



The Campbell M Gold Newsletter

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Campbell M Gold

Consultant

**Self-Help and personal Development through
New Thinking, and Hypnosis and Subliminal
Programs**

Just the Facts...

Welcome

Welcome to the next part of the "Eight Pillars of Prosperity", by James Allen.

As always, no hugs, just the facts... in this case, the facts as presented by Allen in 1911 - so let's jump right in...

Kind regards,

Campbell M Gold

Looking Back To Move Forward

EIGHT PILLARS

OF

PROSPERITY

by

James Allen

(1911)

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Part 6

Fifth Pillar - Sympathy

The remaining pillars are the four central pillars in the Temple of Prosperity. They gave it greater strength and stability, and add both to its beauty and utility. They contribute greatly to its attractiveness, for they belong to the highest moral sphere, and therefore to great beauty and nobility of character. They, indeed, make a man great, and place him among the comparatively few whose minds are rare, and that shine apart in sparkling purity and bright intelligence.

Sympathy should not be confounded with that maudlin and superficial sentiment which, like a pretty flower without root, presently perishes and leaves behind neither seed nor fruit. To fall into hysterical some suffering abroad, is not sympathy. Neither are bursts of violent indignation against the cruelties and injustices of others nor any indication of a sympathetic mind. If one is cruel at home - if he badgers his wife, or beats his children, or abuses his servants, or stabs his neighbours with shafts of bitter sarcasm what hypocrisy is in his profession of love for suffering people who are outside the immediate range of his influence! What shallow sentiment informs his bursts of indignation against the injustice and hard heartedness in the world around him.

Says Emerson of such - "Go, love thy infant; love thy wood chopper; be good natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. They love afar is spite at home". The test of a man is in his immediate acts, and not in ultra sentiments; and if those acts are consistently informed with selfishness and bitterness, if those at home hear his steps with dread, and feel a joyful relief on his departure, how empty are his expressions of sympathy for the suffering or down trodden how futile his membership of a philanthropic society. Though the well of sympathy may feed the spring of tears, that spring more often draws its supply from the dark pool of selfishness, for when selfishness is thwarted it spends itself in tears.

Sympathy is a deep, silent, inexpressible tenderness which is shown in a consistently self forgetful gentle character. Sympathetic people are not gushing and spasmodic, but are permanently self restrained, firm, quiet, unassuming and gracious. Their undisturbed demeanour, where the suffering of others is concerned, is frequently mistaken for indifference by shallow minds, but the sympathetic and discerning eye recognizes, in their quiet strength and their swiftness to aid while others are sweeping, and wronging their hands, the deepest, soundest sympathy. Lack of sympathy is shown in cynicism, illnatured sarcasm, bitter ridicule, taunting and mockery, and anger and condemnation, as well as in that morbid and false sentiment which is a theoretical and assumed sympathy, having no basis in practice.

Lack of sympathy arises in egotism; sympathy arises in love. Egotism is involved in ignorance; love is allied to knowledge. It is common with men to imagine themselves as separate from their fellows, with separate aims and interests; and to regard themselves as right and others wrong in their respective ways. Sympathy lifts a man above this separate and self centred life and enables him to live in the hearts of his fellows, and to think and feel with them. He puts himself in their place, and becomes, for the time being, as they are. As Whitman, the hospital hero, expresses it - "I do not ask the wounded person." It is a kind of impertinence to question a suffering creature. Suffering calls for aid and tenderness, and not for curiosity; and the sympathetic man or woman feels the suffering, and ministers to its alleviation.

Nor can sympathy boast, and wherever self praise enters in, sympathy passes out. If one speaks of his many deeds of kindness, and complains of the ill treatment he has received in return, he has not done kindly deeds, but has yet to reach that self forgetful modest which is the sweetness of sympathy.

