

The Magic Of Self-Confidence

How To Turn Fear And Worry Into Power And Success

The Magic Of Self-Confidence



**How To Turn Fear And Worry Into
Power And Success**

Mariska Publishing

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Life has everything to offer to those who make a right estimate of their own capabilities and desires, and strike a path accordingly.

Study of this work, which is based upon the most modern scientific knowledge concerning the human mind, should prevent you from falling into the category of the discontented and misdirected, and should help you become what you ought to be – a happy and successful man or woman.

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How To Turn Fear And Worry Into Power And Success

Conquering Fear And Worry



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The Magic Of Self-Confidence
A Lesson From The Live Successfully System

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KNOWLEDGE AND COURAGE TOGETHER ARE INVINCIBLE

One of the worst enemies of our success and happiness is the fear, worry or anxiety which may attack any of us at times.

How are we to get rid of such hindrances? At once it seems obvious that fear cannot live in the same mind as courage, and that we need therefore is courage to face life. But that merely presents the problem in a new form. Actually what we need most is knowledge of how to gain courage and still more how to direct it against our fears and worries. Courage without knowledge is no doubt noble, but it may also be futile.

The fears, anxieties and worries which attack the human race spring from a myriad sources. Some are trivial, others are deep-rooted. But any of them may hold us up in our work of making the best of our lives.

These common fears make an intriguing subject of study. And while we examine them, we can find out other interesting facts about our character and our attitude to life.

Do you know, for instance, that a young man may be dissatisfied with his job simply because he has not a sweetheart? Or that a girl may find it difficult to decide which party dress to wear because really she does not wish to go out at all?

These seeming riddles are simple when we see the mental tricks behind them.

A knowledge of how fears affect us, will enable you to overcome any everyday fear you may have. Has it ever

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occurred to you, for instance, that the quickest cure for fear or doubt or worry is to *act*, and that the mental anxiety then disappears like morning mist before the rising sun? This Lesson will not only explain the reason for such statements as this but will give your courage a chance to inspire you to greater endeavours in your progress to success.

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1. UNDERSTANDING FEAR AND WORRY

Fear has this in common with all the strong urges which we feel: at times, it is both right and useful. None of us need hesitate to admit that he or she has experienced it.

There have, in fact, been moments in the lives of most of us when we have known sheer stark terror. Many people remember all their lives the nightmares they had as children. There are few occasions in adult life so terrifying as the experiences of a child lying alone in the dark while imaginary horrors lurk in every corner.

Some of us still associate extremes of fear with warfare. Soldiers who experienced terror during the Great War may remember how their hearts thumped, their tongues dried and stuck to the roofs of their mouths, and their legs almost refused to support them.

Then perhaps there was something to be done. A comrade needed help, or there came a call to advance in support of their friends. And very quickly they overcame their fear.

Women as well as men felt this same terror during air raids. And they overcame it in the same way when there was something which had to be done, or somebody else to comfort.

There is no need to be ashamed of such temporary panic. It is unnatural to feel no fear in circumstances of real danger.

Action Should Be The Answer

Now if you examine these experiences you will note that the chief thing about fear is its paralysing effect. It dries up the saliva in the mouth, scientists tell us it

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stops the process of digestion, and we know it keeps us “rooted to the spot.”

When our prehistoric ancestors led a jungle life, this paralysing effect helped them to escape danger by keeping motionless until it passed. We see the same form of self-protection in a hare or rabbit crouching absolutely still in the grass at our approach.

You will perhaps object to this and say that animals and men too run away under the influence of fear. Quite true; they do. But we have been speaking of fear in its purest form.

When fear is mixed with hope of escape, then it liberates energy for fighting or running. And in the excitement of fighting, or while running away, the feeling of panic is dispersed. That is the first lesson this Book has for you: *Fear goes as soon as you start to do something about it.*

We must remember, however, that certain forms of fear can serve a useful purpose in life still, although the human race no longer lives in the jungle. We are surrounded by dangers in our ordinary civilised life; if it were not for the speed which fear gives us, we might easily be run over by a bus or car.

When, however, you think of the paralysing effect of fear, you realise that the less of that emotion we have, the better. We are more likely to be efficient and happy and successful without fear.

What Anxiety Means

Unfortunately, many of us suffer fear more than we need. We allow ourselves to fear illness, when we are in perfect health. If ailing, we fear that the illness will become worse. We fear that we may lose our jobs or our money, when both are safe. We fear for our

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children when they are out of our sight. We fear we may be left destitute in our old age.

A happier race may evolve an economic system which guarantees security to everybody, so that men will be relieved of the fear of poverty. But even then, unless we have learned wisdom, some of us will go on manufacturing fears!

Look again at this list of manufactured fears, you will see they come from trying to live in two periods at once: the present and the future. When we realise that, it is obvious how foolish they are.

It is just intelligent care to slow down on approaching cross roads, when you are driving a car. Unreasoning fear would make you jam on the brake long before you reach a crossing. It is the same in life; by allowing yourself to feel fear when the trouble is still remote and may never come, you are putting on the brake and preventing yourself from making easy progress.

Anxiety is the exact word for this. It is important to understand clearly what it means. A good, clear definition of it is *a state of fear of something which may never happen.*

Put that way, we can see what a useless thing anxiety is.

Four Kinds Of Fear

So far we have divided fear into two classes. We have decided that one kind of fear can be very useful, but that anxiety, or fear of something that may never happen, is a foolish waste of energy.

It will help us now to get a better grip on the subject if we classify fear under four headings. The first of these is the fear we mentioned above. The others are varieties of anxiety.

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Here is the list:

1. *Fear in the presence of danger.*
2. *Fear of danger which has not yet arrived.*
3. *Fear which sees danger anywhere.*
4. *Unreasonable fear of isolated things which are not real dangers*

The first kind of fear in this list is the only one which has definitely any real value in life. Perhaps we can make a slight exception for the second kind, for it does at least lead us to take reasonable precautions, although it is otherwise useless.

