



The power of
**Positive
Thinking**

by Norman Vincent Peale

A Fireside Book

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Dedicated to my brothers Robert Clifford Peale, M.D., F.I.C.S and The Reverend Leonard Delano Peale Effective Helpers of Mankind

Contents

Preface

Introduction

1. Believe in Yourself
2. A Peaceful Mind Generates Power
3. How to Have Constant Energy
4. Try Prayer Power
5. How to Create Your Own Happiness
6. Stop Fuming and Fretting
7. Expect the Best and Get It
8. I Don't Believe in Defeat
9. How to Break the Worry Habit
10. Power to Solve Personal Problems
11. How to Use Faith in Healing
12. When Vitality Sags, Try This Health Formula
13. Inflow of New Thoughts Can Remake You
14. Relax for Easy Power
15. How to Get People to Like You
16. Prescription for Heartache
17. How to Draw upon That Higher Power

Epilogue

Preface

At the time I wrote this book it never occurred to me that more than two million copies would be so in various hardcover editions and that it would one day attract a vast new readership through paperback edition such as this. Frankly, however, my gratitude for this event is not from the viewpoint of books sold, but in terms of the many persons to whom I have been privileged to suggest a simple workable philosophy of living.

The dynamic laws which the book teaches were learned the hard way by trial and error in my personal search for a way of life. But I found in them an answer to my own problems and, believe me, I am the most difficult person with whom I have worked. The book is my effort to share my spiritual experience, for if it helped me, I felt it might also be of help to others.

In formulating this simple philosophy of life I found my own answers in the teachings of Jesus Christ. I have merely tried to describe those truths in the language and thought forms understandable to present day people. The way of life to which this book is a witness is very wonderful. It is not easy. Indeed, it often is hard, but it is full of joy and hope and victory.

I well recall the day I sat down to begin writing the book. I knew that the best work required more ability than I possessed and therefore I needed help that only God could give. My wife and I have the policy of taking God into working partnership in all our problems and activities. So we had a very earnest session of prayer, asking for guidance, and we put the project into God's hands. When the manuscript was ready for the publisher Mrs. Peale and I again prayed, dedicating the manuscript. We asked only that it might help people to live more effective lives. When the first book of these two million copies came from the press to us it was again a spiritual moment. We thanked God for His help and dedicated the book once more.

The book was written for the plain people of this world, of whom certainly I am one. I was born and reared in humble Midwestern circumstances in a dedicated Christian home. The everyday people of this land are my own kind whom I know and love and believe in with great faith. When anyone of them lets God have charge of his life the power and glory are amazingly demonstrated.

The book is written with deep concern for the pain, difficulty and struggle of human existence. It teaches the cultivation of peace of mind, not as an escape from life into protected quiescence, but as a power center out of which comes driving energy for constructive personal and social living. It teaches positive thinking, not as a means to fame, riches or power, but as the practical application of faith to overcome defeat and accomplish worthwhile creative values in life. It teaches a hard, disciplinary way of life, but one which offers great joy to the person who achieves victory over himself and the difficult circumstances of the world.

To all who have written me about the joyous victory they have had through practicing the spiritual techniques of this book and to those who will yet have such experience may I say how happy I am for all that is happening to them as they live by dynamic spiritual formulas.

I wish finally to express deep appreciation to my publishers for their never-failing support, cooperation and friendship. I have never worked with finer people than my cherished friends at Prentice Hall. I look forward with great pleasure to my association with Fawcett Publications. May God continue to use this book in human helpfulness.

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

Introduction

What This Book Can Do for You

THIS BOOK IS WRITTEN to suggest techniques and to give examples which demonstrate that you do not need to be defeated by anything, that you can have peace of mind, improved health, and a never ceasing flow of energy. In short, that your life can be full of joy and satisfaction. Of this I have no doubt at all for I have watched countless persons learn and apply a system of simple procedures that has brought about the foregoing benefits in their lives. These assertions, which may appear extravagant, are based on bonafide demonstrations in actual human experience.

Altogether too many people are defeated by the everyday problems of life. They go struggling perhaps even whining, through their days with a sense of dull resentment at what they consider the "bad breaks" life has given them. In a sense there may be such a thing as "the breaks" in this life, but there is also a spirit and method by which we can control and even determine those breaks. It is a pity that people should let themselves be defeated by the problems, cares, and difficulties of human existence, and it is also quite unnecessary.

In saying this I certainly do not ignore or minimize the hardships and tragedies of the world, but neither do I allow them to dominate. You can permit obstacles to control your mind to the point where they are uppermost and thus become the dominating factors in your thought pattern. By learning how to cast them from the mind, by refusing to become mentally subservient to them, and by channeling spiritual power through your thoughts you can rise above obstacles which ordinarily might defeat you. By methods I shall outline, obstacles are simply not permitted to destroy your happiness and well-being. You need be defeated only if you are willing to be. This book teaches you how to "will" not be.

The purpose of this book is a very direct and simple one. It makes no pretense to literary excellence nor does it seek to demonstrate any unusual scholarship on my part. This is simply a practical, direct action, personal-improvement manual. It is written with the sole objective of helping the reader achieve a happy, satisfying, and worthwhile life. I thoroughly and enthusiastically believe in certain demonstrated and effective principles which, when practiced, produce a victorious life. My aim is to set them forth in this volume in a logical, simple, and understandable manner so that the reader, feeling a sense of need, may learn a practical method by which he can build for himself, with God's help, the kind of life he deeply desires.

If you read this book thoughtfully, carefully absorbing its teachings, and if you will sincerely and persistently practice the principles and formulas set forth herein, you can experience an amazing improvement within yourself. By using the techniques outlined here you can modify or change the circumstances in which you now live, assuming control over them rather than continuing to be directed by them. Your relations with other people will improve. You will become a more popular, esteemed, and well-liked individual. By mastering these principles, you will enjoy a delightful new sense of well-being. You may attain a degree of health not hitherto known by you and experience new and keen pleasure in living. You will become a person of greater usefulness and will wield an expanded influence.

How can I be so certain that the practice of these principles will produce such results? The answer is simply that for many years in the Marble Collegiate Church of New York City we have taught this system of creative living based on spiritual techniques, carefully noting its operation in the lives of hundreds of people. It is no speculative series of extravagant assertions that I make, for the

principles have worked so efficiently over so long a period of time that they are now firmly established as documented and demonstrable truth. The system outlined is a perfected and amazing method of successful living.