Sympathy, in its real and profound sense, is oneness with others in their strivings and sufferings, so that the man of sympathy is a composite being; he is, as it were, a number of men, and he views a thing from a number of different sides, and not from one side only, and that his own particular side. He sees with the others men's eyes, hears with their ears, thinks with their minds, and feels with their hearts. He is thus able to understand men who are vastly different from himself; the meaning of their lives is revealed to him, and he is united to them in the spirit of goodwill. Said Balzac - "The poor fascinate me; their hunger is my hunger; I am with them in their homes; their privations I suffer; I feel the beggar's rags upon my back; I for the time being become the poor and despised man." It reminds us of the saying of One greater than Balzac, that a deed done for a suffering little one was done for him.

And so it is; sympathy leads us to the hearts of all men, so that we become spiritually united to them, and when they suffer we feel the pain; when they are glad we rejoice with them; when they are despised and persecuted, we spiritually descend with them into the depths, and take into our hearts their humiliation and distress; and he who has this binding, uniting spirit of sympathy, can never be cynical and condemnatory can never pass thoughtless and cruel judgements upon his fellows; because in his tenderness of heart he is ever with them in their pain.

But to have reached this ripened sympathy, it must needs be that one has loved much, suffered much and sounded the dark depths of sorrow. It springs from acquaintance with the profoundest experiences, so that a man has ad conceit, thoughtlessness, and selfishness burnt out of his heart. No man can have true sympathy who has not been, in some measure at least, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," but the sorrow and grief must have passed, must have ripened into a fixed kindness and habitual calm.

To have suffered so much in a certain direction that the suffering is finished, and only its particular wisdom remains, enables one, wherever that suffering presents itself, to understand and deal with it by pure sympathy; and when one has been "perfected by suffering" in many directions, he becomes a centre of rest and healing for the sorrowing and broken hearted who are afflicted with the affections which he has experienced and conquered. As a mother feels the anguish of her suffering child, so the man of sympathy feels the anguish of suffering men.

Such is the highest and holiest sympathy, but a sympathy much less perfect is a great power for good in human life and a measure of it is everywhere and every day needed. While rejoicing in the fact that in every walk in life there are truly sympathetic people, one also perceives that harshness, resentment, and cruelty are all too common. These hard qualities bring their own sufferings, and there are those who fail in their business, or particular work, entirely because of the harshness of their disposition. A man who is fiery and resentful, or who is hard, cold and calculating, with the springs of sympathy dried up within him, even though he be otherwise an able man, will, in the end scarcely avoid disaster in his affairs. His heated folly in the one case, or cold cruelty in the other, will gradually isolate him from his fellows and from those who are immediately related to him in his particular avocation, so that the elements of prosperity will be eliminated from his life, leaving him with a lonely failure, and perhaps a hopeless despair.

Even in ordinary business transactions, sympathy is an important factor, for people will always be attracted to those who are of a kindly and genial nature, preferring to deal with them rather than with those who are hard and forbidding. In all spheres where direct personal contact plays an important part, the sympathetic man with average ability will always take precedence of the man of greater ability but who is unsympathetic.

If a man be a minister or a clergyman, a cruel laugh or an unkind sentence from him will seriously injure his reputation and influence, but particularly his influence, for even they who admire his good qualities will, through his unkindness, unconsciously have a lower regard for him in their personal esteem.

If a business man profess religion, people will expect to see the good influence of that religion on his business transactions. To profess to be a worshipper of the gentle Jesus on Sunday, and all the rest of the wee be a hard, grasping worshipper of mammon, will injure his trade, and detract considerably from his prosperity. Sympathy is a universal spiritual language which all, even the animals,

instinctively understand and appreciate, for all beings and creatures are subject to suffering, and this sameness of painful experience leads to that unity of feeling which we call sympathy.

Selfishness impels men to protect themselves at the expense of others; but sympathy impels them to protect others by the sacrifice of self; and in this sacrifice of self there is no real and ultimate loss, for while the pleasure of selfishness are small and few, the blessings of sympathy are great and manifold.

It may be asked, "How can a business man; whose object is to develop his own trade, practice self-sacrifice?" *Even man can practice self sacrifice just where he is, and in the measure that he is capable of understand it.* If one contends that he cannot practice a virtue it, for were his circumstances different, he would still have the same excuse. Diligence in business is not incompatible with self sacrifice, for devotion to duty, even though that duty be trade, is not selfishness, but may be an unselfish devotion. I know a business man who, when a competitor who had tried to 'cut him out' in business, cut himself out and failed, set that same competitor up in business again. Truly a beautiful act of self sacrifice; and the man that did it is, today, one of the most successful and prosperous of business men.

