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CULTIVATING CHEERFULNESS

Cheerfulness—having a cheery disposition—helps more people to less wear and tear than almost any other quality. Looking on the bright side of things is a great factor in achievement, while looking on the dark side tears down and destroys. Can you realize that cheerfulness is a wonderful producer? It adds to one's active ability and increases mental and physical power. It makes hosts of friends and helps us to be interesting and agreeable. In every activity of life the cheerful person is always the favorite. Good-natured, cheerful people do not waste their vital energy as rapidly as the grumbler or the too-sober and too-sad people. They work with much less friction.

Good cheer is a great lubricant—it oils all of life's machinery. There is no other life habit which can give such prolific returns in happiness and satisfaction as that of being cheerful under all circumstances. If the resolution to cultivate cheerfulness is strongly made at the very outset, it will not be difficult to form the "cheerful habit," and it will prove the greatest protection against suffering and disappointment. Some people are thrown off of their balance the moment that something goes wrong with them. They do not have the ability to overcome impediments and do their work in spite of annoyances.

Anybody can progress when everything goes smoothly, when there is nothing to trouble them; but a person must be made of the right kind of stuff who can rise above things which harass and handicap the weak, and do their work in spite of them. