



remember, that memory coming by the study and application of a true philosophy of life. The reasonableness precedes the realization. We know the infinitude of numbers but cannot demonstrate that knowledge.

Changes go on, and for good, with our efforts to apply the philosophy. Any failures made in such case are stepping-stones to success because followed by undaunted struggles upward. The efforts count and are registered in the supersensuous consciousness. Sometime they will be of quality and force enough to counter balance all opposition.

Your letter conveyed to me the impression that G----- held in his mind too much of a condemnatory attitude as to the deficiencies and failings of others; perhaps not altogether condemnatory, but contemptuous, and that it was general in its application. My remarks were addressed to this, not to him as a person, and not to you.

I think that much of the failure of “old-timers” in study and knowledge of the meaning of Theosophy and the Movement lies in not realizing how necessary it is to apply to ourselves the criticisms and judgments we so freely apply to others. And in saying this I do not say that I am free from these faults. I only recognize that they exist and need correction. So, from that point of view, it is not desirable to let the mind become of the shape and mirror of undesirable things. Then it is not easy to avoid a contemptuous, if not a condemnatory attitude toward others, which engenders a sort of pride by comparison with our own attitude or what we imagine we would have done under similar circumstances. This is all detrimental to the performance of our own duty, and to our progress on the Path of Compassion. Errors have to be recognized and avoided, and pointed out to others when necessary; but there is a wide difference between that and mere gossip.

I have found that the knowledge of many “old-timers” consists of just such things. They give them forth to new adherents as evidence of their knowledge of the Movement, the Society, and by implication, of Theosophy. This is not wisdom nor is it good for anyone, and it certainly does not help Theosophy. Of course, here and there all the crimes in the category have been committed by members, though the majority were good, according to their “lights”, and well-meaning, but ignorantly misled by their misconceptions, desires and passions, sometimes. For all honestly striving with their enormous difficulties, we should have pity, sympathy, charity; we cannot do this if we mentally reproduce the opposites, weighing the act and actors in the balance of the mind.

You will run across more of this as “old-timers” drift in with their mental accumulations, so I wanted you to assist them to dump their encumbering load and to take a fresh cargo of good material. I would gently discourage them from making that kind of mental picture by paying little attention to it, and by presenting *present* time and opportunity.

(R.C.)

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Reproduced from “The Friendly Philosopher”, Robert Crosbie, Theosophy Co., Los Angeles, 415 pp., 1945, pp. 165-167.

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# **The Power of Character and Will**

## **Key Excerpts Selected From the Writings of a *New Thought* Thinker**

**O. S. Marden**



### **1. Having a Positive Nature**

The world takes us at our own valuation. It believes in the man who believes in himself, but it has little use for the timid man, the one who is never certain of himself; who cannot rely on his own judgment, who craves advice from others, and is afraid to go ahead on his own account.

It is the man with a positive nature, the man who believes that he is equal to the emergency, who believes he can do the thing he attempts, who wins the confidence of his fellow-man. He is beloved because he is brave and self-sufficient.

[From "An Iron Will", Orison Swett Marden, Merchant Books, USA, 2009, 83 pp., see p. 23.]

### **2. The Spirit of Boldness**

The man without self-reliance and an iron will is the plaything of chance, the puppet of his environment, the slave of circumstances.

Are not doubts the greatest of enemies? If you would succeed up to the limit of your possibilities, must you not constantly hold to the belief that you are success-organized, and that you will be successful, no matter what opposes?

You are never to allow a shadow of doubt to enter your mind that the Creator [1] intended you to win in life's battle. Regard every suggestion that your life may be a failure, that you are not made like those who succeed, and that success is not for you, as a traitor, and expel it from your mind as you would a thief from your house.

There is something sublime in the youth who possesses the spirit of boldness and fearlessness, who has proper confidence in his ability to do and dare.

[From "An Iron Will", Orison Swett Marden, Merchant Books, USA, 2009, 83 pp., see pp. 22-23.]

### **3. The Influence of (Good) Will**

What is will-power, looked at in a large way, but energy of character? Energy of will, self-originating force, is the soul of every great character. Where it is, there is life; where it is not, there is faintness, helplessness, and despondency.

"Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw; that there is some iron in you." Men who have left their mark upon the world have been men of great and prompt decision. The achievements of will-power are almost beyond computation. Scarcely anything seems impossible to the man who can will strongly enough and long enough.

["An Iron Will", p. 17.]

### **4. Regular Victories in a Long Battle**

There is no one so humble that he cannot improve his condition, if, "without halting, without rest", he is constantly "lifting better up to best".

