

Introduction

The Spontaneous Power of Thought

If you intend to improve, throw away such thoughts as these: if I neglect my affairs, I shall not have the means of living ...

—EPICTETUS

Is your life good, or is it better than good?

Did you ever make an overall assessment of your life? If not, would you find that useful? Are you satisfied with your current life? Or do you wish to improve it? If yes, did you ever ponder how this could possibly be done?

We are all going through phases of up and down, but this is not what I am talking about in this book. Our lives are cyclic, they are not linear because we constantly run through cycles. That is so for all of us. And yet our lives are different. You may have a neighbor whom you see entering his stretch limo in

the morning with a radiant smile; but every time you see that, this nagging thought comes up:

—Why is it that this man is so successful, so rich and so happy, and I am not? What does he do to be like that? Does he *do* anything special for that to happen?

Well, yes, he might indeed do something about it, but perhaps not consciously so ...

We do not know, but
we may assume that if he
does not consciously make
that happen, he makes it
happen unconsciously, for example by thinking good thoughts, constructive, fertile thoughts, and by being emotionally balanced, instead of running wild in fear and resentment ever so often.

Is your life good, or
is it better than good?

And you, are you feeling jealous when you see him like that, and when you see his beautiful wife and happy children? Does it give you a bad moment to see that? Does it make you wonder why the world is 'so unjust'? *Is it really?*

I do not make a judgment. It would be silly in its generality and wouldn't be needed anyway because the purpose of this book is pragmatic, not speculative.

I do not know if the world is just or unjust, I do not even bother. I bother about what I *think* about the world, and myself, and others. Why do I?

Some years ago, I came to observing my thoughts, and that was a surprising new start. I found that my thinking was negative, and that I was thinking not very high about myself. At that time, I still believed that the world is just a chance event, that for some the sun is shining brighter as a matter of luck and for others not, because they have bad luck. I did not really believe that I had deserved my fate, I rather thought it was all random, that there was no intelligence behind this apparent injustice, that it was just a cosmic game, with winners here and losers there—and tomorrow all might be reversed, just as the weather changes.

I don't joke, I really believed it was so, while I must concede I never thought of it in depth, to a point to really look through the veil. I had to learn it all through what Ernest Holmes coined in 1927 as 'The Science of Mind.' So I studied this science, beginning with Joseph Murphy and Catherine Ponder, then Ernest Holmes and finally James Allen and Charles Fillmore and Charles Francis Haanel. It took me about

ten years. And one of the first things I learnt about was the 'Law of Attraction' ...

By and by, my life changed as I started to work with special affirmations. The first thing I realized was that my constant frustration and resentment vanished off as I went along, and made space for a feeling of poised existential calm, a certain stoicism, and this opened my mind to more input, first of all, more *positive* input.

I also began to be aware of how negative input triggers disturbances in the mind, and how to control this input.

After I had finalized my research work and published my books, there was a feeling of void for a certain time. I had accomplished a cycle of thirty years and felt there was time to do something else.

Some years ago I came to observing my thoughts, and that was a surprising new start.

So I began to draft presentations about 'The Science of Mind,' and how it had helped to change my life. My motivation was to assist others in achieving more in their lives, and to be happier, and

live in peace with themselves and others. Then I made the discovery that most people are actually negative, as negative as I had been, that they doubt the basic existential goodness of the universe, and of their fate. I saw that most people refuse to really be responsible for their lives, blaming their fate or God or society, or circumstances, their parents, their upbringing ...

All of that had a rather familiar ring in my ears. I had done the same for more than fifty years of my life. Now, to learn that it was like a general rule that people are overall negative in their facing life taught me an important lesson. I had believed that I was special somehow in my negativism, that I had turned bitter for some or the other rather particular reason, but now I realized that most other people used the same kind of vocabulary. They also blamed particular events, particular relationships, and their overall way to argue was very similar to mine. It was more often than not the parents or one 'bad' parent, it was an abusive educator, it was a sibling, or it was lacking money in the family. Somehow all these people seemed to have been conditioned to believe they had precise reasons to assume that they were worse off than others.

A little further down the road I understood that it effectively boiled down to *one monumental message* that is rather short:

—I was not loved!