The fears numbered three and four on the list are worse than useless. They are morbid, they detract from our efficiency, and are obstacles in the way of success and happiness. We shall deal with them in greater detail in the next chapter, but we must realise now that these emotions are foolish.

Pause here in your reading and think back over the last few days. No matter which classification they were in, how many misfortunes that you anticipated yesterday or last week were justified?

Do you remember the time when you thought that some mistake you had made in your work might result in your losing your job? Do you recall the occasion when a member of the family was much later coming home than usual, so that you thought there had been an accident? Was there not an evening when you were certain that you had pneumonia or appendicitis or some equally bad illness coming?

Probably none of these disasters actually materialised; and most of the fears entertained by the human race are just as unjustified. Unless we control our fear feelings, we make this world look much worse than it actually is.

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One Way To Shake Off Fear

It is all very well to examine past fears in this way and say how foolish they were. But how far does that take us in learning how to avoid being afraid again? Actually it can only convince us that fear is foolish, and that therefore we shall be well repaid if we set out to overcome it. In the next chapter we shall see that knowledge as well as determination are needed. But meanwhile here is a suggestion for “first aid” in dispelling anxiety and fear.

Learn to concentrate on the present. Think over all you have to do at the beginning of the day and plan your work. Having done so, give our whole attention to each moment as it comes. You will thus be less liable to dwell on the mistakes of the past or on the fears of the future, and you will work more efficiently on the lines of your plan.

When you are tying your tie, you should not be thinking of putting on your boots; you might easily end up with the wrong knot, and you will certainly not help either process.

Plan your breakfast so as to give yourself time to catch your train or bus comfortably; then concentrate on enjoying the meal. On your way to business, read or talk or think according to the circumstances, but do not use up your energy in mentally helping to push the vehicle in which you are travelling!

If you are a housewife and the children are getting on your nerves, try to listen patiently to them and to enter into their interests. Stop doing your jobs in your mind before you are free to start them in fact.

The busiest day unrolls itself smoothly if only one keeps mentally and physically to *one thing at a time*.

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You will learn more about another device (relaxing) at www.relax-and-sleep.com

Occasions When Anxiety Arises

Finally, in understanding fear and worry we must recognise how these emotions first get a grip and what may keep them alive in us despite the natural tendency which we have to live our fears down. Anyone who worries or who suffers from silly fears may say “I cannot help it; I have always had a worrying nature.” They may say “I never used to be like this”; or “I did not worry until I got married”; or “I was all right until my last illness”.

These remarks frequently give the right clues to the original reason for fear and anxiety. But we must realise that it is never too late to change such habits of thought.

It is a fact that some of us were unfortunate enough to learn the habit of worrying at a very early age, or to pick up the habit of being anxious from parents who also suffered from their fears.

Others may have started their worrying at some time known to themselves. All these victims can get rid of the habit, if they determine to understand and eradicate the deeper troubles which in these cases act as a perpetual drive to keep the anxiety running.

Generally there is something essential lacking in the sufferer’s life, something of which he is not aware or which he refuses to acknowledge to himself. Frequently the cause is sexual. There are other causes which are just as common, but they do not give so much trouble as a rule because they are not so often repressed as being “unpleasant matters which it is better not to think about.”

We all have natural urges and if they cannot find expression they can at least be side-tracked healthily in

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mixing with friends of both sexes. And employing our time and minds on hobbies and games with others of the same age.

The feeling of anxiety does not limit itself to fear of what brought it about. The anxiety generally spreads. The man who is too long anxious about one thing may eventually become over-anxious about many things.

We ought to note here that there are definite periods of life when anxiety is apt to get the upper hand. These are early childhood, adolescence and the peak of life (known as the climacteric or the change of life).

The feeling of personal insufficiency in face of difficulties can make children nervous and anxious. Especially was is so if anything happened to stress this feeling in the child's mind.

Anxiety At Certain Ages

Adolescence is a period of anxiety because the young person is filled with a surge of power which is new, and which he or she does not quite know how to control. There is the feeling of being on the brink of the unknown. Time and friendship with older people can usually look after this.

Courting couples, too, are apt to suffer from anxiety because the engagement period is one of constant stimulation and frustration. They should make a self-denying resolution to keep stimulation to the minimum.

Men between 45 and 50 are apt to make a bogey of approaching age. This is just as foolish and unnecessary as the fears of the other sex. The change of life in women is certainly apt to be a period of nervous stress, though this has become the subject of exaggerated silly tales. Women sometimes think of it as a time when they lose their attractiveness and their enjoyment of life. Neither need be the case; a cheerful

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acceptance of the passage of time prevents such disaster.

We will go into the anxiety and fear aspects of these subjects in greater detail in the next chapter.

This Chapter Has Told You

1. Everybody experiences fear. Pure fear paralyzes us; but where it is mixed with hope, action results.
2. Fear in the presence of actual danger serves a useful purpose in life. All fear tends to disappear when we do something about it.
3. Anxiety is wasteful. It is a state of fear based upon something which may never happen.
4. Fear falls into four classes: fear of actual danger; of potential danger; of danger seen everywhere; and of some object or occasion which is actually not dangerous at all.
5. Two ways to shake off anxiety are to concentrate on one thing at a time, and to learn to relax.
6. Anxiety arises easily at some ages. Notably in childhood, adolescence, and at the “change of life”.

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2. HOW TO DEAL WITH MORBID FEARS

We spoke of the person who says that he worries because he has “always been one of the worrying kind”.

This admission is important because it shows that he recognises that worry may be a state of mind, and consequently that the particular thing he is anxious about is just a convenient excuse for indulging in worry.

We have mentioned some of the causes of this. Now we must examine how it is that some people are very frequently in a state of fear.

Fear Of Everyday Life

Such a state is unhealthy, unnatural and morbid, for the emotion such people constantly experience is not a fear of injury or death, but a *fear of life*. Before we can learn how to treat a habit of fear which is as far developed as this, we must understand better how it arose in the first place.