If more people realized that great things are not always done by wonderful strokes of genius or brilliancy, they would not so often wait and wait for some extraordinary motive, some unusual opportunity for making a great hit, instead of trying to make each day a triumph over yesterday.

The plodder, who has an ideal, who tries to do everything he undertakes better than it has ever been done before, who is everlastingly trying to improve his best, gets way ahead of the man who is always waiting for a big opportunity, for a chance to do what he considers something worth while.

[From "Making Life a Masterpiece", Orison Swett Marden, Elibron Classics, 2005, a facsimile edition of the 1916 edition, 329 pp., see p. 153.]

### **5. Seeking One's Inner Growth**

It is very pleasant to slide along the line of least resistance, to take things easy, and not feel obliged to exert one's self too strenuously, but one never gets anywhere by adopting such a policy.

The habit of taking things easy is as insidious as the opium habit, the drug habit, or the drink habit. If you cannot overcome your natural inertia or acquired laziness, you may be sure you will never get beyond mediocrity, and may be a total failure.

The man who does things is ever master of himself, of his moods. He never stops to consider whether he feels like doing a thing or not. The only question he asks is whether it is the best thing to do, and if it is he will make himself do it.

If I were just starting out again in active life and wanted to make the most of myself, I would resolve to do whatever would promote my growth, whatever would make me a larger, broader and stronger man, regardless of whether it was pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable, convenient or inconvenient. 'Growth would be my goal', and I would sacrifice my comfort, leisure, good times - anything - to accomplish that one end.

["Making Life a Masterpiece", pp. 216-217.]

## **6. The Lesson of the Big Trees**

What is needed by him who would succeed in the highest degree possible is careful planning. He is to accumulate reserved power, that he may be equal to all emergencies.

Thomas Starr King said that the great trees of California gave him his first impression of the power of reserve. "It was the thought of the reserve energies that had been compacted into them", he said, "that stirred me. The mountains had given them their iron and rich stimulants, the hills had given them their soil, the clouds had given their rain and snow, and a thousand summers and winters had poured forth their treasures about their vast roots."

No young man can hope to do anything above the commonplace who has not made his life a reservoir of power on which he can constantly draw, which will never fail him in any emergency. Be sure that you have stored away, in your powerhouse, the energy, the knowledge that will be equal to the great occasion when it comes.

["An Iron Will", pp. 13-14.]

## **7. Training and Discipline**

In respect to mere mundane relations, the development and discipline of one's will-power is of supreme importance in relation to success in life.

No man can ever estimate the power of will. It is a part of the divine nature, all of a piece with the power of creation.

We speak of God's fiat, "*Fiat lux*, Let light be". Man has his fiat. The achievements of history have been the choices, the determinations, the creations, of the human will.

["An Iron Will", p. 7.]

## **8. Our Character and the Divine World**

"The education of the will is the object of our existence", says Emerson.

Nor is this putting it too strongly, if we take into account the human will in its relations to the divine. This accords with the saying of J. Stuart Mill, that "a character is a completely fashioned will".

["An Iron Will", p. 7.]

## **9. The Spinal Column of Personality**

“There are three kinds of people in the world”, says a recent writer, “the wills, the won’ts, and the can’ts. The first accomplish everything; the second oppose everything; the third fail in everything.”

The shores of fortune, as Foster says, are covered with the stranded wrecks of men of brilliant ability, but who have wanted courage, faith, and decision, and have therefore perished in sight of more resolute but less capable adventurers, who succeeded in making port.

Were I called upon to express in a word the secret of so many failures among those who started out with high hopes, I should say they lacked will-power. They could not have will: and what is a man without a will? He is like an engine without steam. Genius unexecuted is no more genius than a bushel of acorns in a forest of oaks.

Will has been called the spinal column of personality. “The will in its relation to life”, says an English writer, “may be compared at once to the rudder and to the steam engine of a vessel, on the confined and related action of which it depends entirely for the direction of its course and the vigor of its movement.”

Strength of will [2] is the test of a young man’s possibilities. Can he will strong enough, and hold whatever he undertakes with an iron grip? It is the iron grip that takes and holds. What chance is there in this crowding, pushing, selfish, greedy world, where everything is pusher or pushed, for a young man with no will, no grip on life?

The man who would forge to the front in this competitive age must be a man of prompt and determined decision.

[“An Iron Will”, pp. 18-19.]

### NOTES:

[1] *The Creator*: the universal Law, and your own Higher Self and Immortal Soul. (CCA)

[2] Strength implies nobility and legitimacy. An illegitimate and strong will would be worse than nothing. (CCA)

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## **H.P. Blavatsky, on Will and Desire**

“Will is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.”