In my writings, including several books, in my regular weekly newspaper column in nearly one hundred dailies, in my national radio program over seventeen years, in our magazine, *Guideposts*, and in lectures in scores of cities, I have taught these same scientific yet simple principles of achievement, health, and happiness. Hundreds have read, listened, and practiced, and the results are invariably the same: new life, new power, increased efficiency, greater happiness.

Because so many have requested that these principles be put into book form, the better to be studied and practiced, I am publishing this new volume under the title, *The Power of Positive Thinking*. I need not point out that the powerful principles contained herein are not my invention but are given to us by the greatest Teacher who ever lived and who still lives. This book teaches applied Christianity; a simple yet scientific system of practical techniques of successful living that works.

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

Believe in Yourself

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy. But with sound self-confidence you can succeed. A sense of inferiority and inadequacy interferes with the attainment of your hopes, but self-confidence leads to self-realization and successful achievement. Because of the importance of this mental attitude, this book will help you believe in yourself and release your inner powers.

It is appalling to realize the number of pathetic people who are hampered and made miserable by the malady popularly called the inferiority complex. But you need not suffer from this trouble. When proper steps are taken, it can be overcome. You can develop creative faith in yourself—faith that is justified.

After speaking to a convention of businessmen in a city auditorium, I was on the stage greeting people when a man approached me and with a peculiar intensity of manner asked, “May I talk with you about a matter of desperate importance to me?”

I asked him to remain until the others had gone, then we went backstage and sat down.

“I’m in this town to handle the most important business deal of my life,” he explained. “If I succeed it means everything to me. If I fail, I’m done for.”

I suggested that he relax a little, that nothing was quite that final. If he succeeded, that was fine. If he didn’t, well, tomorrow was another day.

“I have a terrible disbelief in myself,” he said dejectedly. “I have no confidence. I just don’t believe I can put it over. I am very discouraged and depressed. In fact,” he lamented, “I’m just about sunk. Heavens, I am, forty years old. Why is it that all my life I have been tormented by inferiority feelings, by lack of confidence, by self-doubt? I listened to your speech tonight in which you talked about the power of positive thinking, and I want to ask how I can get some faith in myself.”

“There are two steps to take,” I replied. “First, it is important to discover why you have these feelings of no power. That requires analysis and will take time. We must approach the maladies of our emotional life as a physician probes to find something wrong physically. This cannot be done immediately, certainly not in our brief interview tonight, and it may require treatment to reach a permanent solution. But to pull you through this immediate problem I shall give you a formula which will work if you use it.

“As you walk down the street tonight I suggest that you repeat certain words which I shall give you. Say them over several times after you get into bed. When you awaken tomorrow, repeat them three times before arising. On the way to your important appointment say them three additional times. Do this with an attitude of faith and you will receive sufficient strength and ability to deal with the problem. Later, if you wish, we can go into an analysis of your basic problem, but whatever we come up with following that study, the formula which I am now going to give you can be a large factor in the eventual cure.”

Following is the affirmation which I gave him—“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13) He was unfamiliar with these words so I wrote them on a card and had him read them over three times aloud.

“Now, follow that prescription, and I am sure things will come out all right.”

He pulled himself up, stood quietly for a moment, then said with considerable feeling, “O.K., Doctor.”

O.K.”

I watched him square his shoulders and walk out into the night. He seemed a pathetic figure, and the way he carried himself as he disappeared showed that faith was already at work in his mind.

Subsequently he reported that this simple formula “did wonders” for him and added, “It seems incredible that a few words from the Bible could do so much for a person.”

This man later had a study made of the reasons for his inferiority attitudes. They were cleared away by scientific counseling and by the application of religious faith. He was taught how to have faith; was given certain specific instructions to follow (these are given later in this chapter). Gradually he attained a strong, steady, reasonable confidence. He never ceases to express amazement at the way in which things now flow toward rather than away from him. His personality has taken on a positive, not negative, character so that he no longer repels success, but, on the contrary, draws it to him. He now has an authentic confidence in his own powers.

There are various causes of inferiority feelings, and not a few stem from childhood.

An executive consulted me about a young man whom he wished to advance in his company. “But,” he explained, “he cannot be trusted with important secret information and I’m sorry, for otherwise I would make him my administrative assistant. He has all the other necessary qualifications, but he talks too much, and without meaning to do so divulges matters of a private and important nature.”

Upon analysis I found that he “talked too much” simply because of an inferiority feeling. To compensate for it he succumbed to the temptation of parading his knowledge.

He associated with men who were rather well to do, all of whom had attended college and belonged to a fraternity. But this boy was reared in poverty, had not been a college man or fraternity member. Thus he felt himself inferior to his associates in education and social background. To build himself up with his associates and to enhance his self-esteem, his subconscious mind, which always seeks to provide a compensatory mechanism, supplied him with a means for raising his ego.

He was on “the inside” in the industry, and accompanied his superior to conferences where he met outstanding men and listened to important private conversations. He reported just enough of his “inside information” to cause his associates to regard him with admiration and envy. This served to elevate his self-esteem and satisfy his desire for recognition.

When the employer became aware of the cause of this personality trait, being a kindly and understanding man, he pointed out to the young man the opportunities in business to which his abilities could lead him. He also described how his inferiority feelings caused his unreliability in confidential matters. This self-knowledge, together with a sincere practicing of the techniques of faith and prayer, made him a valuable asset to his company. His real powers were released.

I can perhaps illustrate the manner in which many youngsters acquire an inferiority complex through the use of a personal reference. As a small boy I was painfully thin. I had lots of energy, was on the track team, was healthy and hard as nails, but thin. And that bothered me because I didn’t want to be thin. I wanted to be fat. I was called “skinny,” but I didn’t want to be called “skinny.” I wanted to be called “fat.” I longed to be hard-boiled and tough and fat. I did everything to get fat. I drank cod-liver oil, consumed vast numbers of milk shakes, ate thousands of chocolate sundaes with whipped cream and nuts, cakes and pies innumerable, but they did not affect me in the slightest. I stayed thin and lay awake nights thinking and agonizing about it. I kept on trying to get heavy until I was about thirty when all of a sudden did I get heavy? I bulged at the seams. Then I became self-conscious because I was so fat, and finally had to take off forty pounds with equal agony to get myself down to respectable size.

In the second place (to conclude this personal analysis which I give only because it may help others)

showing how this malady works), I was a minister's son and was constantly reminded of that fact. ~~Everybody else could do everything, but if I did even the slightest little thing—~~“Ah, you are preacher's son.” So I didn't want to be a preacher's son, for preachers' sons are supposed to be nice and namby-pamby. I wanted to be known as a hard-boiled fellow. Perhaps that is why preachers' sons get their reputation for being a little difficult, because they rebel against having to carry the banner of the church all the time. I vowed there was one thing I would never do, and that was to become a preacher.

