

Concentrate

On

Wealth

Compiled from the writings

of

Theron Q Dumont

(The Power of Concentration)

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by

Campbell M Gold

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Introduction

It was never intended that man should be poor. When wealth is obtained under the proper conditions it broadens the life. Everything has its value. Everything has a good use and a bad use. The forces of mind like wealth can be directed either for good or evil. A little rest will re-create forces. Too much rest degenerates into laziness, and brainless, dreamy longings.

If you acquire wealth unjustly from others, you are misusing your forces; but if your wealth comes through the right sources you will be blessed. Through wealth we can do things to uplift ourselves and humanity.

Wealth is many persons' goal. It therefore stimulates their endeavor. They long for it in order to dress and live in such a way as to attract friends. Without friends they would not be so particular of their surroundings. The fact is the more attractive we make ourselves and our surroundings the more inspiring are their influences. It is not conducive to proper thought to be surrounded by conditions that are uncongenial and unpleasant.

So the first step toward acquiring wealth is to surround yourself with helpful influences; to claim for yourself an environment of culture, place yourself in it and be molded by its influences.

Most great men of all ages have been comparatively rich. They have made or inherited money. Without money they could not have accomplished what they did. The man engaged in physical drudgery is not likely to have the same high ideals as the man that can command comparative leisure.

Wealth is usually the fruit of achievement. It is not, however, altogether the result of being industrious. Thousands of persons work hard who never grow wealthy. Others with much less effort acquire wealth. Seeing possibilities is another step toward acquiring wealth. A man may be as industrious as he can possibly be, but if he does not use his mental forces he will be a laborer, to be directed by the man that uses to good advantage his mental forces.

No one can become wealthy in an ordinary lifetime, by mere savings from earnings. Many scrimp and economize all their lives; but by so doing waste all their vitality and energy. For example, I know a man that used to walk to work. It took him an hour to go and an hour to return. He could have taken a car and gone in twenty minutes. He saved ten cents a day but wasted an hour and a half. It was not a very profitable investment unless the time spent in physical exercise yielded him large returns in the way of health.

The same amount of time spent in concentrated effort to overcome his unfavorable business environment might have firmly planted his feet in the path of prosperity.

One of the big mistakes made by many persons of the present generation is that they associate with those who fail to call out or develop the best that is in them. When the social side of life is developed too exclusively, as it often is, and recreation or entertainment becomes the leading motive of a person's life, he acquires habits of extravagance instead of economy; habits of wasting his resources, physical, mental, moral and spiritual, instead of conserving them. He is, in consequence, lacking in proper motivation, his God-given powers and forces are undeveloped and he inevitably brings poor judgment to bear upon all the higher relationships of life, while, as to his financial fortunes, he is ever the leaner; often a parasite, and always, if opportunity affords, as heavy a consumer as he is a poor producer.

It seems a part of the tragedy of life that these persons have to be taught such painful lessons before they can understand the forces and laws that regulate life. Few profit by the mistakes of others. They must experience them for themselves and then apply the knowledge so gained in reconstructing their lives.

Any man that has ever amounted to anything has never done a great deal of detail work for long periods at any given time. He needs his time to reflect. He does not do his duties today in the same way as yesterday, but as the result of deliberate and concentrated effort, constantly tries to improve his methods.

The other day I attended a lecture on Prosperity. I knew the lecturer had been practically broke for ten years. I wanted to hear what he had to say. He spoke very well. He no doubt benefited some of his hearers, but he had not profited by his own teachings. I introduced myself and asked him if he believed in his maxims. He said he did. I asked him if they had made him prosperous. He said not exactly. I asked him why. He answered that he thought he was fated not to experience prosperity.

In half an hour I showed that man why poverty had always been his companion. He had dressed poorly. He held his lectures in poor surroundings. By his actions and beliefs he attracted poverty. He did not realize that his thoughts and his surroundings exercised an unfavorable influence. I said: "Thoughts are moving forces; great powers. Thoughts of wealth attract wealth. Therefore, if you desire wealth you must attract the forces that will help you to secure it. Your thoughts attract a similar kind of thoughts. If you hold thoughts of poverty you attract poverty. If you make up your mind you are going to be wealthy, you will instil this thought into all your mental forces, and you will at the same time use every external condition to help you."