(From the article “[How to Strengthen One’s Will](#)”, by HPB.)

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Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate  
 Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,  
 Whose slightest action or inaction serves  
 The one great aim. Why, even Death stands still,  
 And waits an hour sometimes for such a will.

(Ella Wheeler Wilcox)

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The above poem was reproduced from the book “Poetical Works of Ella Wheeler Wilcox”, by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Edinburgh, W. P. Nimmo, Hay, & Mitchell, undated edition, probably 1917, pp. 129-130. Original title: “Will”.

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## Correcting Our Own Mistakes



Right action often seems to be silly, while foolishness uses the most shining garments of wisdom. No pilgrim should expect applause along the path. Wisdom is often perceived as meaningless, and - according to the Mahatma Letters - ridicule must be fearlessly confronted in order for anyone to live up to theosophy. [1]

The daily practices related to self-discipline appear as senseless and foolish to those aspects of oneself which resist wisdom; and to other people as well. In order to follow one's heart, it is necessary to perform actions every day that seem to be idiotic, for selfishness presents itself as morally beautiful, and wise action can be easily described as wrong.

[See the full article](#)  
[“Correcting Our Own Mistakes”](#)

NOTE:

[1] Click to see [“The Mahatma Letters”](#), Letter LXII, pp. 351-352.

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## Thoughts Along the Road On Making the Meaningful Journey



- \* **W**hatever I send forth, comes back, in essence.
- \* Every time I say “peace to all beings”, a similar kind of healing energy is sent to my own mental, emotional and vital principles. From them it goes down to my physical body, including cells, nervous system and the main organs. For there is no separation in nature.
- \* In troubling times, it is correct to say:
  - \* “I send peace, vigour and vitality to every cell in my body”.
  - \* In order to compensate for unnecessary suffering, or perhaps to prevent it, one may pronounce these words:
    - \* “I send life, harmony and strength to every part of my body”.
  - \* By having good will regarding fellow human beings, one’s existence is improved. It is an intelligent thing to do, to purify oneself, to wish the best to those around us, and make the meaningful Journey from ignorance to universal compassion.
- \* There are moments in the Karma and History of mankind when the tide of events changes so as to bring about a closer contact between actions and the One Law.
- \* When common sense and good sense are lost by many, this is a sure sign that the time for readjustment has come and everyone must make a choice. Omission in matters of ethics and karma is also a choice, but not the best one.

\* One must unmask the illusory feeling according to which, “in order to have inner peace, one must first obtain this and that”.

\* The act of accepting silence and bliss is not always easy, for it must be unconditional. How many excuses are subconsciously presented as reasons to postpone the calm tranquillity that paves the way to discernment?

\* Just as space exists around each object, every existential Effort must be surrounded by a corresponding Void. Our nurturing contact with the Void gives us plenitude, inspiration, rest, and renewal. In the interaction between Work and Rest, both terms of the equation are enriched by their alternation.

\* One’s daily discipline must provide for the experience of closeness to nothingness. Meditation includes a feeling of friendship for the void.

\* Peace is found in silence, and silence - being inner - can be established in the middle of noise, and then expand.

\* Pure space is like voluntary silence and equivalent to wisdom. True consciousness is free from any particular object or thought, for it includes and transcends them all.

\* Silence and will-power combined gather magnetic strength and pure potentiality. Inner power is in doing less than we can. A master wrote in the Letter 55 of “[The Mahatma Letters](#)” that the *warriors of the one divine Verity* must nourish their moral strength and not waste it upon trifles.

\* Any enduring sentiment of frustration regarding circumstances or beings unleashes a grave assault against one’s antahkarana, threatening the bridge that links one’s lower self to his spiritual soul.

\* Regardless of the amount of social misunderstanding around us, our fundamental feeling must be of respect for those who think differently. Even when cooperation is not possible and firm action is necessary, one must keep the door open to mutual help at the proper time.

\* Probation and karmic fever are passing events, while the souls remain. By abstaining from blind action and useless feelings, we keep away from wasting valuable time - and energy.

\* We must remember that our failures are the ones which depend mainly on us. Not paying too much attention to supposed mistakes of others liberates us to struggle with our own errors, and correct them.