Also, I came of a family practically every member of which was a performer in public, a platform speaker, and that was the last thing I wanted to be. They used to make me get up in public to make speeches when it scared me to death, even filled me with terror. That was years ago, but the twinge of it comes to me every now and then when I walk onto a platform. I had to use every known device to develop confidence in what powers the good Lord gave me.

I found the solution of this problem in the simple techniques of faith taught in the Bible. The principles are scientific and sound and can heal any personality of the pain of inferiority feelings. Their use can enable the sufferer to find and release the powers which have been inhibited by a feeling of inadequacy.

Such are some of the sources of the inferiority complex which erect power barriers in our personalities. It is some emotional violence done to us in childhood, or the consequences of certain circumstances, or something we did to ourselves. This malady arises out of the misty past in the dim recesses of our personalities.

Perhaps you had an older brother who was a brilliant student. He got A's in school; you made only C's, and you never heard the last of it. So you believed that you could never succeed in life as he could. He got A's and you got C's, so you reasoned that you were consigned to getting C's all your life. Apparently you never realized that some of those who failed to get high grades in school have been the greatest successes outside of school. Just because somebody gets an A in college doesn't make him the greatest man in the United States, because maybe his A's will stop when he gets his diploma, and the fellow who got C's in school will go on later to get the real A's in life.

The greatest secret for eliminating the inferiority complex, which is another term for deep and profound self-doubt, is to fill your mind to overflowing with faith. Develop a tremendous faith in God and that will give you a humble yet soundly realistic faith in yourself.

The acquiring of dynamic faith is accomplished by prayer, lots of prayer, by reading and mentally absorbing the Bible and by practicing its faith techniques. In another chapter I deal with specific formulas of prayer, but I want to point out here that the type of prayer that produces the quality of faith required to eliminate inferiority is of a particular nature. Surface skimming, formalistic and perfunctory prayer is not sufficiently powerful.

A wonderful colored woman, a cook in the home of friends of mine in Texas, was asked how she had completely mastered her troubles. She answered that ordinary problems could be met by ordinary prayers, but that “when a big trouble comes along, you have to pray deep prayers.”

One of my most inspiring friends was the late Harlowe B. Andrews of Syracuse, New York, one of the best businessmen and competent spiritual experts I ever knew. He said the trouble with most prayers is that they aren't big enough. “To get anywhere with faith,” said he, “learn to pray big prayers. God will rate you according to the size of your prayers.” Doubtless he was right, for the Scriptures say, “According to your faith be it unto you.” (Matthew 9:29) So the bigger your problem, the bigger your prayer should be.

Roland Hayes, the singer, quoted his grandfather to me, a man whose education was not equal to the

of his grandson, but whose native wisdom was obviously sound. He said, "The trouble with lots of prayers is they ain't got no suction." ~~Drive your prayers deep into your doubts, fears, inferiorities~~ Pray deep, big prayers that have plenty of suction and you will come up with powerful and vital faith. Go to a competent spiritual adviser and let him teach you how to have faith. The ability to possess and utilize faith and gain the release of powers it provides are skills and, like any skills, must be studied and practiced to gain perfection.

At the conclusion of this chapter are listed ten suggestions for overcoming your inferiority pattern and for developing faith. Practice these rules diligently and they will aid you in developing confidence in yourself by dissipating your feelings of inferiority, however deeply imbedded.

At this point, however, I wish to indicate that to build up feelings of self-confidence the practice of suggesting confidence concepts to your mind is very effective. If your mind is obsessed by thoughts of insecurity and inadequacy it is, of course, due to the fact that such ideas have dominated your thinking over a long period of time. Another and more positive pattern of ideas must be given the mind, and that is accomplished by repetitive suggestion or confidence ideas. In the busy activities of daily existence thought disciplining is required if you are to re-educate the mind and make of it a power-producing plant. It is possible, even in the midst of your daily work, to drive confident thoughts into consciousness. Let me tell you about one man who did so by the use of a unique method.

One icy winter morning he called for me at a hotel in a Midwestern city to take me about thirty-five miles to another town to fill a lecture engagement. We got into his car and started off at a rather high rate of speed on the slippery road. He was going a little faster than I thought reasonable, and I reminded him that we had plenty of time and suggested that we take it easy.

"Don't let my driving worry you," he replied. "I used to be filled with all kinds of insecurities myself but I got over them. I was afraid of everything. I feared an automobile trip or an airplane flight; and whenever any of my family went away I worried until they returned. I always went around with a feeling that something was going to happen, and it made my life miserable. I was saturated with inferiority and lacked confidence. This state of mind reflected itself in my business and I wasn't doing very well. But I hit upon a wonderful plan which knocked all these insecurity feelings out of my mind, and now I live with a feeling of confidence, not only in myself but in life generally."

This was the "wonderful plan." He pointed to two clips fastened on the instrument panel of the car just below the windshield and, reaching into the glove compartment, took out a pack of small cards. He selected one and slipped it beneath the clip. It read, "If ye have faith ... nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matthew 17:20) He removed that one, shuffled expertly through the cards with one hand as he drove, selected another, and placed it under the clip. This one read, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)

"I'm a traveling salesman," he explained, "and I drive around all day calling on my customers. I have discovered that while a man drives he thinks all kinds of thoughts. If his pattern of thought is negative he will think many negative thoughts during the day and that, of course, is bad for him; but that is the way I used to be. I used to drive around all day between calls thinking fear and defeat thoughts, and incidentally that is one reason my sales were down. But since I have been using these cards as I drive and committing the words to memory, I have learned to think differently. The old insecurities that used to haunt me are just about all gone, and instead of thinking fear thoughts of defeat and ineffectiveness, I think thoughts of faith and courage. It is really wonderful the way this method has changed me. It has helped in my business, too, for how can one expect to make a sale if he drives up to a customer's place of business thinking he is not going to make a sale?"

This plan used by my friend is a very wise one. By filling his mind with affirmations of the presence

support, and help of God, he had actually changed his thought processes. He put an end to the domination of his long-held sense of insecurity. His potential powers were set free.

We build up the feeling of insecurity or security by how we think. If in our thoughts we constantly fix attention upon sinister expectations of dire events that might happen, the result will be constantly to feel insecure. And what is even more serious is the tendency to create, by the power of thought, the very condition we fear. This salesman actually created positive results by vital thoughts of courage and confidence through the process of placing the cards before him in his car. His powers, previously inhibited by a defeat psychology, now flowed out of a personality in which creative attitudes had been stimulated.

