsibility
Mental Magic that Wins the Opposite
Sex
How Mental Magic Predicts Your
Future
How to Win Your Desires Quickly
What You Should Know About
Happiness

How Your Thoughts Can Make You
Popular
How to Find Lasting Security
How Mental Magic Solves Your
Problems
The Miracle Way to Release Tension
How Your Mind Attracts Prosperity
Inspiring Answers on Mental Magic
How Good Things Will Come to You
Your Adventures into Mental Magic

About VERNON HOWARD

VERNON HOWARD's personal career is a success-story as startling as any in his book. Searching for a way to get ahead faster, early in life he stumbled on the track of an exciting discovery. To his surprise, the application of this dynamic force which he calls “Mental Magic” rocketed him to the heights of fame and fortune in a few short years!

Today he is an inspirational speaker and writer known to millions, who lectures every year before vast audiences. Over 2,000,000 copies of his works have been sold and translated into over a dozen languages.

As a personal advisor, Vernon Howard succeeds overwhelmingly in helping people find new hope and happiness. His own amazing achievements prove that life can be exciting and richly rewarding . . . and he has led tens of thousands to find just that kind of exciting life for themselves.