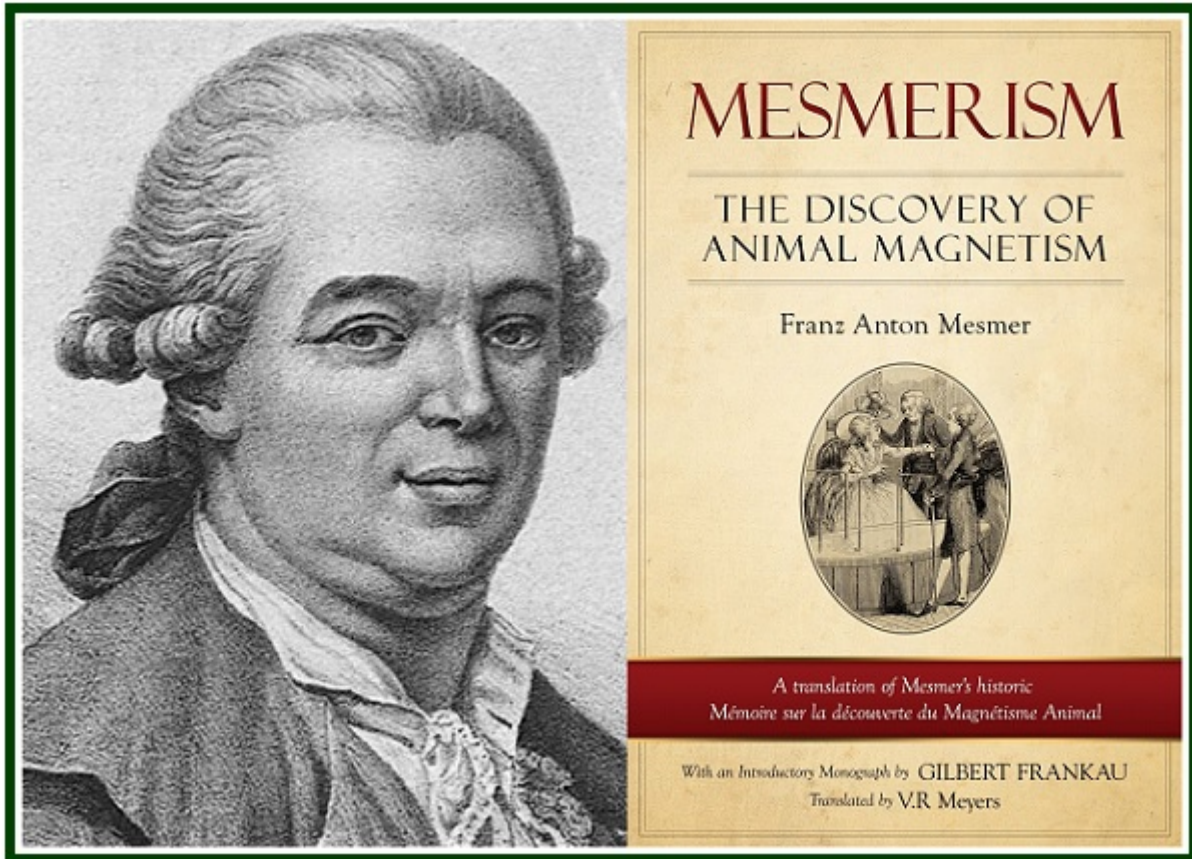
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Some of our Facebook pages and groups: [The Aquarian Theosophist](#), page; 9943 followers. [Theosophy and Future](#), group; 987 members. [Art and Theosophy](#), page; 4265 followers. [E-Theosophy](#), page; 9709 followers. [Carlos Cardoso Aveline](#), page; 9302 followers. [Teosofía en Español](#), page; 4433 followers. [Teosofía Iberoamericana](#), Spanish language group; 621 members.

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## Isis Unveiled: **Passages From H.P. Blavatsky That Refer to Mesmer and Mesmerism - 4**



**Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) and a recent  
 edition of his famous essay on animal magnetism**

In Professor Stewart's work <sup>1</sup>, the author regards our universe as composed of atoms with some sort of medium between them as the machine, and the laws of energy as the laws working this machine. Professor Youmans calls this "a modern doctrine", but we find among the twenty-seven propositions laid down by Mesmer, in 1775, just one century earlier, in his *Letter to a Foreign Physician*, the following:

*1st. There exists a mutual influence between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and living bodies.*

*2d. A fluid, universally diffused and continued, so as to admit no vacuum, whose subtlety is beyond all comparison, and which, from its nature, is capable of receiving, propagating, and communicating all the impressions of motion, is the medium of this influence.*

It would appear from this, that the theory is not so modern after all. Professor Balfour Stewart says, "We may regard the universe in the light of a vast physical machine". And Mesmer:

<sup>1</sup> "The Conservation of Energy", N. Y., 1875.