The most prosperous commercial traveler I have ever known, was overflowing with exuberant kindness and geniality. He was as innocent of all "tricks of trade" as a new born infant, but his great heart and manly uprightness won for him fast friends wherever he went. Men were glad to see him come into their office or shop or mill, and not alone for the good and bracing influence he brought with him, but also because his business was sound and trustworthy. This man was successful through sheer sympathy, but sympathy so pure and free from policy, that he himself would probably have denied that his success could be attributed to it. Sympathy can never hinder success. It is selfishness that blights and destroys. As goodwill increases, man's prosperity will increase. All interests are mutual, and stand or fall together, and as sympathy expands the heart, it extends the circle of influence, making blessings, both spiritual and material, to more greatly abound.

Fourfold are the qualities which make up the great virtue of sympathy, namely:

1. Kindness
2. Generosity
3. Gentleness
4. Insight

Kindness, when fully developed, is not a passing impulse but a permanent quality. An intermittent and unreliable impulse is not kindness, though it often goes under that name. There is no kindness in praise if it be followed by abuse. The love which seems to prompt the spontaneous kiss will be of little account if it be associated with a spontaneous spite. The gift which seemed so gracious will lose its value should the giver afterwards wish its value in return. To have one's feelings aroused to do a kind action towards another by some external stimulus pleasing to one's self, and shortly afterwards to be swayed to the other extreme towards the same person by an external event unpleasing to one's self, should be regarded as weakness of character; and it is also a selfish condition, us, and when he pleases us, to be thinking of one's self only. A true kindness is unchangeable, and needs no external stimulus to force it into action. It is a well from which thirsty souls can always drink, and it never runs dry. Kindness, when it is a strong virtue, is bestowed not only on those who please us, but also upon those whose actions go contrary to our wish and will, and it is a constant and never - varying glow of genial warmth.

There are some actions of which men repent; such are all unkind actions. There are other actions of which men do not repent, and such are all kind actions. The day comes when men are sorry for the cruel things they said and did; but the day of gladness is always with them for the kindly things they have said and done.

Unkindness mars a man's character, it mars his face as time goes on, and it mars that perfection of success which he would otherwise reach.

Kindness beautifies the character, it beautifies the face with the growth of the years, and it enables a man to reach that perfection of success to which his intellectual abilities entitle him. A man's prosperity is mellowed and enriched by the kindness of his disposition.

Generosity goes with a larger hearted kindness. If kindness be the gentle sister, Generosity is the strong brother. A free, open handed, and magnanimous character is always attractive and influential. Stringiness and meanness always repel; they are dark, cramped, narrow, and cold. Kindness and generosity always attract; they are sunny, genial, open, and warm. That which repels makes for isolation and failure; that which attracts makes for union and success. Giving is as important a duty as getting; and he who gets all he can, and refuses to give, will at last be unable to get; for it is as much a spiritual law that we cannot get unless we give, as that we cannot give unless we get.

Giving has always been taught as a great and important duty by all the religious teachers. This is because giving is one of the highways of personal growth and progress. It is a means by which we attain to greater and greater unselfishness, and by which we prevent the falling back into selfishness. It implies that we recognize our spiritual and social kinship with our fellowmen, and are willing to part with a portion of that we have earned or possess, for man who, the more he gets, hungers for more still, and refuses to loosen his grasp upon his accumulating store, like a wild beast with its prey, is retrogressing; he is shutting himself out from all the higher and joy giving qualities, and from free and life giving communion with unselfish, happy human hearts. Dickens's Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol" represents the condition of such a man with graphic vividness and dramatic force.