But don't let us become sentimental and assume it was all a gigantic misunderstanding, that all parents love their children, but are often preoccupied with their problems, showing their children the cold face. I do not believe that love is *programmed* into the parent-child relationship. Research has shown that the caring instinct that is so conspicuous with animals is not instinctual with humans. It is something we learn through being cared for! If we were poorly cared for, our own attitude to care for our children is equally poorly developed.

Now, to learn that it was like a general rule that people are overall negative in their facing life taught me an important lesson.

In other words, when you feel you are being loved by your parents and educators, that you are respected for what you are, rather than being told to conform to certain expectations, you develop a nurturing spirit.

This is not just theory; it has even been confirmed by neuroscience. James W. Prescott, an American neuropsychologist found in many years of research that our brain develops differently when as infants we were breastfed only for a short while, when we were lacking tactile care and suffered from physical punishment, to sum it up: when we were growing in a non-caring environment. In such a case our brain develops in ways that are not natural but a consequence of the emotional starvation we have suffered early in life.

Now, of course, the problem with this kind of research is always that it is explanatory only; it doesn't help us to change our condition. While it is good to know that love is really a biological factor, not just a cultural achievement, our growing up sanely, the fact that it was lacking in our childhood cannot be changed; it has to be accepted! What does that mean?

Acceptance is something we hardly ever practice in our society. Somehow we are trained to fight against circumstances, even those we can't change. That is not smart, it's even a waste of energy! What is acceptance, then? Acceptance is an act of making peace, it is an act of forgiveness and also an attitude that puts understanding up as the solution.

I do not mean the rather superficial justifications such as ‘well, my parents didn’t have time for me, they were too busy with making money, but I understand that now and will thus not bother anymore.’ It can’t be done that way or nothing will change, and the old devils will come out of their cave again the next time you are down, when you are depressed and feel abandoned by all and everybody! Acceptance is more than understanding! It argues more on the line of ‘I accept it anyway, whatever they made wrong, whatever they had in mind, however inadequate they were, I accept it!’

The Better Life, title of this book, conveys that there is really something that is better than just good. What is it? It is your own expectation to live a fulfilled life, your belief you have deserved it, and your effort to make it

happen! When you want to have a life that is better than good, that is more than average, you need to make it happen! It will not happen by itself if you, like me, did not have the favors some luckier people

Acceptance is an act of making peace, it is an act of forgiveness and also an attitude that puts understanding up as a solution.

are born with, the support we needed as children, for developing our talents, even later as young adults. This, we cannot change, we cannot change the past, but we can all live lives that are better than good!

It is quite obvious that we cannot do that as long as we are blaming the past, our parents, a bad childhood, some or the other event, a wrong marriage or having entered the wrong business. The past is dead so blaming the past can logically not get you on a new constructive track. All that happened to you in the past also has no value for having you recognize your current potential. So if the past cannot be involved in your quest to lead a life that is better than good, is it perhaps the future that will get you closer to your dream? Well, the future is just potential, it is not yet realized, it's actually contained in the present. All the potential of that future is in the *now*, the present moment; it is from the now that the future unfolds, gradually. So should we not care about the now, the present rather than bothering about the past and the future?

You will also realize if you ponder the issue that worrying both about the past and the future will easily make you fearful and apprehensive, for you know what you went through in the past,

remembering the hurt and your past fears, and regarding the future, the anxiety is created by the fact that the future is utterly uncertain. So is it not actually dysfunctional to worry about the past or the future? Is it not much more constructive to bother about the present? But how are you dealing with the present? Are you worrying about your life or are you confident that you are going in the right direction?

Now, before I am going to explain the Law of Attraction in the first chapter of this book, let me point out to you what your options are before you ever set out to deliberately attract anything to you. Your options are that either you are setting your priorities and make up your mind what you really want in life, or you let others, or the mass mind decide for you. Do you find it difficult to choose? Are you perhaps feeling guilty or extravagant when you want a life that is better than good, a life in which your dreams are fulfilled and not piled up in the recesses of your yearning mind?

All the potential of that future is in the *now*, the present moment; it is from the now that the future unfolds, gradually.