Many persons are of the opinion that if you have money it is easy to make more money. But this is not necessarily true. Ninety per cent of the men that start in business fail. Money will not enable one to accumulate much more, unless he is trained to seek and use good opportunities for its investment. If he inherits money the chances are that he will lose it. While, if he has made it, he not only knows its value, but has developed the power to use it as well as to make more if he loses it.

Business success today depends on foresight, good judgment, grit, firm resolution and settled purpose. But never forget that thought is as real a force as electricity. Let your thoughts be such, that you will send out as good as you receive; if you do not, you are not enriching others, and therefore deserve not to be enriched.

The man that tries to get all he can from others for nothing becomes so selfish and mean that he does not even enjoy his acquisitions. We see examples of this every day. What we take from others, will in turn, be taken from us. All obligations have to be met fairly and squarely. We cannot reach perfection until we discharge every obligation of our lives. We all realize this, so why not willingly give a fair exchange for all that we receive?

Again I repeat that the first as well as the last step in acquiring wealth is to surround yourself with good influences--good thought, good health, good home and business environment and successful business associates. Cultivate, by every legitimate means, the acquaintance of men of big caliber. Bring your thought vibrations in regard to business into harmony with theirs. This will make your society not only agreeable, but sought after, and, when you have formed intimate friendships with clean, reputable men of wealth, entrust to them, for investment, your surplus earnings, however small, until you have developed the initiative and business acumen to successfully manage your own investments. By this time you will, through such associations, have found your place in life which, if you have rightly concentrated upon and used your opportunities, will not be among men of small parts. With a competence secured, you will take pleasure in using a part of it in making the road you traveled in reaching your position easier for those who follow you.

There is somewhere in every brain the energy that will get you out of that rut and put you far up on the mountain of success if you can only use the energy.

You know that gasoline in the engine of an automobile doesn't move the car until the spark comes to explode the gasoline.

So it is with the mind of man. We are not speaking now of men of great genius, but of average, able citizens.

Each one of them has in his brain the capacity to climb over the word impossible and get into the successful country beyond.

And hope, self-confidence and the determination to do something supply the spark that makes the energy work.

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You Can Concentrate,

But Will You?

All have the ability to concentrate, but will you? You can, but whether you will or not depends on you. It is one thing to be able to do something, and another thing to do it. There is far more ability not used than is used. Why do not more men of ability make something of themselves? There are comparatively few successful men but many ambitious ones. Why do not more get along? Cases may differ, but the fault is usually their own. They have had chances, perhaps better ones than some others that have made good.

What would you like to do, that you are not doing? If you think you should be "getting on" better, why don't you? Study yourself carefully. Learn your shortcomings. Sometimes only a mere trifle keeps one from branching out and becoming a success. Discover why you have not been making good--the cause of your failure. Have you been expecting someone to lead you, or to make a way for you? If you have, concentrate on a new line of thought.

There are two things absolutely necessary for success--energy and the will to succeed. Nothing can take the place of either of these. Most of us will not have an easy path to follow so don't expect to find one. The hard knocks develop our courage and moral stamina. The persons that live in an indolent and slipshod way never have any. They have never faced conditions and therefore don't know how. The world is no better for their living.

We must make favorable conditions and not expect them to shape themselves. It is not the man that says, "It can't be done," but the man that goes ahead in spite of adverse advice, and shows that "it can be done" that "gets there" today. "The Lord helps those that help themselves," is a true saying. We climb the road to success by overcoming obstacles. Stumbling blocks are but stepping stones for the man that says, "I can and I Will." When we see cripples, the deaf and dumb, the blind and those with other handicaps amounting to something in the world, the able-bodied man should feel ashamed of himself if he does not make good.

There is nothing that can resist the force of perseverance. The way ahead of all of us is not clear sailing, but all hard passages can be bridged, if you just think they can and concentrate on how to do it. But if you think the obstacles are unsurmountable, you will not of course try, and even if you do, it will be in only a half-hearted way--a way that accomplishes nothing.

Many men will not begin an undertaking unless they feel sure they will succeed in it. What a mistake! This would be right, if we were sure of what we could and could not do. But who knows? There may be an obstruction there now that might not be there next week. There may not be an obstruction there now that will be there next week. The trouble with most persons is that just as soon as they see their way blocked they lose courage. They forget that usually there is a way around the difficulty. It's up to you to find it. If you tackle something with little effort, when the conditions call for a big effort, you will of course not win. Tackle everything with a feeling that you will utilize all the power within you to make it a success. This is the kind of concentrated effort that succeeds.