Our public men in England today (probably also in America) are nearly all (I think I might say all, for I have not yet met an exception) great givers. These men - Lord Mayors, Mayors, Magistrates, Town and City Councillors, and all men filling responsible public offices - being men who have been singularly successful in the management of their own private affairs, are considered the best men for the management of public affairs, and numerous noble institutions throughout the land are perpetual witnesses to the munificence of their gifts. Nor have I been able to find any substantial truth in the accusation, so often hurled against such men by the envious and unsuccessful, that their riches are made unjustly. Without being perfect men, they are an honourable class of manly, vigorous, generous, and successful men, who have acquired riches and honour by sheer industry, ability and uprightness.

Let a man beware of greed, of meanness, of envy, of jealousy, of suspicion, for these things, if harboured, will rob him of all that is best in life, aye, even all that is best in material things, as well as all that is best in character and happiness. Let him be liberal of heart and generous of hand, magnanimous and trusting, not only giving cheerfully and often of his substance, but allowing his friends and fellowmen freedom of thought and action - let him be thus, and honour, plenty, and prosperity will come knocking at the door for admittance as his friends and guests.

Gentleness is akin to divinity. Perhaps no quality is so far removed from all that is coarse, brutal and selfish as gentleness, so that when one is becoming gentle, he is becoming divine. It can only be acquired after much experience and through great selfdiscipline. It only becomes established in a man's heart when he has controlled and brought into subjection his animal voice, a distinct, firm, but quiet enunciation, and freedom from excitement, vehemence, or resentment in peculiarly aggravating circumstances.

If there is one quality which, above all others, should distinguish the religious man, it is the quality of gentleness, for it is the hall mark of spiritual culture. The rudely aggressive man is an affront to cultivated minds and unselfish hearts. Our word *gentlemen* has not altogether departed from its original meaning. It is still applied to one who is modest and selfrestrained, and is considerate for the feelings and welfare of others. A gentle man one whose good behaviour is prompted by thoughtfulness and kindness is always loved, whatever may be his origin. Quarrelsome people make a display in their bickering and recriminations - of their ignorance and lack of culture. The man who has perfected himself in gentleness never quarrels. He never returns the hard word; he leaves it alone, or meets it with a gentle word which is far more powerful than wrath. Gentleness is wedded to wisdom, and the wise man has overcome all anger in himself, and so understands how to overcome it in

others. The gentleman is saved from most of the disturbances and turmoil's with which uncontrolled men afflict themselves. While they are wearing themselves out with wasteful and needless strain, he is quiet and composed, and such quietness and composure are strong to win in the battle of life.

Insight is the gift of sympathy. The sympathetic mind is the profoundly perceiving mind. We understand by experience, and not by argument. Before we can know a thing or being, our life must touch its or his life. Argument analyzes the outer skin, but sympathy reaches to the heart. The cynic sees the hat and coat, and thinks he sees the man. The sympathetic seer sees the man, and is not concerned with the hat and coat. In all kinds of hatred there is a separation by which each misjudges the other. In all kinds of love there is a mystic union by which each knows the other. Sympathy, being the purest form of this the greatest poet because he has the largest heart. No other figure in all literature has shown such a profound knowledge of the human heart, and of nature both animate and inanimate. The *personal* Shakespeare is not to be found in his works; he is merged, by sympathy, into his characters. The wise man and the philosopher; the madman and the fool; the drunkard and the harlot - these he, for the time into their particular experiences and knew them better than they knew themselves. Shakespeare has no partiality, no prejudice; his sympathy embraces all, from the lowest to the highest.

Prejudice is the great barrier to sympathy and knowledge. It is impossible to understand those against whom one harbours a prejudice. We only see men and things as they are when we divest our minds of partial judgements. We become seers as we become sympathizers. Sympathy has knowledge for her companion.

Inseparable are the feeling heart and the seeing eye. The man of pity is the man of prophecy. He whose heart beats in tune with all hearts, to him the contents of all hearts are revealed. Nor are past and future any longer insoluble mysteries to the man of sympathy. His moral insight apprehends the perfect round of human life.

Sympathetic insight lifts a man into the consciousness of freedom, gladness and power. His spirit inhales joy as his lungs inhale air. There are no longer any fears of his fellowmen of competition, hard times, enemies, and the like.

These grovelling illusion have disappeared, and there has opened up before his awakened vision a realm of greatness and grandeur.

Continued in next issue...

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