If you are among those who are, like me, rather modest-minded when it goes to claim our riches in life, please ponder what happens if you refuse to choose! Do you agree that in such a case, choices will nevertheless be made, namely by fate? For example, when you go on vacation, would you not choose the hotel room you wish to have, the amenities, the view from the room, the size of the bed, or if the room comes with breakfast or not? Would you leave it over to the desk clerk to choose all these details for you? Obviously not, you would make a conscious choice, so what stands in the way of your choosing the greater pattern of your life, namely the details that make your life better than good?

Now you will want to know what I mean when I use this term, *better than good*, right? I simply mean a life that is above the law of averages, that is exuberant, sparkling, extraordinary, abundant, and happy! I mean a life where you virtually feel in which *direction* you are going, because you have attained a certain assurance of the good that comes to you. If you are drowned in debt, you may feel you are going in the wrong direction, while if you are in an upward cycle, for example after having realized a successful new start in your professional life, you may feel you

are going in the right direction. But of course, the feeling may not be the reality of what's actually happening.

Yet the rub is that feeling negative or positive about the direction of your life does have an impact upon your subconscious mind and that is why it's so important that you feel positive and free of guilt about yourself.

As life is *anyway uncertain* and you will not really know where you are going, why not adopting a positive attitude and learn how to program your subconscious mind accordingly?

Now let me explain how this works. What actually do I mean when I talk about the subconscious mind? I want to convey to you that we have two minds, a conscious or objective mind, and a subconscious or subjective mind. The objective mind focuses upon the objective material world out there, and it grasps and perceives reality through the five senses. It has also been called the male part of the mind.

The subconscious mind, by contrast, is the subjective mind, and has been called the female mind. It is not concerned with perception of reality but actually creates reality for us according to what we

feed it with through our thoughts and emotions. Thus this subjective or inner mind is like a field or acre that can be seeded in order to grow fruit. According to what you sow in it, you reap at the time of harvest.

The subconscious mind, unlike the conscious mind, is not able to discriminate between true and false. It accepts anything that is written on it by the conscious mind. That is why all kinds of suggestive therapies, be they religious or mundane are possible. People kiss a certain stone, worship a relic, caress the bone of a saint, go into certain waters that are supposed to have healing powers, or they go on a pilgrimage to a far-away monastery: they do all this in the firm belief that they will be cured of their disease. And they are! But why?

Because they believe in it so strongly that they impregnate their subconscious mind to a point that this inner mind accepts as true what they affirm. And when that

Why not adopting a positive attitude and learn how to program your subconscious mind accordingly?

happens, a healing is certain, but it may be temporary. Many who have been moved by certain ceremonies to which they saw many people flock for a common

purpose, and where there was a lot of chanting and dancing, and music, and exhilaration, have experienced short-time healing. The problem is that after a while, a few weeks later, the hypnotic effect vanished off and they were as miserable as before. Why was that? Because they had been in a delirium created by the ambience of the event. However, true and lasting healing requires us to participate in a more engaged manner in our healing process. This positive engagement is absolutely necessary to insure a long-term healing. What does it imply?

It requires you to take *responsibility for your disease* first of all. This means that you need to find the cause of it in the first place. The cause is always in the thought realm, not in outward reality. What you see in the life around you is effects. It's not the cause. The cause is within yourself, it is in your way to think and how positively or negatively you energize your thoughts with emotions. In other words, it's how you react to events in your life.

If, for example, you notice that you are abrasive in your relations with others, that you have strong feelings of resentment, that you hold on to peevish and grudges, once you feel inside, you will recognize your inner turmoil. You will become aware that there is not

a peaceful moment in your mind and that you are all torn up in strife and conflict. Thus, when you realize that you *know* that you are in a state of inner war!

This realization should be a signal for you to take another position altogether and get on a new track! In that case you need to make peace with not only yourself, your younger self, your past self, but also with others, all people who have had a negative impact on your life. As long as you haven't done that step, the remembrance of these people will be a bother to you, it will leave a sting in your mind every time you think of them, and this will prevent you from *experiencing true inner peace*.

Hence, to make peace with both yourself and all people you ever met in your life is the first priority in your new orientation of building a life that is better than good.