Most people are beaten before they start. They think they are going to encounter obstacles, and they look for them instead of for means to overcome them. The result is that they increase their obstacles instead of diminishing them. Have you ever undertaken something that you thought would be hard, but afterwards found it to be easy? That is the way a great many times. The things that look difficult in advance turn out to be easy of conquest when once encountered. So start out on your journey with the idea that the road is going to be clear for you, and that if it is not you will clear the way. All men that have amounted to anything have cleared their way and they did not have the assistance that you will have today.

The one great keynote of success is to do whatever you have decided on. Don't be turned from your path, but resolve that you are going to accomplish what you set out to do. Don't be frightened at a few rebuffs, for they cannot stop the man that is determined--the man that knows in his heart that success is only bought by tremendous resolution, by concentrated and whole-hearted effort.

"He who has a firm will," says Goethe, "molds the world to himself."

"People do not lack strength," says Victor Hugo; "they lack Will."

It is not so much skill that wins victories as it is activity and great determination. There is no such thing as failure for the man that does his best. No matter what you may be working at, at the present time, don't let this make you lose courage. The tides are continually changing, and tomorrow or some other day they will turn to your advantage if you are a willing and are an ambitious worker. There is nothing that develops you and increases your courage like work. If it were not for work how monotonous life would at last become!

So I say to the man that wants to advance, "Don't look upon your present position as your permanent one. Keep your eyes open, and add those qualities to your makeup that will assist you when your opportunity comes. Be ever alert and on the watch for opportunities. Remember, we attract what we set our minds on. If we look for opportunities, we find them."

If you are the man you should be, some one is looking for you to fill a responsible position. So when he finds you, don't let your attention wander. Give it all to him. Show that you can concentrate your powers, that you have the makeup of a real man. Show no signs of fear, uncertainty or doubt. The man that is sure of himself is bound to get to the front. No circumstances can prevent him.

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The Art of Concentrating

by Means

of Practical Exercises

Select some thought, and see how long you can hold your mind on it. It is well to have a clock at first and keep track of the time. If you decide to think about health, you can get a great deal of good from your thinking besides developing concentration. Think of health as being the greatest blessing there is, in the world. Don't let any other thought drift in. Just the moment one starts to obtrude, make it get out.

Make it a daily habit of concentrating on this thought for, say, ten minutes. Practice until you can hold it to the exclusion of everything else. You will find it of the greatest value to centralize your thoughts on health. Regardless of your present condition, see yourself as you would like to be and be blind to everything else. You will find it hard at first to forget your ailments, if you have any, but after a short while you can shut out these negative thoughts and see yourself as you want to be. Each time you concentrate you form a more perfect image of health, and, as you come into its realization, you become healthy, strong and wholesome.

I want to impress upon your mind that the habit of forming mental images is of the greatest value. It has always been used by successful men of all ages, but few realize its full importance.

Do you know that you are continually acting according to the images you form? If you allow yourself to mould negative images you unconsciously build a negative disposition. You will think of poverty, weakness, disease, fear, etc. Just as surely as you think of these will your objective life express itself in a like way. Just what we think, we will manifest in the external world.

In deep concentration you become linked with the great creative spirit of the universe, and the creative energy then flows through you, vitalizing your creations into form. In deep concentration your mind becomes attuned with the infinite and registers the cosmic intelligence and receives its messages. You become so full of the cosmic energy that you are literally flooded with divine power. This is a most desired state. It is then we realize the advantages of being connected with the supra-consciousness. The supra-consciousness registers the higher cosmic vibrations. It is often referred to as the wireless station, the message recorded coming from the universal mind.

There are very few that reach this stage of concentration. Very few even know that it is possible. They think concentration means limitation to one subject, but this deeper concentration that brings us into harmony with the Infinite is that which produces and maintains health.

When you have once come in contact with your supra-consciousness you become the controller of your human thoughts. That which comes to you is higher than human thoughts. It is often spoken of as Cosmic Consciousness. Once it is experienced it is never forgotten. Naturally it requires a good deal of training to reach this state, but once you do, it becomes easier each time to do, and in the course of time you can become possessed of power which was unknown to you before. You are able to direct the expression of almost Infinite Power while in this deeper state of concentration.

Exercises In Concentration. The rays of the sun, when focused upon an object by means of a sun glass, produce a heat many times greater than the scattered rays of the same source of light and heat. This is true of attention. Scatter it and you get but ordinary results. But center it upon one thing and you secure much better results. When you focus your attention upon an object your every action, voluntary and involuntary, is in the direction of attaining that object. If you will focus your energies upon a thing to the exclusion of everything else, you generate the force that can bring you what you want.