Lack of self-confidence apparently is one of the great problems besetting people today. In a university a survey was made of six hundred students in psychology courses. The students were asked to state their most difficult personal problem. Seventy-five per cent listed lack of confidence. It can safely be assumed that the same large proportion is true of the population generally. Everywhere you encounter people who are inwardly afraid, who shrink from life, who suffer from a deep sense of inadequacy and insecurity, who doubt their own powers. Deep within themselves they mistrust their ability to meet responsibilities or to grasp opportunities. Always they are beset by the vague and sinister fear that something is not going to be quite right. They do not believe that they have it in them to be what they want to be, and so they try to make themselves content with something less than that of which they are capable. Thousands upon thousands go crawling through life on their hands and knees, defeated and afraid. And in most cases such frustration of power is unnecessary.

The blows of life, the accumulation of difficulties, the multiplication of problems tend to sap energy and leave you spent and discouraged. In such a condition the true status of your power is often obscured, and a person yields to a discouragement that is not justified by the facts. It is vital and essential to re-appraise your personality assets. When done in an attitude of reasonableness, this evaluation will convince you that you are less defeated than you think you are.

For example, a man fifty-two years of age consulted me. He was in great despondency. He revealed utter despair. He said he "was all through." He informed me that everything he had built up over his lifetime had been swept away.

"Everything?" I asked.

"Everything," he repeated. He was through, he reiterated. "I have nothing left at all. Everything is gone. There is no hope, and I am too old to start all over again. I have lost all faith."

Naturally I felt sympathetic toward him, but it was evident that his chief trouble was the fact that dark shadows of hopelessness had entered his mind and discolored his outlook, distorting it. Behind this twisted thinking his true powers had retreated, leaving him without force.

"So," I said, "suppose we take a piece of paper and write down the values you have left."

"There's no use," he sighed. "I haven't a single thing left. I thought I told you that."

I said, "Let's just see anyway." Then asked, "Is your wife still with you?"

"Why, yes, of course, and she is wonderful. We have been married for thirty years. She would never leave me no matter how bad things are."

"All right, let us put that down—your wife is still with you and she will never leave you no matter what happens. How about your children? Got any children?"

"Yes," he replied, "I have three and they are certainly wonderful. I have been touched by the way they have come to me and said, 'Dad, we love you, and we'll stand by you.'"

"Well, then," I said, "that is number two—three children who love you and who will stand by you. G

any friends?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, "I really have some fine friends. I must admit they have been pretty decent. They have come around and said they would like to help me, but what can they do? They can't do anything."

"That is number three—you have some friends who would like to help you and who hold you in esteem. How about your integrity? Have you done anything wrong?"

"My integrity is all right," he replied. "I have always tried to do the right thing and my conscience is clear."

"All right," I said, "we will put that down as number four—integrity. How about your health?"

"My health is all right," he answered. "I have had very few sick days and I guess I am in pretty good shape physically."

"So let's put down as number five—good physical health. How about the United States? Do you think it's still doing business and is the land of opportunity?"

"Yes," he said. "It is the only country in the world I would want to live in."

"That is number six—you live in the United States, land of opportunity, and you are glad to be here. Then I asked, "How about your religious faith? Do you believe in God and that God will help you?"

"Yes," he said. "I do not think I could have gotten through this at all if I hadn't had some help from God."

"Now," I said, "let's list the assets we have figured out:

"1. A wonderful wife—married for thirty years.

"2. Three devoted children who will stand by you.

"3. Friends who will help you and who hold you in esteem.

"4. Integrity—nothing to be ashamed of.

"5. Good physical health.

"6. Live in the United States, the greatest country in the world.

"7. Have religious faith."

I shoved it across the table at him. "Take a look at that. I guess you have quite a total of assets. I thought you told me everything had been swept away."

He grinned ashamedly. "I guess I didn't think of those things. I never thought of it that way. Perhaps things aren't so bad at that," he said pensively. "Maybe I can start all over again if I can just get some confidence, if I can get the feel of some power within me."

Well, he got it, and he did start all over again. But he did so only when he changed his viewpoint, his mental attitude. Faith swept away his doubts, and more than enough power to overcome all his difficulties emerged from within him.

This incident illustrates a profound truth which is expressed in a very important statement made by the famous psychiatrist, Dr. Karl Menninger. He said, "Attitudes are more important than facts." This is worth repeating until its truth grips you. Any fact facing us, however difficult, even seeming hopeless, is not so important as our attitude toward that fact. How you think about a fact may defeat you before you ever do anything about it. You may permit a fact to overwhelm you mentally before you start to deal with it actually. On the other hand, a confident and optimistic thought pattern can modify or overcome the fact altogether.

I know a man who is a tremendous asset to his organization, not because of any extraordinary abilities but because he invariably demonstrates a triumphant thought pattern. Perhaps his associates view his proposition pessimistically, so he employs what he calls "the vacuum-cleaner method." That is, by

series of questions he “sucks the dust” out of his associates’ minds; he draws out their negative attitudes. Then quietly he suggests positive ideas concerning the proposition until a new set of attitudes gives them a new concept of the facts.

They often comment upon how different facts appear when this man “goes to work on them.” It’s the confidence attitude that makes the difference, nor does this rule out objectivity in an appraisal of facts. The inferiority complex victim sees all facts through discolored attitudes. The secret correction is simply to gain a normal view, and that is always slanted on the positive side.

So if you feel that you are defeated and have lost confidence in your ability to win, sit down, take a piece of paper and make a list, not of the factors that are against you, but of those that are for you. If you or I or anybody think constantly of the forces that seem to be against us, we will build them up into a power far beyond that which is justified. They will assume a formidable strength which they do not actually possess. But if, on the contrary, you mentally visualize and affirm and reaffirm your assets and keep your thoughts on them, emphasizing them to the fullest extent, you will rise out of any difficulty regardless of what it may be. Your inner powers will reassert themselves and, with the help of God, lift you from defeat to victory.

One of the most powerful concepts, one which is a sure cure for lack of confidence, is the thought that God is actually with you and helping you. This is one of the simplest teachings in religion, namely that Almighty God will be your companion, will stand by you, help you, and see you through. No other idea is so powerful in developing self-confidence as this simple belief when practiced. To practice it simply affirm “God is with me; God is helping me; God is guiding me.” Spend several minutes each day visualizing His presence. Then practice believing that affirmation. Go about your business on the assumption that what you have affirmed and visualized is true. Affirm it, visualize it, believe it, and it will actualize itself. The release of power which this procedure stimulates will astonish you.