Q & A Session

Q. Are you satisfied with your current life? Or do you wish to change or improve it? What is your attitude toward material riches? Are you jealous to see others being richer than you?

A. These questions are the starting point of the present self-help book. You should ask them honestly to

yourself and find definite answers. It is only when you sincerely question yourself about the fundamentals of your life that you can start to live a life that is better than good.

Q. Do you think that life is a chance event, and that there are such things as 'good luck' and 'bad luck'?

A. The mass mind has it to belittle the decisive influence of our thoughts upon outward reality. And our science only most recently began to find out that thoughts and intentions really have a measurable impact upon matter. This was known to ancient philosophers but was denied by mechanistic science for the last about four hundred years, but now we got the proof that our thoughts really are energy streams that have a vibrational impact upon the creation and change of matter. As this is so, you will easily understand that your thoughts are the blueprint for the circumstances of your life. Hence, you need to think in the proper manner in order to bring your life up to the highest standard.

Q. Have you ever observed your thoughts? Can you make out a predominant line or characteristic in the quality of your thoughts? Can you say that they are either predominantly negative or predominantly positive?

A. We all have negative thoughts in a while, but it's different for the person who thinks *predominantly* in a negative way. In ordinary language, we call such a person a 'negative person.' This is interesting as a usage of language for here you see that we actually associate a person with the content of their predominant thoughts.

Q. Have you been conditioned to believe that you have precise reasons to assume that you are worse off than others; or have you had the feeling as a child that you were not loved at all by your parents?

A. You should ask these other questions to yourself to have clarity about how you face yourself, how you meet yourself, namely in your self-talk, as a friend or as an enemy. If the latter is the case, you must not wonder that you are following the scarcity principle, for if *you* don't accept your greatness, *who* will?

Q. Is acceptance something you must have experienced in childhood or you won't be able to carry it over into your adult life? Or is it rather an act of self-acceptance which is going to override whatever you experienced in terms of being accepted, or not, as a child?

A. In this book, I defend the latter point of view. I am saying throughout this book that self-acceptance is the point of departure of all, and any, self-help programs.

Without self-acceptance, you cannot honestly strive for anything extraordinary in your life and you will be like most people: going for bottomline! I wrote this book for you to long and strive for more than bottomline, much more! A life that is better than good is simply a good life, and a good life is a great, extraordinary, unusual life. It must be a life of your own making for we are all born equal in the sense that our starting point is helplessness. As an infant, you depended on your mother, and later, on your father, but now you are an adult which means you should depend solely upon yourself! That means you have build autonomy in your life, self-reliance and a feeling of independence. This independence, then, is the starting point for *interdependence*, which is the necessary spirit for collaboration with others. And collaborate you must, for achieving great success! As a patient, when you are sick, you need to become aware that ultimately, not the doctor is responsible for your disease, but you yourself! In this spirit of responsibility or *response ability*, you build awareness of the fact that all disease is an imbalance in the body, for the natural condition is health, and balance! Hence, when you are sick, you can respond to that sickness in a variety of ways: you can respond to it by denying a response altogether, and leave it over to chemicals—pharmaceuticals—to get you back into balance (chances are they won't be doing the job) or you begin to see in which ways you have contributed to the

the lack of ease (dis-ease) in your body. For example, when you suffer from gout (arthritis), you build awareness about your diet and you see that the cause is too much of uric acid in your blood; in other words, the pH of your blood is too acidic while naturally it must be alkaline. The cause simply is a diet that is too acidic, lots of seafood, eggs and meat, lots of alcohol, too much of fried or stir-fried food, not enough alkaline substances such as green vegetables and salads, fresh fruits, beans, lentils, etc. Also, you may lack healthy exercise and your kidneys have become lazy for it's the kidneys which remove acidity from the blood. As you see this, you will bring your body back into balance simply through a change of diet, and you do not even need a doctor for doing that. By the same token, you do not need a life coach or expensive seminars for bringing your life into a healthy balance. You just need to watch your thoughts and your self-talk and remedy negativity through forgiveness and putting your past behind you. Negativity prevents you from experiencing true inner peace, and without inner peace, you can't achieve greatness. All great achievements have been made by humans because they have built inner peace, a silent mind, for it is the silent mind that achieves great things in life!