*3d. This reciprocal action is subject to mechanical laws, unknown up to the present time.*

Professor Mayer, reaffirming Gilbert's doctrine that the earth is a great magnet, remarks that the mysterious variations in the intensity of its force seem to be in subjection to emanations from the sun, "changing with the apparent daily and yearly revolutions of that orb, and pulsating in sympathy with the huge waves of fire which sweep over its surface". He speaks of "the constant fluctuation, the ebb and flow of the earth's directive influence". And Mesmer:

*4th. From this action result alternate effects which may be considered a flux and reflux.*

*6th. It is by this operation (the most universal of those presented to us by nature) that the relations of activity occur between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and its constituent parts.*

There are two more which will be interesting reading to our modern scientists:

*7th. The properties of matter, and of organized body, depend on this operation.*

*8th. The animal body experiences the alternate effects of this agent; and it is by insinuating itself into the substance of the nerves, that it immediately affects them.*

Among other important works which appeared between 1798 and 1824, when the French Academy appointed its second commission to investigate mesmerism, the *Annales du Magnetisme Animal*, by the Baron d'Henin de Cuvillier, Lieutenant-General, Chevalier of St. Louis, member of the Academy of Sciences, and correspondent of many of the learned societies of Europe, may be consulted with great advantage. In 1820 the Prussian government instructed the Academy of Berlin to offer a prize of three hundred ducats in gold for the best thesis on mesmerism.

The Royal Scientific Society of Paris, under the presidency of His Royal Highness the Duc d'Angouleme, offered a gold medal for the same purpose. The Marquis de la Place, peer of France, one of the *Forty* of the Academy of Sciences, and honorary member of the learned societies of all the principal European governments, issued a work entitled *Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités*, in which this eminent scientist says:

"Of all the instruments that we can employ to know the imperceptible agents of nature, the most sensitive are the nerves, especially when exceptional influences increase their sensibility..... The singular phenomena which result from this extreme nervous sensitiveness of certain individuals, have given birth to diverse opinions as to the existence of a new agent, which has been named animal magnetism..... We are so far from knowing all the agents of nature and their various modes of action that it would be hardly philosophical to deny the phenomena, simply because they are inexplicable, in the actual state of our information. It is simply our duty to examine them with an attention as much more scrupulous as it seems difficult to admit them."

The experiments of Mesmer were vastly improved upon by the Marquis de Puysegur, who entirely dispensed with apparatus and produced remarkable cures among the tenants of his estate at Busancy. These being given to the public, many other educated men experimented with like success, and in 1825 M. Foissac proposed to the Academy of Medicine to institute a new inquiry. A special committee, consisting of Adelon, Parisey, Marc, Burdin, Sen., with Husson as reporter, united in a recommendation that the suggestion should be adopted. They make the manly avowal that "in science no decision whatever is absolute and irrevocable", and afford us the means to estimate the value which should be attached to the conclusions of the Franklin committee of 1784, by saying that "the experiments on which this judgment was

founded appeared to have been conducted without the simultaneous and necessary assembling together of all the commissioners, and *also with moral predispositions*, which, according to the principles of the fact which they were appointed to examine, *must cause their complete failure.*”

What they say concerning magnetism as a secret remedy, has been said many times by the most respected writers upon modern Spiritualism, namely: “It is the duty of the Academy to study it, to subject it to trials; finally, to take away the use and practice of it from persons quite strangers to the art, who abuse this means, and make it an object of lucre and speculation.”

(From H. P. Blavatsky’s book [Isis Unveiled, vol. I](#), pp. 172-174.)

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Previous parts of the present compilation can be seen in some former issues of “The Aquarian”: [March 2020](#), pages 3-5; [April 2020](#); and [May 2020](#). The series goes on.

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## Observing Our States of Mind

Along the path to self-knowledge, one comes to observe the difference between various states of mind. As we compare the moods and attitudes in our consciousness, the question emerges about what makes them change.

The mind adopts the shape and colour of that which it sees. [1]

One thing makes the person sad; another thing makes him get angry. A combination of nice facts may lead naïve persons into intense but passing states of contentment, just before they get infuriated by this or that “unfortunate” turn of events.

Changes in states of mind may depend on many a factor. French philosopher Maine de Biran tracked the influence that natural events and weather conditions around us may have on our own psychological “climate”. The change in mindset can be seen as a sort of “private climate change”.

[Click and see the full article](#)  
[“Observing Our States of Mind”](#)

NOTE:

[1] See Aphorisms 3 and 4, Book One, in “The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali”.

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