Feelings of confidence depend upon the type of thoughts that habitually occupy your mind. Think of defeat and you are bound to feel defeated. But practice thinking confident thoughts, make it a dominating habit, and you will develop such a strong sense of capacity that regardless of what difficulties arise you will be able to overcome them. Feelings of confidence actually induce increased strength. Basil King once said, “Be bold, and mighty forces will come to your aid.” Experience proves the truth of this. You will feel these mighty forces aiding you as your increasing faith reconditions your attitudes.

Emerson declared a tremendous truth, “They conquer who believe they can.” And he added, “Do the thing you fear and the death of fear is certain.” Practice confidence and faith and your fears and insecurities will soon have no power over you.

Once when Stonewall Jackson planned a daring attack, one of his generals fearfully objected, saying “I am afraid of this” or “I fear that ...” Putting his hand on his timorous subordinate’s shoulder, Jackson said, “General, never take counsel of your fears.”

The secret is to fill your mind with thoughts of faith, confidence, and security. This will force out and expel all thoughts of doubt, all lack of confidence. To one man who for a long time had been haunted by insecurities and fears I suggested that he read through the Bible underlining in red pencil every statement it contains relative to courage and confidence. He also committed them to memory, in effect cramming his mind full of the healthiest, happiest, most powerful thoughts in the world. The dynamic thoughts changed him from cringing hopelessness to a man of compelling force. The change in him in a few weeks was remarkable. From almost complete defeat he became a confident and inspiring personality. He now radiates courage and magnetism. He regained confidence in himself and his own powers by a simple process of thought conditioning.

To sum up—what can you do *now* to build up your self-confidence? Following are ten simple workable rules for overcoming inadequacy attitudes and learning to practice faith. Thousands have used these rules, reporting successful results. Undertake this program and you, too, will build confidence in your powers. You, too, will have a new feeling of power.

1. Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold the picture tenaciously. Never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop this picture. Never think of yourself as failing; never doubt the reality of the mental image. That is most dangerous, for the mind always tries to complete what it pictures. So *always* picture “success” no matter how bad things seem to be going at the moment.
2. Whenever a negative thought concerning your personal powers comes to mind, deliberately voice a positive thought to cancel it out.
3. Do not build up obstacles in your imagination. Depreciate every so-called obstacle. Minimize them. Difficulties must be studied and efficiently dealt with to be eliminated, but they must be seen for only what they are. They must not be inflated by fear thoughts.
4. Do not be awestruck by other people and try to copy them. Nobody can be you as efficiently as YOU can. Remember also that most people, despite their confident appearance and demeanor, are often as scared as you are and as doubtful of themselves.
5. Ten times a day repeat these dynamic words, “If God be *for* us, who can be *against* us?” (Romans 8:31) (Stop reading and repeat them NOW slowly and confidently.)
6. Get a competent counselor to help you understand why you do what you do. Learn the origin of your inferiority and self-doubt feelings which often begin in childhood. Self-knowledge leads to a cure.
7. Ten times each day practice the following affirmation, repeating it out loud if possible. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13) Repeat those words NOW. This magic statement is the most powerful antidote on earth to inferiority thoughts.
8. Make a true estimate of your own ability, then raise it 10 per cent. Do not become egotistical, but develop a wholesome self-respect. Believe in your own God-released powers.
9. Put yourself in God’s hands. To do that simply state, “I am in God’s hands.” Then believe you are NOW receiving all the power you need. “Feel” it flowing into you. Affirm that “the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21) in the form of adequate power to meet life’s demands.
10. Remind yourself that God is with you and nothing can defeat you. Believe that you *now* RECEIVE power from him.

A Peaceful Mind Generates Power

AT BREAKFAST IN A HOTEL dining room three of us fell to discussing how well we had slept the night before, a truly momentous topic. One man complained of a sleepless night. He had tossed and turned and was about as exhausted as when he retired. “Guess I’d better stop listening to the news before going to bed,” he observed. “I tuned in last night and sure got an ear full of trouble.”

That is quite a phrase, “an ear full of trouble.” Little wonder he had a disturbed night. “Maybe the coffee I drank before retiring had something to do with it,” he mused.

The other man spoke up, “As for me, I had a grand night. I got my news from the evening paper and from an early broadcast and had a chance to digest it before I went to sleep. Of course,” he continued, “I used my go-to-sleep plan which never fails to work.”

I prodded him for his plan, which he explained as follows: “When I was a boy, my father, a farmer, had the habit of gathering the family in the parlor at bedtime and he read to us out of the Bible. I can’t hear him yet. In fact, every time I hear those Bible verses I always seem to hear them in the tone of my father’s voice. After prayers I would go up to my room and sleep like a top. But when I left home I got away from the Bible reading and prayer habit.

“I must admit that for years practically the only time I ever prayed was when I got into a jam. But some months ago my wife and I, having a number of difficult problems, decided we would try it again. We found it a very helpful practice, so now every night before going to bed she and I together read the Bible and have a little session of prayer. I don’t know what there is about it, but I have been sleeping better and things have improved all down the line. In fact, I find it so helpful that even out on the road, as I am now, I still read the Bible and pray. Last night I got into bed and read the 23rd Psalm. I read it out loud and it did me a lot of good.”

He turned to the other man and said, “I didn’t go to bed with an ear full of trouble. I went to sleep with a mind full of peace.”

Well, there are two cryptic phrases for you—“an ear full of trouble” and “a mind full of peace.” Which do you choose?

The essence of the secret lies in a change of mental attitude. One must learn to live on a different thought basis, and even though thought change requires effort, it is much easier than to continue living as you are. The life of strain is difficult. The life of inner peace, being harmonious and without stress, is the easiest type of existence. The chief struggle then in gaining mental peace is the effort of revamping your thinking to the relaxed attitude of acceptance of God’s gift of peace.

As an illustration of taking a relaxed attitude and therefore receiving peace, I always think of an experience in a certain city where I lectured one evening. Prior to going on the platform I was sitting backstage going over my speech when a man approached and wanted to discuss a personal problem. I informed him that at the moment it was impossible to talk as I was just about to be introduced, and I asked him to wait. While speaking I noticed him in the wings nervously pacing up and down, but afterward he was nowhere about. However, he had given me his card, which indicated that he was a man of considerable influence in that city.

Back at my hotel, although it was late, I was still troubled by this man so I telephoned him. He was surprised at my call and explained that he did not wait because obviously I was busy. “I just wanted you to pray with me,” he said. “I thought if you would pray with me, perhaps I could get some peace.”