When you focus your thought, you increase its strength. The exercises that follow are tedious and monotonous, but useful. If you will persist in them you will find they are very valuable, as they increase your powers of concentration.

Before proceeding with the exercises I will answer a question that just comes to me. This person says after he works all day he is too tired to practice any exercise. But this is not true. We will say he comes home all tired out, eats his supper and sits down to rest. If his work has been mental, the thought which has been occupying his mind returns to him and this prevents him from securing the rest he needs.

It is an admitted fact that certain thoughts call into operation a certain set of brain cells; the other cells, of course, are not busy at that time and are rested. Now if you take up something that is just different from what you have been doing during the day, you will use the cells that have not done anything and give those that have had work to do a rest. So you should regulate the evenings that you have and call forth an entirely different line of thought so as not to use the cells which you have tired out during the day. If you will center your attention on a new thought, you relieve the old cells from vibrating with excitement and they get their needed rest. The other cells that have been idle all day want to work, and you will find you can enjoy your evenings while securing needed rest.

When once you have learned to master your thoughts, you will be able to change them just as easily as you change your clothes.

Remember, the real requisite of centering is to be able to shut out outside thoughts--anything foreign to the subject. Now, in order to control your intention first gain control over the body. This must be brought under direct control of the mind; the mind under the control of the will. Your will is strong enough to do anything you wish, but you must realize that it is. The mind can be greatly strengthened by being brought under the direct influence of the will. When the mind is properly strengthened by the impulse of the will it becomes a more powerful transmitter of thought, because it has more force.

The Best Time to Concentrate Is after reading something that is inspiring, as you are then mentally and spiritually exalted in the desired realm. Then is the time you are ready for deep concentration. If you are in your room first see that your windows are up and the air is good. Lie down flat on your bed without a pillow. See that every muscle is relaxed. Now breathe slowly, filling the lungs comfortably full of fresh air; hold this as long as you can without straining yourself; then exhale slowly. Exhale in an easy, rhythmic way. Breathe this way for five minutes, letting the Divine Breath flow through you, which will cleanse and rejuvenate every cell of brain and body.

You are then ready to proceed. Now think how quiet and relaxed you are. You can become enthusiastic over your condition. Just think of yourself as getting ready to receive knowledge that is far greater than you have ever received before. Now relax and let the spirit work in and through you and assist you to accomplish what you wish.

Don't let any doubts or fears enter. Just feel that what you wish is going to manifest. Just feel it already has, in reality it has, for just the minute you wish a thing to be done it manifests in the thought world. Whenever you concentrate just believe it is a success. Keep up this feeling and allow nothing to interfere and you will soon find you have become the master of concentration. You will find that this practice will be of wonderful value to you, and that rapidly you will be learning to accomplish anything that you undertake.

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The 19 Exercises

It will be necessary to first train the body to obey the commands of the mind. I want you to gain control of your muscular movements. The following exercise is especially good in assisting you to acquire perfect control of the muscles.

Exercise 1

Sit in a comfortable chair and see how still you can keep. This is not as easy as it seems. You will have to center your attention on sitting still. Watch and see that you are not making any involuntary muscular movements. By a little practice you will find you are able to sit still without a movement of the muscles for fifteen minutes. At first I advise sitting in a relaxed position for five minutes. After you are able to keep perfectly still, increase the time to ten minutes and then to fifteen. This is as long as it is necessary. But never strain yourself to keep still. You must be relaxed completely. You will find this habit of relaxing is very good.

Exercise 2

Sit in a chair with your head up and your chin out, shoulders back. Raise your right arm until it is on the level with your shoulder, pointing to your right. Look around, with head only, and fix your gaze on your fingers, and keep the arm perfectly still for one minute. Do the same exercise with left arm. When you are able to keep the arm perfectly steady, increase the time until you are able to do this five minutes with each arm. Turn the palm of the hand downward when it is outstretched, as this is the easiest position. If you will keep your eyes fixed on the tips of the fingers you will be able to tell if you are keeping your arm perfectly still.

Exercise 3

Fill a small glass full of water, and grasp it by the fingers; put the arm directly in front of you. Now fix the eyes upon the glass and try to keep the arm so steady that no movement will be noticeable. Do this first for one moment and then increase it to five. Do the exercise with first one arm and then the other.