A weakly child may develop exaggerated fears if it is not treated carefully.

If fears develop in him, it is sometimes because a habit of fear has been passed on from the parents to the child. Naturally with a pre-disposition to weakness, the child finds it hard not to follow his parents’ tendencies. On the other hand, it is quite possible for a child of weak physique to fall victim to habits of fear because of the over-vigorous treatment handed out by a parent.

Nervous parents are likely to make all sorts of mistakes when bringing up a child. The coddling he receives

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then may mean that when he goes into the world later his rougher experiences will almost certainly make him afraid. So starts the insidious habit of his seeing danger in every new situation.

Children must have love but it must be of the right kind. The possessive emotion which uses a little boy or a girl as a plaything or as a pet to be kept safe but never exposed, is a crippling and smothering form of love.

Naturally a child brought up on “don’ts” will be afraid to show initiative when he grows up. And a child surrounded by fussy precautions is likely to make an exaggerated version of “safety first” his chief rule of conduct.

Conquering The Habit Of Fear

There are more ways in which children are wrongly treated, and in many cases the result is a personality that is ruled by fear – perhaps throughout life – unless steps are taken to overcome this handicap.

Anyone who suffers in this way must think back to his childhood days to discover if his habit of fear was due to his early treatment and upbringing.

If it was, then the realisation of the fact will put him in a position to set about curing himself. Inferiority feelings are frequently linked with fear. If he follows the advice given there, the rest is a matter of cultivating more courageous habits.

Adolescent Fears

Fears which arise during adolescence are in an entirely different class from those we have just mentioned.

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Normally they disappear as a person grows up. But there are, of course, occasions when they result in a habit of fear being started which is as hard to disperse as fears which start in childhood.

Even when a boy or a girl has had a sensible upbringing and childhood fears have not been allowed to obtain a permanent grip, the rapid physical and mental development at the age of 14 to 18 makes special care necessary. Lack of explanation of sexual matters at this time may result in all sorts of minor nervous troubles, including morbid fears. This is simply because he or she is not mentally adjusted to the new aspects of life which have arrived so suddenly. Of course, it is the lack of satisfactory knowledge that is wrong, and not the development which after all is absolutely natural.

We mentioned this in the previous Chapter. But we must talk about it again because it is not generally realised that in the nervous adolescent there is an underlying state of fear. That is why it is so useless to try to argue a person of this age out of any one particular foolish fear.

A youth may have a cough and get the fixed idea that he has consumption. Even if medical examination shows that he is quite healthy, it may be impossible to convince him that he is not tubercular.

Similarly a girl may think that she has heart disease just because her heart beats fast after strenuous exercise.

Argument, medical advice, and logical appeal are often useless in such cases. What is wrong is the whole attitude to life. A fear of the unknown is taking the place of the spirit of joyful adventure which is natural in young people. This fear could be dispelled by accurate knowledge, but in cases of this kind there is frequently some parental prudishness on the subject.

The adolescent's knowledge is usually incomplete and has frequently been acquired in a furtive way which

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gives the whole subject an unpleasant tinge. Is it not natural that he or she feels ashamed and perhaps afraid of the whole business?

Anyone who seems to be suffering from adolescent fears should be assisted by frank conversation with some healthy-minded adult. And a point to remember is that some people carry fears of this kind, together with an adolescent outlook, long after they have physically reached adult maturity.

Uncontrollable “Pet” Fears

Apart from the person who suffers from a timid state of mind and is likely to experience anxiety on all sorts of occasions which do not merit it, there are others who suffer an even more unreasonable fear.

These people are normally as calm as the rest of us about everyday events, but they have one or two pet fears. They know they are unreasonable, but they cannot control them. Thus many women who are normally very self-confident become almost panic-stricken in the presence of a large spider or the proverbial mouse.

These are fears which come under the fourth heading in our classification in the previous chapter. They are irrational fears of dread about things which are not really dangerous, or are not dangerous except in special circumstances. How can these morbid fears be dealt with?

Fear Of Thunderstorms And Heights

It is quite reasonable to be afraid of genuine dangers. A severe thunderstorm is not something which one likes to encounter on a bare upland or working as a steeple-jack does at the top of a tall tower or chimney. On the other hand, it is not reasonable in ordinary circumstances to feel panic at the sound of distant thunder.

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Fear of a height is reasonable if a person is perched on a narrow ledge with very little to hold on to. But it becomes unreasonable if it prevents us from going up in a lift.

Apart from such fears as these, which are reasonable in special circumstances, there are hundreds of things which people fear that are not dangerous at all. *There is no situation which for some individuals cannot serve as the stimulus of an unreasonable fear.*

In most cases this kind of fear can be traced back to an incident in childhood. Frequently the occasion has been entirely forgotten, but the emotion of fear persists. The fear remains connected at the back of the mind with whatever caused it at the time. When this cause appears again in some form, the emotion of fear also returns although the victim cannot give any conscious reason for it.

The fear of lightning can sometimes be traced to a child having become infected by the fear displayed by adults during a severe storm. Or again a child might have been alone and in the dark when it first heard thunder and saw lightning. The feeling of inadequacy and consequent fear at such a time might easily get a very firm hold on a child's emotions and retain that hold into adult life.

“Symbolic” Fear Reasons

Another explanation is that some fears of such things as thunderstorms are the result of people subconsciously linking these with other things of which they are afraid.

For instance, some people have been known to regard thunder as an expression of the anger of higher powers. Naturally anybody with this idea at the back of his mind is just as upset by a thunderstorm as a small boy is at the angry words of his father.

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In the same way a fear of heights has been known to develop in a stocks and shares speculator. Such a person acquires a fear of heights because they symbolise for him the danger of a fall in the value of his holdings or from the successful heights he has scaled.

So, too, a fear of enclosed spaces may have its origin in a morbid loathing of the idea of death and burial.