“There is nothing to prevent us from praying together on the telephone right now,” I said.

Somewhat in surprise, he replied, “I have never heard of praying on the telephone.”

“Why not?” I asked. “A telephone is simply a gadget of communication. You are some blocks from me, but by means of the telephone we are together. Besides,” I continued, “the Lord is with each of us. He is at both ends of this line and in between. He is with you and He is with me.”

“All right,” he conceded. “I’d like to have you pray for me.”

So I closed my eyes and prayed for the man over the telephone, and I prayed just as though we were in the same room. He could hear and the Lord could hear. When I finished I suggested, “Won’t you pray?” There was no response. Then at the other end of the line I heard sobbing and finally, “I can’t talk,” he said.

“Go on and cry for a minute or two and then pray,” I suggested. “Simply tell the Lord everything that is bothering you. I assume this is a private line, but if not, and if anybody is listening, it won’t matter. As far as anyone is concerned, we are just a couple of voices. Nobody would know it is you and I.”

Thus encouraged, he started to pray, hesitantly at first, and then with great impetuosity he poured out the contents of his heart, and it was filled with hate, frustration, failure—a mass of it. Finally he prayed plaintively.

“Dear Jesus, I have a lot of nerve to ask you to do anything for me, because I never did anything for you. I guess you know what a no-account I am, even though I put on a big front. I am sick of all this. dear Jesus. Please help me.”

So I prayed again, and asked the Lord to answer his prayer, then said, “Lord, at the other end of the telephone wire, place your hand on my friend and give him peace. Help him now to yield himself and accept your gift of peace.” Then I stopped, and there was a rather long pause, and I shall never forget the tone in his voice as I heard him say, “I shall always remember this experience, and I want you to know that for the first time in months I feel clean inside and happy and peaceful.” This man employed a simple technique for having a peaceful mind. He emptied his mind and he received peace as a gift from God.

As a physician said, “Many of my patients have nothing wrong with them except their thoughts. So I have a favorite prescription that I write for some. but it is not a prescription that you can fill at a drugstore. The prescription I write is a verse from the Bible, ‘Romans 12:2.’ I do not write out the verse for my patients. I make them look it up and it reads: ‘... be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind ...’ To be happier and healthier they need a renewing of their minds, that is, a change in the pattern of their thoughts. When they ‘take’ this prescription, they actually achieve a mind full of peace. That helps to produce health and well-being.”

A primary method for gaining a mind full of peace is to practice emptying the mind. This will be emphasized in another chapter, but I mention it here to underscore the importance of a frequent mental catharsis. I recommend a mind-emptying at least twice a day, more often if necessary. Definitely practice emptying your mind of fears, hates, insecurities, regrets, and guilt feelings. The mere fact that you consciously make this effort to empty your mind tends to give relief. Haven’t you ever experienced a sense of release when you have been able to pour out to somebody whom you can trust your worrisome matters that lay heavy upon the heart? As a pastor I have often observed how much it means to people to have someone to whom they can truly and in confidence tell everything troubling their minds.

I conducted a religious service on board the *S.S. Lurline* on a recent voyage to Honolulu. In the course of my talk I suggested that people who were carrying worries in their minds might go to the stern of the vessel and imaginatively take such anxious thought out of the mind, drop it overboard, and watch it disappear in the wake of the ship. It seems an almost childlike suggestion, but a man came to me

later that day and said, "I did as you suggested and am amazed at the relief it has given me. During this voyage," he said, "every evening at sunset I am going to drop all my worries overboard until I develop the psychology of casting them entirely out of my consciousness. Every day I shall watch them disappear in the great ocean of time. Doesn't the Bible say something about 'forgetting the things that are behind'?"

The man to whom this suggestion appealed is not an impractical sentimentalist. On the contrary, he is a person of extraordinary mental stature, an outstanding leader in his field.

Of course, emptying the mind is not enough. When the mind is emptied, something is bound to enter. The mind cannot long remain a vacuum. You cannot go around permanently with an empty mind. I admit that some people seem to accomplish that feat, but by and large it is necessary to refill the emptied mind or the old, unhappy thoughts which you have cast out will come sneaking in again.

To prevent that happening, immediately start filling your mind with creative and healthy thoughts. Then when the old fears, hates, and worries that have haunted you for so long try to edge back in, they will in effect find a sign on the door of your mind reading "occupied." They may struggle for admission, for having lived in your mind for a long time, they feel at home there. But the new and healthy thoughts which you have taken in will now be stronger and better fortified, and therefore able to repulse them. Presently the old thoughts will give up altogether and leave you alone. You will permanently enjoy a mind full of peace.

At intervals during the day practice thinking a carefully selected series of peaceful thoughts. Let mental pictures of the most peaceful scenes you have ever witnessed pass across your mind, as, for example, some beautiful valley filled with the hush of evening time, as the shadows lengthen and the sun sinks to rest. Or recall the silvery light of the moon falling upon rippling waters, or remember the sea washing gently upon soft shores of sand. Such peaceful thought images will work upon your mind as a healing medicine. So now and then during every day allow motion pictures of peace slowly to cross your mind.

Practice the technique of suggestive articulation, that is, repeat audibly some peaceful words. Words have profound suggestive power, and there is healing in the very saying of them. Utter a series of panicky words and your mind will immediately go into a mild state of nervousness. You will perhaps feel a sinking in the pit of your stomach that will affect your entire physical mechanism. If, on the contrary, you speak peaceful, quieting words, your mind will react in a peaceful manner. Use such a word as "tranquillity." Repeat that word slowly several times. *Tranquillity* is one of the most beautiful and melodious of all English words, and the mere saying of it tends to induce a tranquil state.

Another healing word is "serenity." Picturize serenity as you say it. Repeat it slowly and in the mood of which the word is a symbol. Words such as these have a healing potency when used in this manner. It is also helpful to use lines from poetry or passages from the Scriptures. A man of my acquaintance who achieved a remarkable peace of mind has the habit of writing on cards unusual quotations expressing peacefulness. He carries one of the cards in his wallet at all times, referring to it frequently until each quotation is committed to memory. He says that each such idea dropped into the subconscious "lubricates" his mind with peace. A peaceful concept is indeed oil on troubled thoughts. One of the quotations which he used is from a sixteenth-century mystic, "Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. Everything passes away except God. God alone is sufficient."

The words of the Bible have a particularly strong therapeutic value. Drop them into your mind, allowing them to "dissolve" in consciousness, and they will spread a healing balm over your entire mental structure. This is one of the simplest processes to perform and also one of the most effective for attaining peace of mind.