Exercise 4

Watch yourself during the day and see that your muscles do not become tense or strained. See how easy and relaxed you can keep yourself. See how poised you can be at all times. Cultivate a self-poised manner, instead of a nervous, strained appearance. This mental feeling will improve your carriage and demeanor. Stop all useless gestures and movements of the body. These mean that you have not proper control over your body. After you have acquired this control, notice how "ill-at-ease" people are that have not gained this control. I have just been sizing up a salesman that has just left me. Part of his body kept moving all the time. I just felt like saying to him, "Do you know how much better appearance you would make if you would just learn to speak with your voice instead of trying to express what you say with your whole body?" Just watch those that interview you and see how they lack poise.

Get rid of any habit you have of twitching or jerking any part of your body. You will find you make many involuntary movements. You can quickly stop any of these by merely centering your attention on the thought, "I will not."

If you are in the habit of letting noises upset you, just exercise control; when the door slams, or something falls, etc., just think of these as exercises in self-control. You will find many exercises like this in your daily routine.

The purpose of the above exercises is to gain control over the involuntary muscular movement, making your actions entirely voluntary. The following exercises are arranged to bring your voluntary muscles under the control of the will, so that your mental forces may control your muscular movements.

Exercise 5

Move your chair up to a table, placing your hands upon it, clenching the fists, keeping the back of the hand on the table, the thumb doubled over the fingers. Now fix your gaze upon the fist for a while, then gradually extend the thumb, keeping your whole attention fixed upon the act, just as if it was a matter of great importance. Then gradually extend your first finger, then your second and so on until you open the rest. Then reverse the process, closing first the last one opened and then the rest, and finally you will have the fist again in the original position with the thumb closed over the finger. Do this exercise with the left hand. Keep up this exercise first with one hand and then the other until you have done it five times with each hand. In a few days you can increase it to ten times.

The chances are that the above exercises will at first make you "tired," but it is important for you to practice these monotonous exercises so you can train your attention. It also gives you control over your muscular movement. The attention, of course, must be kept closely on each movement of the hand; if it is not, you of course lose the value of the exercise.

Exercise 6

Put the right hand on knee, both fingers and thumb closed, except the first finger, which points out in front of you. Then move the finger slowly from side to side, keeping the attention fixed upon the end of the finger. You can make up a variety of exercises like these. It is good training to plan out different ones. The main point you should keep in mind is that the exercise should be simple and that the attention should be firmly fixed upon the moving part of the body. You will find your attention will not want to be controlled and will try to drift to something more interesting. This is just where these exercises are of value, and you must control your attention and see it is held in the right place and does not wander away.

You may think these exercises very simple and of no value, but I promise you in a short time you will notice that you have a much better control over your muscular movements, carriage and demeanor, and you will find that you have greatly improved your power of attention, and can center your thoughts on what you do, which of course will be very valuable.

No matter what you may be doing, imagine that it is your chief object in life. Imagine you are not interested in anything else in the world but what you are doing. Do not let your attention get away from the work you are at. Your attention will no doubt be rebellious, but control it and do not let it control you. When once you conquer the rebellious attention you have achieved a greater victory than you can realize at the time. Many times afterwards you will be thankful you have learned to concentrate your closest attention upon the object at hand.

Let no day go by without practicing concentrating on some familiar object that is uninteresting. Never choose an interesting object, as it requires less attention. The less interesting it is the better exercise will it be. After a little practice you will find you can center your attention on uninteresting subjects at will.

The person that can concentrate can gain full control over his body and mind and be the master of his inclinations; not their slave. When you can control yourself you can control others. You can develop a Will that will make you a giant compared with the man that lacks Will Power. Try out your Will Power in different ways until you have it under such control that just as soon as you decide to do a thing you go ahead and do it. Never be satisfied with the "I did fairly well" spirit, but put forward your best efforts. Be satisfied with nothing else. When you have gained this you are the man you were intended to be.

Exercise 7

Concentration Increases the Sense of Smell. When you take a walk, or drive in the country, or pass a flower garden, concentrate on the odor of flowers and plants. See how many different kinds you can detect. Then choose one particular kind and try to sense only this. You will find that this strongly intensifies the sense of smell. This differentiation requires, however, a peculiarly attentive attitude.

When sense of smell is being developed, you should not only shut out from the mind every thought but that of odor, but you should also shut out cognizance of every odor save that upon which your mind, for the time, is concentrated.