And a fear of open spaces (which is another of the seemingly unreasonable terrors from which some people suffer) may be due to an inferiority feeling so working upon a person that he dislikes to be out of reach of physical shelter; open spaces accentuate his feeling of loneliness and inadequacy, but this he does not comprehend – he only knows that he fears such places.

Of course we have to remember also that we like to be near such objects as trees, hedges, walls, and so on; as probably did our prehistoric ancestors, who had more reason than we to seek them for protection. We can see for ourselves how even today tables near to the walls in restaurants always fill up more quickly than those in the centre.

Finally there is a type of unreasoning fear based on wishes which we hide from others and would not care even to acknowledge to ourselves.

Fears Based On Unconscious Wishes

Nearly everyone has at some time had a wish that a certain person be removed from his life.

For example, a man may want the position held by someone over him, and he therefore hopes to supersede this other person by some means. But this wish may not be acknowledged consciously. And so we have the better part of this man's nature producing in him a conscious fear that the other person may be in some danger of losing his job. The voice of conscience

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makes the man worry about the harm which he is unconsciously wishing the other.

This is a difficult process to understand without studying the behaviour of the deeper parts of the mind. But undoubtedly it is at the bottom of some cases of extreme solicitude of one person for another, when the second person is a handicap in the first's search for happiness and freedom.

Uprooting Difficult Fears

How are such unreasonable fears as we have been discussing to be uprooted? In many cases a knowledge of the mechanisms of the mind which cause these terrors and anxieties provides the remedy.

When we understand that a certain fear may be due to a childhood incident which we have forgotten, or may be due to an unconscious wish which we are trying to disguise, this knowledge in itself may show up the actual cause. And when we know the cause, our conscious mental processes can deal with the problem.

Exactly the same applies, as we have seen, to the fear and anxiety feelings which attach themselves to situations which have nothing to do with what caused the feelings. We can say to ourselves for example, "I am nervous about crossing the road because of the anxiety and worry of the illness at home." Our nervousness then becomes understandable and loses its power of influencing us unduly.

Fear of any kind is always best treated by some kind of action. Knowledge of how the fear arises enables us to take the right action and so remove the fear.

In the next chapter we shall see also how worry and doubt can very frequently be removed if we know the *real* reason why they exist.

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Great Thoughts To Inspire You

If a man harbours any sort of fear, it percolates through all his thinking, damages his personality, makes him landlord to a ghost.

LLOYD C.
DOUGLAS

I do not believe on a fate that falls on men however they act, but I do believe in a fate that falls on them unless they act.

G. K.
CHESTERTON

When fear rules the will nothing can be done, but when a man casts fear out of his mind the world becomes his oyster. To lose a bit of money is nothing, but to lose hope – to lose nerve and ambition – that is what makes men cripples.

HERBERT N.
CASSON

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This Chapter Has Told You

1. Fear of everyday life is frequently due to faulty training during childhood. Such fear is overcome in the same way as inferiority feelings.
2. Adolescent fears are often unreasonable. They generally spring from incomplete knowledge of sex matters and a consequent wrong attitude to life.
3. 'Pet' fears may attach themselves to almost anything. They are generally due to childhood accidents which have been forgotten although the fears they caused remain.
4. Some fears are due to our symbolic way of thinking of the thing feared. Fear of thunderstorms and of heights are examples.
5. Other fears are due to wishes which we do not want to acknowledge even to ourselves.
6. The way to deal with our fear is to discover what caused it and how it has affected our minds. Then we can re-educate ourselves to better habits.

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3. OVERCOMING WORRY AND DOUBT

Many worries and doubts are simply mental tricks which we play on ourselves and others without even knowing that we are doing so.

A knowledge of how our mind is working enables to deal with such tricks. But until we examine an instance or two, we ay find it difficult to believe in them. Naturally, it would seem a confession of guilt for us to say that we can understand our own self-deceptions.

Do not, however, let our feelings and preconceptions interfere with our uncovering the facts.

Worry Used To Influence Others

A special type of worry, for instance, can be seen in the person who is anxious for no reasonable cause about the safety of near relations. Often the relations are greatly hampered in their activities by this seeming solicitude for them.

Many a mother, for instance, worries so much about a boy or girl getting into bad company, or getting overtired, or staying out late, or getting hurt at sports, that the child reluctantly stays at home to please the parent. How real is this concern, and how far is it self-deception? If such a parent stops worrying about her children the moment she has her friends with her, we can recognise her worry to be a false emotion dictated by selfishness.

Such worrying is clearly a parent's trick to keep the child at home for the sake of its company and attentions.

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Do not think that this means that all anxiety is only a trick. We do not say that. But we do say that frequently anxiety is used for selfish ends; and even when that is so, the anxious person is not consciously dishonest.

A woman who acts thus is frequently seeking an outlet for her maternal instincts. Naturally she is more likely to find it when one of her family is at home. That is why she may even seem pleased if one of them is mildly ill and needs to be looked after in bed.

We have all heard of the proverbial hen with one chick; the obvious remedy for a human being who smothers another with affection is for her to find an outlet for her feelings in some kind of welfare work. Today there are many opportunities for activity in organisations which serve the needs of children and young people.

Another kind of worry is often the result of a fear of making decisions. Indecisiveness is a habit which is frequently picked up from parents who suffer in the same way.

You may think we are blaming the parents for too many of the child's mental troubles. But it is a fact that the parent's training has much to do with the child's mental health and that the effects of that training tend to persist through life.

Worry Due To Indecision

A youngster who is surrounded by prohibitions and who is blamed unduly for every lapse, soon becomes afraid of doing anything which he has not done before.

Having learned in childhood to expect blame rather than praise, some people carry about with them a certain readiness to feel guilty. They are pre-disposed to expect blame no matter what they do. We cannot wonder that such people will take any means of delaying to make a definite move. They work on the supposition that only if they do nothing, will they avoid mistakes.