A salesman told me of an incident that took place in a Midwestern hotel room. He was one of a group of businessmen having a conference. One man was very much on edge. He was snappy, argumentative, high-strung. Everyone present knew him quite well and realized he was under great nervous pressure. But finally his irritating attitudes began to get on everybody's nerves. Presently this nervous individual opened his traveling bag, took out a big bottle of brackish-looking medicine, and poured himself a large dose. Asked what this medicine was, he growled, "Oh, it's something for nerves. I feel like I'm going to break in pieces. The pressure I'm under makes me wonder if I am going to crack up. I try not to show it, but I suppose even you fellows have observed that I'm nervous. This medicine was recommended and I've swallowed several bottles of it, but I don't seem to get any better."

The other men laughed, then one said in a kindly manner, "Bill, I don't know anything about the medicine you are taking. Maybe it's all right. It probably is, but I can give you some medicine for those nerves that will do you more good than that. I know, because it cured me, and I was worse off than you are."

"What is this medicine?" snapped the other.

The other man reached into his bag and pulled out a book. "This book will do the job, and I really mean it. I suppose you think it strange that I carry a Bible around in my bag, but I don't care who knows it. I am not a bit ashamed of it. I have been carrying this Bible in my bag for the past two years and I have marked places in it that help keep my mind at peace. It works for me, and I think it can do something for you too. Why not give it a trial?"

The others were listening with interest to this unusual speech. The nervous man had sunk low in his chair. Seeing that he was making an impression, the speaker continued, "I had a peculiar experience in a hotel one night which got me into the habit of reading the Bible. I was getting into a pretty tense state. I was out on a business trip and late one afternoon came up to my room terribly nervous. I tried to write some letters, but couldn't get my mind on them. I paced up and down the room, tried to read the paper, but that annoyed me, so I decided to go down and get a drink—anything to get away from myself.

"While standing by the dresser, my eye happened to fall upon a Bible lying there. I had seen many such Bibles in hotel rooms, but had never read any of them. However, something impelled me, and I opened the book to one of the Psalms and started to read it. I remember that I read that one standing up, then sat down and read another. I was interested but certainly surprised at myself—me reading the Bible! It was a laugh, but I kept on reading.

"Soon I came to the 23rd Psalm. I had learned that one as a boy in Sunday school and was surprised that I still knew most of it by heart. I tried saying it over, especially that line where it says, 'He leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul.' I liked that line. It sort of got me. I sat there repeating it over and over—and the next thing I knew I woke up.

"Apparently I had dropped off to sleep and slept soundly. I slept only about fifteen minutes, but upon awakening was as refreshed and rested as if I'd had a good night's sleep. I can remember yet the wonderful feeling of complete refreshment. Then I realized that I felt peaceful, and said to myself, 'Isn't it strange? What is wrong with me that I have missed something as wonderful as this?'"

"So after that experience," he said, "I bought a Bible, a little one I could put in my bag, and I've been carrying it ever since. I honestly like to read it, and I am not nearly so nervous as I used to be. So," he added, "try that, Bill, and see if it doesn't work."

Bill did try it, and he kept on trying it. He reported that it was a bit strange and difficult for him at first, and he read the Bible on the sly when nobody was around. He didn't want to be thought holy or pious. But now he says he brings it out on trains and planes or "any old place" and reads it, and

“does him a world of good.”

“I no longer need to take nerve medicine,” he declared.

This scheme must have worked in Bill’s case, for he is easy to get along with now. His emotions are under control. These two men found that getting peace of mind isn’t complicated. You merely fill your mind with thoughts that cause it to be peaceful. To have a mind full of peace merely fill it full of peace. It’s as simple as that.

There are other practical ways by which you can develop serenity and quiet attitudes. One way is through your conversation. Depending upon the words we use and the tone in which we use them, we can talk ourselves into being nervous, high-strung, and upset. We can talk ourselves into either negative or positive results. By our speech we can also achieve quiet reactions. Talk peaceful to be peaceful.

In a group when the conversation takes a trend that is upsetting, try injecting peaceful ideas into the talk. Note how it counteracts the nervous tensions. Conversation filled with expressions of unhappiness and expectation, at breakfast, for example, often sets the tone of the day. Little wonder things turn out according to the unhappy specifications. Negative conversation adversely affects circumstances. Certainly talk of a tense and nervous nature enhances inner agitation.

On the contrary, start each day by affirming peaceful, contented, and happy attitudes and your day will tend to be pleasant and successful. Such attitudes are active and definite factors in creating satisfactory conditions. Watch your manner of speech then if you wish to develop a peaceful state of mind.

It is important to eliminate from conversations all negative ideas, for they tend to produce tension and annoyance inwardly. For example, when you are with a group of people at luncheon, do not comment that the “Communists will soon take over the country.” In the first place, Communists are not going to take over the country, and by so asserting you create a depressing reaction in the minds of others. This undoubtedly affects digestion adversely. The depressing remark colors the attitude of all present, and everyone goes away with a perhaps slight but definite feeling of annoyance. They also carry away with them a mild but definite feeling that something is wrong with everything. There are times when we must face these harsh questions and deal with them objectively and vigorously, and no one has more contempt for Communism than I have, but as a general thing to have peace of mind, fill your personal and group conversations with positive, happy, optimistic, satisfying expressions.

The words we speak have a direct and definite effect upon our thoughts. Thoughts create words, for words are the vehicles of ideas. But words also affect thoughts and help to condition if not to create attitudes. In fact, what often passes for thinking starts with talk. Therefore if the average conversation is scrutinized and disciplined to be sure that it contains peaceful expressions, the result will be peaceful ideas and ultimately, therefore, a peaceful mind.

Another effective technique in developing a peaceful mind is the daily practice of silence. Everyone should insist upon not less than a quarter of an hour of absolute quiet every twenty-four hours. Go alone into the quietest place available to you and sit or lie down for fifteen minutes and practice the art of silence. Do not talk to anyone. Do not write. Do not read. Think as little as possible. Throw your mind into neutral. Conceive of your mind as quiescent, inactive. This will not be easy at first because thoughts are stirring up your mind, but practice will increase your efficiency. Conceive of your mind as the surface of a body of water and see how nearly quiet you can make it, so that there is not a ripple. When you have attained a quiescent state, then begin to listen for the deeper sounds of harmony and beauty and of God that are to be found in the essence of silence.

Americans unfortunately are not skilled in this practice, which is a pity, for as Thomas Carlyle said

“Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves.” This generation of Americans has missed something that our forefathers knew and which helped to condition their character—and that is the silence of the great forest or of the far-reaching plains.