You can find plenty of opportunity for exercises for developing the sense of smell. When you are out in the air, be on the alert for the different odors. You will find the air laden with all kinds, but let your concentration upon the one selected be such that a scent of its fragrance in after years will vividly recall the circumstances of this exercise.

The object of these exercises is to develop concentrated attention, and you will find that you can, through their practice, control your mind and direct your thoughts just the same as you can your arm.

Exercise 8

Concentration on the Within. Lie down and thoroughly relax your muscles. Concentrate on the beating of your heart. Do not pay any attention to anything else. Think how this great organ is pumping the blood to every part of the body; try to actually picture the blood leaving the great reservoir and going in one stream right down to the toes. Picture another going down the arms to the tips of the fingers. After a little practice you can actually feel the blood passing through your system.

If, at any time, you feel weak in any part of the body, will that an extra supply of blood shall go there. For instance, if your eyes feel tired, picture the blood coming from the heart, passing up through the head and out to the eyes. You can wonderfully increase your strength by this exercise. Men have been able to gain such control over the heart that they have actually stopped it from beating for five minutes. This, however, is not without danger, and is not to be practiced by the novice.

I have found the following a very helpful exercise to take just before going to bed and on rising in the morning: Say to yourself, "Every cell in my body thrills with life; every part of my body is strong and healthy." I have known a number of people to greatly improve their health in this way. You become what you picture yourself to be. If your mind thinks of sickness in connection with self you will be sick. If you imagine yourself in strong, vigorous health, the image will be realized. You will be healthy.

Exercise 9

Concentrating on Sleep. What is known as the water method is, although very simple, very effective in inducing sleep.

Put a full glass of clear water on a table in your sleeping room. Sit in a chair beside the table and gaze into the glass of water and think how calm it is. Then picture yourself, getting into just as calm a state. In a short time you will find the nerves becoming quiet and you will be able to go to sleep. Sometimes it is good to picture yourself becoming drowsy to induce sleep, and, again, the most persistent insomnia has been overcome by one thinking of himself as some inanimate object--for instance, a hollow log in the depths of the cool, quiet forest.

Those who are troubled with insomnia will find these sleep exercises that quiet the nerves very effective. Just keep the idea in your mind that there is no difficulty in going to sleep; banish all fear of insomnia. Practice these exercises and you will sleep.

By this time you should have awakened to the possibilities of concentration and have become aware of the important part it plays in your life.

Exercise 10

Concentration Will Save Energy and Appearance. Watch yourself and see if you are not in the habit of moving your hands, thumping something with your fingers or twirling your mustache. Some have the habit of keeping their feet going, as, for instance, tapping them on the floor. Practice standing before a mirror and see if you are in the habit of frowning or causing wrinkles to appear in the forehead. Watch

others and see how they needlessly twist their faces in talking. Any movement of the face that causes the skin to wrinkle will eventually cause a permanent wrinkle. As the face is like a piece of silk, you can make a fold in it a number of times and it will straighten out of itself, but, if you continue to make a fold in it, it will in time be impossible to remove it.

By Concentration You Can Stop the Worry Habit. If you are in the habit of worrying over the merest trifles, just concentrate on this a few minutes and see how needless it is; if you are also in the habit of becoming irritable or nervous at the least little thing, check yourself instantly when you feel yourself becoming so; start to breathe deeply; say, "I will not be so weak; I am master of myself," and you will quickly overcome your condition.

Exercise 11

By Concentration You Can Control Your Temper. If you are one of those that flare up at the slightest "provocation" and never try to control yourself, just think this over a minute. Does it do you any good? Do you gain anything by it? Doesn't it put you out of poise for some time? Don't you know that this grows on you and will eventually make you despised by all that have any dealings with you? Everyone makes mistakes and, instead of becoming angry at their perpetrators, just say to them, "Be more careful next time." This thought will be impressed on them and they will be more careful. But, if you continually complain about their making a mistake, the thought of a mistake is impressed on them and they will be more likely to make mistakes in the future. All lack of self-control can be conquered if you will but learn to concentrate.

Many of you that read this may think you are not guilty of either of these faults, but if you will carefully watch yourself you will probably find that you are, and, if so, you will be greatly helped by repeating this affirmation each morning:

"I am going to try today not to make a useless gesture or to worry over trifles, or become nervous or irritable. I intend to be calm, and, no matter what may be the circumstances, I will control myself. Henceforth I resolve to be free from all signs that show lack of self-control."