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This leads us to a common reason why people worry about which of various courses to adopt. They realise dimly that so long as they have a mental conflict which prevents them from making a decision and which others can understand, they have an excuse in the eyes of the world for delay. Especially is this so where either decision may be painful or troublesome.

A simple example is the case of a person who, having half-persuaded himself that he is ill, lies in bed worrying whether to get up and go to the doctor or whether to go about his duties in the normal way. The result of the worry is that he lies in bed longer. It is possible to imagine that lying lazily in bed is really the desired object in such a case, whether or not the person concerned acknowledges this fact to himself.

But, of course we must not assume from this that if a person worries in bed the sole reason is physical laziness. All the fears and worries we quote are abnormal, and however numerous are the cases of such troubles, it is encouraging to know that normal mentality is not the exception but the rule. When we study abnormalities, as we are doing here, it is all too easy to overlook this fact of the high level of average healthiness.

People Who Keep Making Sure

Just as some fears can permeate a person's life and become active on occasions very different from those which gave rise to them, similarly a basic doubt about one's way of living may show itself in many tiny but annoying symptoms of uncertainty.

A man may come downstairs two or three times during the night to make certain that he has bolted the door or shut the windows. He will go back to the gas fire again and again to convince himself that he has turned it off. He will get up and look at his alarm clock to make sure that it is set. And, during the day, he may check his work repeatedly even though he found no mistakes the first time.

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Many factors combine to produce such a state of mind. Anybody young or old who has an underlying doubt in his life is likely to show it in this way. What can be done?

In *extreme* cases this, like all extreme mental troubles, is best dealt with by one who can go deeply into the individual problem. There are many doctors and psychologists in the country, and in almost every town a sufferer can get treatment for such mental disorders.

In mild cases of doubt it is at times sufficient for the victim to change his routine. He then gets a fresh set of conditions which he can deal with well, and he gains in confidence and interest in life.

Even the fact of going to work by a different route, getting up at a different time, or varying other such everyday habits will often prove to a man that he can meet everyday problems successfully and that there is no reason for his doubt.

Genuine Illness Makes Us Worry

In dealing with these unusual causes of worry, we must not overlook that illness and fatigue allow little mental troubles to get a grip which they never achieve when we are fit and well. Feelings of weakness and weariness naturally give us a sense of inadequacy which is a fertile soil for pessimism. The remedy is rest and change.

But it is not always easy for us to know when we are weak and fatigued. Hence if we find ourselves worrying, it is wise to ask ourselves if our anxiety is not due to a temporary lack of vitality.

Many worried people who commit rash acts would never do so if they gave themselves a chance to recover normal physical vigour first.

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Worry Is Never Any Use

Whatever the cause of worry it can be seen that it never serves any really healthy or useful purpose. There is no such thing as justified worry, because to worry is to feel in the present a fear that properly belongs to some event which has not yet happened – *and which may never happen.*

Worry is always concerned with what *may* happen. And as such it is a wasteful use of fear because it handicaps us when, quite possibly, there is no good reason.

Present pain, present sorrow or grief are understandable. Often they are unavoidable and have to be accepted. Sometimes action will alleviate them. But worry is a senseless anticipation of these harrowing emotions.

You may say that worry sometimes fastens on to things which are past. That is certainly so, but here again our mental unhappiness is due to an anticipation of trouble which may, or may not, occur as a result of these past events.

Uncertainty is always hard to bear whatever it may be based upon. But when we worry we are acting as if the thing we feared was a certainty. The calm way to look at it is this: nothing is certain in life except what is past and what is happening at this very moment.

Action As The Remedy

If we remember this we can allow hope to take the place of worry.

If we also fix it in our minds that we all have our share of misfortunes to carry we shall not worry so much about what may be coming our way. That is why it is

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always kindest to let children know that illness, misfortune and even death are natural occurrences.

Any child who is protected from knowledge of such things is bound eventually to come face-to-face with them, like all other children. Then he will receive a very great shock. And he will be likely to worry much more than the normal person about such things occurring in the future.

Occasionally, it must be said, a situation comes which almost inevitably means worry – worry for even the most well-balanced person. What then can be done?

If we remember what was said about fear, we will see that any form of useful action can help. A woman who is worried about the illness of a near relative should use her energy by caring for somebody else who needs help, rather than by spending hours wondering if the experts at the hospital are doing the right thing.

Not only is this sound from the point of view of relieving present worry, but it prevents this wasteful emotion breaking down our reserves and gaining a greater and greater hold.

Worry is a negative emotion, leading nowhere and destroying happiness. It grows with inactivity and is driven out by action and the healthier feelings aroused thereby. Let us then banish our fears and worries through action.

Great Thoughts To Inspire You

The misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never come.

LOWELL

The pessimist who broods over troubles is sure to hatch out a lot of new ones.

*We cannot change yesterday, that is clear,
Nor begin tomorrow until it is here.*

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*So all that is left for you and for me
Is to make today as sweet as can be.*

*Those who worry a great deal usually frown as they
frown not only with their faces but with their bodies.
When you worry, you worry all over!*

DR WINCHELL M CRAIG

*Our doubts are traitors and make us lose the good we
oft might win by fearing to attempt.*

SHAKESPEARE

This Chapter Has Told You

1. Worry and doubt are often mental tricks which people use unwittingly to deceive both themselves and others.
2. Worry is sometimes just a device to keep people in attendance on the worrier and give him or her a sense of importance.
3. Indecision which results in action being delayed is sometimes encouraged for this reason alone. But it is not used consciously for this end.
4. When people have the habit of repeatedly going back to make sure (checking work, seeing if lights are turned out, etc) they betray an underlying dissatisfaction with life
5. Illness and fatigue frequently cause worry and anxiety which we would not entertain when fresh and well. These emotions never serve any useful purpose.
6. Learn to accept a certain amount of trouble as inevitable. Action is frequently the best way to overcome feelings of anxiety and worry.

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4. ARE YOU SELF-CONSCIOUS?