Perhaps our lack of inner peace is due to some extent to the effect of noise upon the nervous system of modern people. Scientific experiments show that noise in the place where we work, live, or sleep reduces efficiency to a noticeable degree. Contrary to popular belief, it is doubtful if we ever completely adjust our physical, mental, or nervous mechanisms to noise. No matter how familiar a repeated sound becomes, it never passes unheard by the subconscious. Automobile horns, the roar of airplanes, and other strident noises actually result in physical activity during sleep. Impulses transmitted to and through the nerves by these sounds cause muscular movements which detract from real rest. If the reaction is sufficiently severe, it partakes of the nature of shock.

On the contrary, silence is a healing, soothing, healthy practice. Starr Daily says, “No man or woman of my acquaintance who knows how to practice silence and does it has ever been sick to my knowledge. I have noticed that my own afflictions come upon me when I do not balance expression with relaxation.” Starr Daily closely associates silence with spiritual healing. The sense of rest that results from a practice of complete silence is a therapy of utmost value.

In the circumstances of modern life, with its acceleration of pace, the practice of silence is admittedly not so simple as it was in the days of our forefathers. A vast number of noise-producing gadgets exist that they did not know, and our daily program is more hectic. Space has been annihilated in the modern world, and apparently we are also attempting to annihilate the factor of time. It is only rarely possible for an individual to walk in deep woods or sit by the sea or meditate on a mountaintop or on the deck of a vessel in the midst of the ocean. But when we do have such experiences, we can print on the mind the picture of the silent place and the feel of the moment and return to it in memory to live over again just as truly as when we were actually in that scene. In fact, when you return to it in memory the mind tends to remove any unpleasant factors present in the actual situation. The memory visit is often an improvement over the actual for the mind tends to reproduce only the beauty in the remembered scene.

For example, as I write these words, I am on a balcony of one of the most beautiful hotels in the world, the Royal Hawaiian on the famed and romantic Waikiki Beach in Honolulu, Hawaii. I am looking into a garden filled with graceful palm trees, swaying in the balmy breeze. The air is laden with the aroma of exotic flowers. Hibiscus, of which on these islands there are two thousand varieties, fill the garden. Outside my windows are papaya trees laden with ripening fruit. The brilliant color of the royal poinciana, the flame of the forest trees, adds to the glamor of the scene; and the acacia trees are hung heavily with their exquisite white flowers.

The incredible blue ocean surrounding these islands stretches away to the horizon. The white waves are surging in, and the Hawaiians and my fellow visitors are riding gracefully on surf-boards and outrigger canoes. Altogether it is a scene of entrancing beauty. It has an indescribably healing effect upon me as I sit here writing about the power generated in a peaceful mind. The insistent responsibilities under which I ordinarily live seem so far away. Though I am in Hawaii to give a series of lectures and to write this book, nevertheless the peace with which this place is filled envelops me. Yet I realize that when I have returned to my home in New York, five thousand miles away, I shall only then truly savor the exquisite joy of the beauty which I now behold. It will become enshrined in memory as a prized retreat to which my mind can go in the busy days that lie ahead. Often, when far from this idyllic place, I shall return in memory to find peace along the palm-lined, foam-washed beach at Waikiki.

Fill your mind with all peaceful experiences possible, then make planned and deliberate excursions

them in memory. You must learn that the easiest way to an easy mind is to create an easy mind. This is done by practice, by the application of some such simple principles as outlined here. The mind quickly responds to teaching and discipline. You can make the mind give you back anything you want, but remember the mind can give back only what it was first given. Saturate your thoughts with peaceful experiences, peaceful words and ideas, and ultimately you will have a storehouse of peace-producing experiences to which you may turn for refreshment and renewal of your spirit. It will be a vast source of power.

I spent a night with a friend who has a very lovely home. We had breakfast in a unique and interesting dining room. The four walls are painted in a beautiful mural picturing the countryside in which my host was reared as a boy. It is a panorama of rolling hills, gentle valleys, and singing streams, the latter clean and sun speckled, and babbling over rocks. Winding roads meander through pleasant meadows. Little houses dot the landscape. In a central position is a white church surmounted by a tall steeple.

As we breakfasted my host talked of this region of his youth, pointing out various points of interest in the painting around the wall. Then he said, "Often as I sit in this dining room I go from point to point in my memory and relive other days. I recall, for example, walking up that lane as a boy with bare feet, and I can remember yet how the clean dust felt between my toes. I remember fishing in that trout stream on many a summer afternoon and coasting down those hills in the wintertime.

"There is the church I attended as a boy." He grinned and said, "I sat through many a long sermon at that church but gratefully recall to mind the kindness of the people and the sincerity of their lives. I can sit here and look at that church and think of the hymns I heard there with my mother and father. I we sat together in the pew. They are long buried in that cemetery alongside the church, but in memory I go and stand by their graves and hear them speak to me as in days gone by. I get very tired and sometimes am nervous and tense. It helps to sit here and go back to the days when I had an untroubled mind, when life was new and fresh. It does something for me. It gives me peace."

Perhaps we all cannot have such murals on the dining-room walls, but you can put them around the wall of your mind: pictures of the most beautiful experiences of your life. Spend time among the thoughts which these pictures suggest. No matter how busy you may be or what responsibilities you carry, this simple, rather unique practice, having proved successful in many instances, may have a beneficial effect upon you. It is an easily practiced, easy way to a peaceful mind.

There is a factor in the matter of inner peace which must be stated because of its importance. Frequently I find that people who are lacking in inner peace are victims of a self-punishment mechanism. At some time in their experience they have committed a sin and the sense of guilt haunts them. They have sincerely sought Divine forgiveness, and the good Lord will always forgive anyone who asks Him and who means it. However, there is a curious quirk within the human mind whereby sometimes an individual will not forgive himself.

He feels that he deserves punishment and therefore is constantly anticipating that punishment. As a result he lives in a constant apprehension that something is going to happen. In order to find peace under these circumstances he must increase the intensity of his activity. He feels that hard work will give him some release from his sense of guilt. A physician told me that in his practice a number of cases of nervous breakdown were traceable to a sense of guilt for which the patient had unconsciously attempted to compensate by hectic overwork. The patient attributed his breakdown not to the sense of guilt, but to his overworked condition. "But," said the physician, "these men need not have broken down from overwork if first the sense of guilt had been fully released." Peace of mind under such circumstances is available by yielding the guilt as well as the tension it produces to the healing therapy of Christ.

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