At night quickly review your actions during the day and see how fully you realized your aim. At first you will, of course, have to plead guilty of violation a few times, but keep on, and you will soon find that you can live up to your ideal. After you have once gained self-control, however, don't relinquish it. For some time it will still be necessary to repeat the affirmation in the morning and square your conduct with it in the evening. Keep up the good work until, at last, the habit of self-control is so firmly fixed that you could not break it even though you tried.

I have had many persons tell me that this affirmation and daily review made a wonderful difference in their lives. You, too, will notice the difference if you live up to these instructions.

Exercise 12

Practice Talking Before a Glass. Make two marks on your mirror on a level with your eyes, and think of them as two human eyes looking into yours. Your eyes will probably blink a little at first. Do not move your head, but stand erect. Concentrate all your thoughts on keeping your head perfectly still. Do not let another thought come into your mind. Then, still keeping the head, eyes and body still, think that you look like a reliable man or woman should; like a person that anyone would have confidence in. Do not let your appearance be such as to justify the remark, "I don't like his appearance. I don't believe he can be trusted."

While standing before the mirror practice deep breathing. See that there is plenty of fresh air in the room, and that you are literally feasting on it. You will find that, as it permeates every cell, your timidity will disappear. It has been replaced by a sense of peace and power.

The one that stands up like a man and has control over the muscles of his face and eyes always commands attention. In his conversation, he can better impress those with whom he comes in contact. He acquires a feeling of calmness and strength that causes opposition to melt away before it.

Three minutes a day is long enough for the practice of this exercise.

Look at the clock before you commence the exercise, and if you find you can prolong the exercise for more than five minutes do so. The next day sit in a chair and, without looking at the picture, concentrate on it and see if you cannot think of additional details concerning it. The chances are you will be able to think of many more. It might be well for you to write down all you thought of the first day, and then add to the list each new discovery. You will find that this is a very excellent exercise in concentration.

Exercise 13

The Control of Sensations. Think how you would feel if you were cool; then how you would feel if you were cold; again, how you would feel if it were freezing. In this state you would be shivering all over. Now think of just the opposite conditions; construct such a vivid image of heat that you are able to experience the sensation of heat even in the coldest atmosphere. It is possible to train your imagination until you do this, and it can then be turned to practical account in making undesirable conditions bearable.

You can think of many very good exercises like this. For instance, if you feel yourself getting hungry or thirsty and for any reason you do not wish to eat, do not think of how hungry or thirsty you are, but just visualize yourself as finishing a hearty meal. Again, when you experience pain, do not increase it by thinking about it, but do something to divert your attention, and the pain will seem to decrease. If you will start practicing along this line systematically you will soon gain a wonderful control over the things that affect your physical comfort.

Exercise 14

The Eastern Way of Concentrating. Sit in a chair with a high back in upright position. Press one finger against the right nostril. Now take a long, deep breath, drawing the breath in gently as you count ten; then expel the breath through the right nostril as you count ten. Repeat this exercise with the opposite nostril. This exercise should be done at least twenty times at each sitting.

Exercise 15

Controlling Desires. Desire, which is one of the hardest forces to control, will furnish you with excellent exercises in concentration. It seems natural to want to tell others what you know; but, by learning to control these desires, you can wonderfully strengthen your powers of concentration. Remember, you have all you can do to attend to your own business. Do not waste your time in thinking of others or in gossiping about them.

If, from your own observation, you learn something about another person that is detrimental, keep it to yourself. Your opinion may afterwards turn out to be wrong anyway, but whether right or wrong, you have strengthened your will by controlling your desire to communicate your views.

If you hear good news resist the desire to tell it to the first person you meet and you will be benefited thereby. It will require the concentration of all your powers of resistance to prohibit the desire to tell. After you feel that you have complete control over your desires you can then tell your news. But you must be able to suppress the desire to communicate the news until you are fully ready to tell it. Persons that do not possess this power of control over desires are apt to tell things that they should not, thereby often involving both themselves and others in needless trouble.

If you are in the habit of getting excited when you hear unpleasant news, just control yourself and receive it without any exclamation of surprise. Say to yourself, "Nothing is going to cause me to lose my self-control. You will find from experience that this self-control will be worth much to you in business. You will be looked upon as a cool-headed business man, and this in time becomes a valuable business asset. Of course, circumstances alter cases. At times it is necessary to become enthused. But be ever on the lookout for opportunities for the practice of self-control. "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that ruleth a city."