There are two forms of self-consciousness. We must decide the difference between them.

The right kind of self-consciousness can give one dignity; it is a serene emotion. An example of this may help us in understanding its opposite, which should really be called morbid self-consciousness.

Take the case of a royal princess. Whenever she goes out, she is well aware that she is the object of attention. She knows that people are looking at her, and commenting on her behaviour and appearance. But this interest arouses no misgivings in her mind.

She accepts this notice as something right and proper because she knows it comes from the respectful attitude of people towards royalty. She knows that the interest she arouses springs from this respect, and she does not pause to wonder what they think of her apart from this.

Yet this same person might feel painfully self-conscious in other circumstances. In her family she might feel at a disadvantage among her brothers and sisters and morbidly self-conscious with her parents' friends.

The painful kind of self-consciousness is not so much dependent upon what people actually think of us, as upon what we fear they may be thinking of us.

Self-Consciousness Is Not Modesty

Before we go further in considering what self-consciousness actually is, we ought to get it clear that it is *not* connected with modesty. Modesty is a praiseworthy virtue; but it is frequently claimed by people who are only self-conscious – a claim which is itself immodest.

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If a person found by experience that he can give pleasure by singing or playing the fiddle, that person should always be ready to place his gift at the service of others. The modest person who will do so when sincerely requested, but will not make any claim for exceptional consideration.

A highly talented person will have no inferiority feeling with respect to his talents and can afford to be modest and say little about his gifts. It is only the person who has not much to show that has to make a display on every possible occasion in order to attempt to prove to himself and others that he is not lacking.

What, then, is the difference between modesty and the shrinking from notice of the self-conscious? The first is a desire which takes into consideration the feelings of others. The modest person would always rather another person had the opportunity of shining.

The self-conscious person, on the other hand, is thinking mainly of himself and of hiding his deficiencies. His interest is to protect himself from other people rather than allow others full scope and to neglect himself as the modest person does.

Self-Consciousness As A Fear

This leads us back to the fact that self-consciousness in its morbid form is another kind of fear. It is the fear that we are not readily acceptable to other people. The victim feels a sense of difference between himself and others; and he suspects that this difference is the subject of hostile criticism.

To the victim of the feeling this difference may imply his superiority over his assumed critics, or it may imply his inferiority. Doubtless you will recognise this state of mind; it is another aspect of inferiority feelings.

The young person who is self-conscious will become dissatisfied for almost any reason. A girl may hate the

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colour of her hair or dislike the appearance of her eyes. A boy may think that his nose is too small or too large, or that his chin is not big enough, or that he is too short or too tall and thin. He may entertain any one of dozens of imaginary deficiencies.

As we have seen before it is useless to point out to such sufferers that their supposed defects are little or nothing to worry about. It is the emotions of these people which are involved; and any appeal to pure reason is almost bound to fail.

They use their supposed deficiency as an excuse to retreat, and sometimes they are unlucky enough to hit on something which they cannot easily grow out of, and so can use it as their excuse all their lives. Examples of this are speech defects (which we deal with later) and that typical symptom of self-consciousness – blushing.

Why Do We Blush?

Blushing is almost always used so that the victim can retreat from contact with other people. People who have inferiority feelings or who are self-conscious allow their minds to conjure up a blush when they wish to retreat from a situation. It is the old story of feeling inferior because we are different, and making ourselves more different than ever in a mistaken attempt to put things right.

The victim of the habit is obviously in a vicious circle. He or she blushes because of self-consciousness, and is self-conscious because of blushing.

This circle may be the only reason for the habit continuing. If a victim thinks this, he or she must learn to ignore blushing and so break the circle. Let the victim begin to disregard his own blushes and the habit of blushing is bound to die away.

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How Self-Consciousness Arises

To overcome deeper self-consciousness we must first see how its morbid form starts. There is no such thing as a self-conscious baby. The infant is interested in itself more than in anything else. But it does not compare itself with others either favourably or unfavourably.

It is not until a child begins to understand language that it begins to form an idea of itself according to what it hears and what it senses from those around it.

Parental influence at this time can easily result in the child becoming over-conscious of its own actions and emotions. Too much attention, either by coddling or teasing or bullying, naturally will start this. And obviously the best way to prevent a child from being self-conscious is to cultivate its natural curiosity in people and things outside itself.

Very often parents make no distinction between self-respect in a child and vanity. Thinking to kill vanity, they deal blows at the child's proper pride – his self-respect, and so injure his natural defence against life's difficulties.

A little vanity may be encouraged both in children and in adults because it fosters self-respect. Anyone can be commended for his or her outstanding ability. But his does not mean that we should encourage anyone to show off on every possible occasion. An exaggerated opinion of oneself is bound eventually to meet with a shock which turns the victim's pride to painful self-consciousness.

The Cure For Self-Consciousness

All through this chapter we have noticed the similarity between morbid self-consciousness and some aspects of exaggerated inferiority feelings. You will not be

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surprised therefore to find that the cure for both is more or less the same.

You will remember that the suggested cure for inferiority feelings was based mainly on the cultivation of more interest in other people. The very word “self-consciousness” itself suggests the same remedy for the feelings we have been talking about.

A person who continually compares himself with others and who suspects that they are criticising him adversely is showing that he does not feel any faith in his own qualities. If he did, he would not have to spend so much time uncomfortably measuring them.

The cure of self-consciousness, therefore, is to accept ourselves and to realise that whatever our qualities we have a definite place in the world.

This sense of value need not depend upon any particular gift or capacity. It is simply a matter of accepting what we are and resolving to make the most of ourselves. With this determination we can leave our standing in the world to be decided by our efforts.

If we use our energy in interesting ourselves in others and doing our work well, self-consciousness is bound to disappear. We forget ourselves and begin to concentrate on the more interesting and wider aspects of life.

It is truly said that the person who is wrapped up in himself makes a very small parcel!

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This Chapter Has Told You

1. Self-consciousness is healthy and right when normal, but a handicap when morbid. Exaggerated self-consciousness should not be confused with modesty.
2. Fear that we are not readily acceptable to others may result in retreat. Self-conscious persons are expert at finding reasons for avoiding other people.
3. Blushing provides one of the most common excuses for avoiding people. The victim of this is in a vicious circle, which can best be broken by his ignoring the habit.
4. Self-consciousness generally arises because of too much coddling or bullying in childhood. It is possible to foster self-respect without encouraging vanity.
5. The cure for self-consciousness is first to accept ourselves and realise we have a place in the world.
6. Secondly, the victim of self-consciousness should set about interesting himself more in other people. The person who lives for himself alone finds life very narrow.

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5. DEALING WITH SPEECH DIFFICULTIES

Many difficulties in speech are due to feelings of fear and anxiety rather than to physical abnormality. People are apt to think of speech as being purely physical, like other muscular movements. But mental control is required for almost all physical movements, and especially is it needed for speech.

Naturally, physical defects of the throat and mouth will have an effect on speech. But it is amazing how these handicaps can be overcome. Doctors are very clever today in treating mal-formations of the teeth, mouth, throat, tongue and palate. When a difficulty persists all the time, even in situations which provoke no self-consciousness, then it is generally safe to assume that medical attention is necessary.

Speech difficulties due to other causes can also usually be alleviated or remedied. And if they arise only at certain times and in certain situations, we can be sure they are mental, not physical. How can people with this kind of difficulty in talking learn to speak easily at any time, instead of only when at ease with friends or when alone?

This chapter does not pretend to tell anyone how to overcome bad doses of chronic speech difficulty, but it will explain some of the minor troubles. For the very worst cases, we recommend treatment by a medical psychologist as affording most likelihood of a cure.

Afraid To Speak Up

Apart from such definite difficulties as stuttering and stammering, many people on occasion have difficulty in saying what they have in their minds.

They may not be able to sort out their thoughts properly; or alternatively they may have “stage-fright” and just be afraid of saying what they want to say.

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Confusion of thought can be due to any of a number of causes. Inferiority feelings, fear and anxiety, self-consciousness, ill-health and fatigue are all possible causes which we have already touched upon.

Again there is an art in correct thinking which will show the close connection between clear thinking and convincing speech and writing.

If we have not an average grasp of correct thinking we shall be conscious at times of our deficiency. Hesitation to speak out will no doubt be common in such circumstances, though we should remember that we can learn from mistakes – even if we get laughed at for our pains.

Lack of confidence may be principally due to a basic feeling of fear and anxiety, or to a conscious acknowledgement of comparative ignorance of the particular subject of conversation.

In the latter case it is wise to be silent, so long as we are not afraid to ask questions when necessary in order to understand a point. Ignorance is no crime if we set about remedying it as soon as we can.

How We Learn To Talk

If we consider how a child learns to talk, we shall see that fluent speech requires that mind and muscle work perfectly together. At first a child can only make queer noises. How is the miracle of speech achieved?

The child tries to make the same noises as it hears. If a baby is born deaf, it will not speak, simply because it never has a chance to hear the sounds. This is why such babies used to grow up to be deaf mutes. Fortunately, today it is possible for such children to be taught human sounds by means of sound-amplifying apparatus very much like a radio set.

When a normal child begins to pronounce words, it tends to imitate the person it hears most frequently. If this person

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happens to have a trick of speech, it is understandable that the child may pick it up.

On the other hand, a child will often discover an unusual trick of pronunciation in its efforts to master speech. Sometimes adults will even imitate him and adopt the mispronunciation as a family joke. If a little boy or girl finds that such an “accomplishment” excites interest and admiration, then he or she will retain it longer, perhaps even into adult life.

Speech defects of this type can easily be overcome. The example of others around him, and the realisation that his mispronunciation is an affectation, usually start a man on the routine of changing his speech habits.

Doubt As A Cause Of Stuttering And Stammering

How do stuttering and similar speech troubles arise?

Anyone may hesitate or even stammer when he wishes to say something but is afraid he is giving a wrong impression. When the element of doubt creeps into the mind, the speaker hesitates or stumbles.

The persistent stammerer is in the position of one who has long doubted his ability to speak easily. The doubt is permanently with him, and the more he tries to speak normally the more difficult becomes his speech.

Trying hard to form one’s sounds clearly, is here no remedy. Ordinarily we do not think about this process of utterance at all; it is automatic. The idea of failure does not occur to us. But if we become too conscious of an action which normally requires no thought, the mind becomes aware of the possibility of failure and tends to dwell on it. The stammerer trips up because he thinks he is going to, and he thinks he is going to because he does trip up. What can he do?

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All attempts to get rid of stammering are concerned with trying to break this cycle.

The folly of tackling only the purely physical symptoms is seen when we consider that everyone with such speech difficulties knows occasions when he is fluent. Nearly every stammerer, for instance, loses his stammer when he sings.

If the stammerer can be made to lose his anxiety he will be on the way to a cure.

He should put his energies into the business of living, and should follow the path of those who are ending their inferiority feelings and building up their self-confidence towards life in general. By removing fear and self-consciousness one removes the basis for the habit, and by degrees the habit itself will disappear.

The Story Of Demosthenes

Many prominent people who have attained happiness and success were troubled in their early days with their speech. There are even prominent politicians today who started life with speech difficulties.

The classical instance is that of Demosthenes who overcame his stammer by training himself to speak with pebbles in his mouth, and who ended by becoming the greatest orator known to the ancient Greeks.

We do not recommend this method, though we can see that Demosthenes probably concentrated his attention on the pebble (he had to avoid either swallowing it or letting it fall out of his mouth), and so forgot his preoccupation with speech.

Any person with speech trouble may be as successful as Demosthenes in curing himself (without resorting to pebbles!) if he will realise that his difficulty is a symptom of his whole attitude to life.

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This Chapter Has Told You

1. Difficulties with speech are sometimes due to fear, rather than to defects of the mouth or throat.
2. A child may learn a faulty pronunciation from an adult, or may hit on it by accident. This may be retained to attract attention.
3. Stammering has a mental basis if the sufferer knows occasions when he is fluent.
4. Doubt and anxiety may cause stammering.
5. Speech difficulties are hard to cure because the harder the victim tries, the more conscious he makes the process of speaking. Speech is best achieved without conscious control of the muscles.
6. The vicious circle of bad speech and fear can best be broken by concentrating on other matters. Stammering must not be used as an excuse for retreating from life.

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6. HOW TO ACQUIRE COURAGE

Fear is perhaps the greatest single enemy of human happiness and success. How then are we to acquire true courage?

First we have to distinguish between physical courage and moral courage. One of the mistakes generally made is to exalt physical courage above everything. Ever since men started fighting one another the ability to take hard knocks and to face the possibility of wounds and death has been regarded highly as an indication of a person's worth.

Physical courage is certainly a very great quality. And even when men become more civilised and cease to injure and kill, this standard of value can scarcely be modified so long as lives must be risked and the demands of comradeship satisfied in the struggle with nature for food and clothes.

Imagination Conquers Fear

But physical courage (except in the very unimaginative) is not a question of being without fear, but of overcoming and surpassing it. That is to say, the individual puts something in the place of his fear. It may be loyalty to his comrades, or love of his country, or even just his awareness of the shame of showing cowardice. But in any case he is conquering fear by means of another emotion.

It is his ideal of himself and his conduct, the way in which he looks at himself and the world, which decides his action. When a man risks his life for another, say by stopping a runaway horse or by plunging into the river, he is putting into action the ideal of himself as one who is unselfish – he is living up to his conception of himself – though he obviously does not think of it in this way.

He just thinks of the other person and forgets his own danger – as any person will who has a truly unselfish ideal.

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Such an action could not be performed by a man who had made it a habit in life to put his own welfare first. He would not jump to the rescue even though he were as fearless as the one who did.

More important than whether we fear or not, therefore, is the way we react to situations demanding courage. Frequently a courageous person is not a person without fear, but a person who overcomes his fear.

The secret of this attitude is daily self-training along the lines set out by our ideals of conduct. The right use of imagination as expressed by our ideals and our aim in life can in the end make it “second nature” for us to ignore fear and look instead to the higher standard we have set ourselves.

Courage That Is Not Physical

This is true whether we are dealing with a sudden emergency or with the troubles which we are all bound to meet.

The man who shows what we call moral courage is he who has firmly fixed in his own imagination an ideal of what his own conduct should be. He is morally courageous because he will not allow the troubles of life to change the standards of courage and decent behaviour he has set himself. He does not go to pieces when he suffers a loss, whether it be of a dear relative or of money or of position and prestige. He maintains his idea of what a man should be, whatever happens to him.

A Psychologist’s Philosophy

Professor William McDougall says that the only sentiment which we should allow to rule us completely is the ideal of our own conduct. He adds that this is the one thing in life which we can be sure will always be there for us to consider, and points out quite rightly that it is possible to visualise everything else being taken away.

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A man may centre all his hopes in his children, but they may disappoint him sadly. He may concentrate on personal success, and fail through no fault of his own. He may live entirely for a beloved parent or wife, but even this relationship can be wrecked by death or parting.

To set the highest value of all upon our ability to meet life and deal with it according to the ideal of conduct which we have set ourselves – this is the only sound philosophy. It brings courage, because it brings a true security.

A person who puts most store on maintaining a certain standard of conduct has an anchor which will keep him steady whatever storms life may send.

You may think that such a partial detachment from normal emotional ties is super-human. It is certainly rare; but nevertheless it is an attitude to aim at.

Courage Conquers All Obstacles!

Men and women seek security in many ways. As we have seen, those who try to find it in retreat are making a mistake. The faster they run away from life, the faster the bogey of their fear comes after them. The retreats these people find are too numerous to mention.

However we gain our feeling of security, the main point is that it can set us free from fears and anxieties and many other heavy burdens. We can relish life and treat it in a light-hearted “onlooker-enjoying-the-game” way.

This attitude to life is the one which brings courage. And once we are possessed of courage, nothing can stop us on the path to success and happiness!

Great Thoughts To Inspire You

Remember today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.

J.P. McEVOY

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There is in the worst of fortune the best chances for a happy change.

EURIPIDES

The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the great art in life is to have as many of them as possible.

BOVEE

When things can't be worse, they must get better!

CECIL ROBERTS

It is the lifted face that feels the shining of the sun.

ROBERT BROWNING

There are two kinds of discontent in this world; the discontent that works, and the discontent that wrings its hands. The first gets what it wants, and the second loses what it has. There's no cure for the first but success; and there's no cure at all for the second.

GORDON GRAHAM

Look on petty annoyances as training-ground in control, and you will find them easier to fight. Check instantly the feelings to which they give rise. It is brooding over them that causes all the trouble.

JAMES ALEXANDER

After all, the kind of world one carries about in oneself is the important thing, and the world outside takes all its graces, colour and value from that.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Healthy optimism is founded on a knowledge of self, it faces the future fearlessly by facing squarely the worst that can happen, and refusing to dwell on it.

JAMES ALEXANDER

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This Chapter Has Told You

1. Courage is generally divided into physical and moral. Physical courage has received more attention than moral, but both are noble qualities.
2. Courage does not mean lack of fear, but the conquering of fear. Imagination is the quality which makes this possible.
3. Imagination fixes ideals of conduct in our minds which we act up to, whether we fear or not.
4. Daily practice of our ideals of conduct in little things trains us to maintain them in all circumstances with calm courage.
5. To retreat from life behind excuses is not to achieve security, although it may seem to offer it.
6. The one factor which will always be with us to consider is the ideal of our own conduct. Courage comes with security feeling, and makes life a joyous adventure!

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