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YOUR MIND IS THE BARRIER

When Sir Charles Napier and his expedition party cornered a large number of elephants in Bengal, they were at a loss to know how they could confine them. Someone suggested that they build a stockade of bamboo poles around the elephants, so large as to appear to be a formidable barrier thru which they could not break. This they did, and it proved so successful that the elephants never made any attempt to break thru the flimsy barrier which kept them in captivity. They were slaves to captivity, simply because they thought they were confined within solid barriers.

How many human beings are just as foolish as were these deluded elephants? We imagine ourselves held back by all kinds of impediments; we are the slaves of all sorts of bamboo barriers.

There are bamboo habits which are sapping our vitality and seriously interfering with our success in life. On every hand we see men who are held in slavery by drugs, immorality, inertia, laziness, selfishness and greed, imprisoned within bamboo stockades, which they could break if they only believed they could and would exert themselves.

I knew a man in New England who used to drive a beautiful horse from his country estate every morning, tie the horse with an apparently very flimsy halter-strap, and leave the horse all day while he went to town. When he returned, the horse was not even unchecked. Now, why did that horse, so powerful that he could easily have broken away, stand such treatment? He would stand for hours in the hot sun, without anything to eat or drink, waiting for the man to return. It was simply because he thought he was so fastened that it was impossible for him to gain his liberty.

A horse will obey our slightest suggestion. He will quickly respond to the least pulling of the rein this way or that way. You would think he is subject to his master, until some day something frightens him and he takes the bit in his mouth. Then, for the first time in his life, he finds he is master and is pulling at the rein. The man at the reins is but a baby, compared with the horse's power. He runs away, with very little hindrance, in spite of all his master's efforts to stop him. For the first time in his life he

tastes power, and realizes that he is not the slave that he thought himself to be.

How many men are like the elephants of Sir Charles Napier which walked up and down, to and fro, within the bamboo stockade, never making any real effort to escape and to get their freedom because they thought they were behind impregnable walls!

The consciousness that you were free-born, as was Paul, the consciousness that you have the power within yourself to break thru the bamboo stockade and get your liberty, will free you from all slavery, my friend. But you must first believe that you have power to do, or you will never make the necessary effort. You would be free, except that you believe you are tied, are convinced that you are tied, with something that is strong enough to hold you; but which you could break thru without effort.

If the elephants in Sir Charles Napier's bamboo stockade had even leaned against the walls, they would have gone thru it, but they did not even try. They believed that they were strongly imprisoned.

You are not the slave of sickness, of ill health, of disease, of poverty, of failure, of unhappiness, of unfortunate conditions, of an unfriendly environment. There is a power right within you to break away from all of these things which enslave you.

The truth that will make you free, that will cut the cords which bind you, will be the consciousness of your divinity, the consciousness of your freedom from all slavery by virtue of your birthright, of your divinity, the omnipotence which you have inherited.

Lincoln said that this country could not long endure, half-slave and half-free. Neither can individuals. The majority of men are more than half-slaves to vices, to weaknesses, to habits which devitalize, which demoralize them and seriously interfere with their getting on in the world. Multitudes of people are the slaves of sickness and weaknesses which they imagine they have inherited or acquired.

How many of us have a strong, deep-seated conviction that we are not strong and never will be, that we must go thru life seriously handicapped on account of poor health. We do not realize that we must think health, that we must believe it is possible for us, that it is our birthright. We must think health, talk health, before we can be healthy, just as we must think prosperity and success before we can become prosperous or successful.