Exercise 16

When You Read. No one can think without first concentrating his thoughts on the subject in hand. Every man and woman should train himself to think clearly. An excellent exercise is to read some short story and then write just an abridged statement. Read an article in a newspaper, and see in how few words you can express it. Reading an article to get only the essentials requires the closest concentration. If you are unable to write out what you read, you will know you are weak in concentration. Instead of writing it out you can express it orally if you wish. Go to your room and deliver it as if you were talking to some one. You will find exercises like this of the greatest value in developing concentration and learning to think.

After you have practiced a number of these simple exercises read a book for twenty minutes and then write down what you have read. The chances are that at first you will not remember very many details, but with a little practice you will be able to write a very good account of what you have read. The closer the concentration the more accurate the account will be.

It is a good idea when time is limited to read only a short sentence and then try to write it down word for word. When you are able to do this, read two or more sentences and treat similarly. The practice will produce very good results if you keep it up until the habit is fixed.

If you will just utilize your spare time in practicing exercises like those suggested you can gain wonderful powers of concentration. You will find that in order to remember every word in a sentence you must keep out every thought but that which you wish to remember, and this power of inhibition alone will more than compensate for the trouble of the exercise. Of course, success in all of the above depends largely upon cultivating, through the closest concentration, the power to image or picture what you read; upon the power, as one writer expresses it, of letting the mountains of which we hear loom before us and the rivers of which we read roll at our feet.

Exercise 17

Concentration Overcomes Bad Habits. If you have a habit that you want to get rid of, shut your eyes and imagine that your real self is standing before you. Now try the power of affirmation; say to yourself, "You are not a weakling; you can stop this habit if you want to. This habit is bad and you want to break it." Just imagine that you are some one else giving this advice. This is very valuable practice. You, in time, see yourself as others see you. The habit loses its power over you and you are free.

If you will just form the mental image of controlling yourself as another person might, you will take a delight in breaking bad habits. I have known a number of men to break themselves of drinking in this way.

Exercise 18

Watch Concentration. Sit in a chair and place a clock with a second hand on the table. Follow the second hand with your eyes as it goes around. Keep this up for five minutes, thinking of nothing else but the second hand, This is a very good exercise when you only have a few minutes to spare, if you are able to keep every other thought in the stream of consciousness subordinate to it. As there is little that is particularly interesting about the second hand, it is hard to do this, but in the extra effort of will power required to make it successful lies its value. Always try to keep as still as possible during these exercises.

In this way you can gain control over nerves and this quieting effect is very good for them.

Exercise 19

Faith Concentration. A belief in the power to concentrate is of course very important. I purposely did not put this exercise in the beginning where it naturally belongs because I wanted you to know that you could learn to concentrate. If you have practiced the above exercises you have now developed

this concentration power to a considerable extent and therefore you have faith in the power of concentration, but you can still become a much stronger believer in it.

We will say that you have some desire or wish you want fulfilled, or that you need some special advice. You first clearly picture what is wanted and then you concentrate on getting it. Have absolute faith that your desires will be realized. Believe that it will according to your belief be fulfilled. Never, at this time, attempt to analyze the belief. You don't care anything about the whys and wherefores. You want to gain the thing you desire, and if you concentrate on it in the right way you will get it.

A Caution. Never think you will not succeed, but picture what is wanted as already yours, and yours it surely will be.

Self-Distrust. Do you ever feel distrust in yourself? If You do, just ask yourself, which self do I mistrust? Then say: my higher self cannot be affected. Then think of the wonderful powers of the higher self. There is a way to overcome all difficulties, and it is a delight for the human soul to do so. Instead of wasting precious thought-force by dreading or fearing a disagreeable interview or event, instead devote the time and concentrated thought in how to make the best of the interview or event and you will find that it will not be as unpleasant as you thought it would be. Most of our troubles are but imaginary, and it is the mental habit of so dreading them that really acts as a magnet in attracting those that really do come. Your evil circumstances are created or attracted by your own negative, fears and wrong thoughts, and are a means of teaching you to triumph over all evils, by discovering that which is inherent within yourself.

You will find it helpful in overcoming self-distrust, to stop and think, why you are, concentrating your forces, and by so doing you become more closely attached to the higher self, which never distrusts.

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Theron Q Dumont
(William Walker Atkinson)

Theron Q Dumont was a pseudonym for American author William Walker Atkinson, who was an influential pioneer in the areas of New Thought, personal transformation, occultism, and yoga.

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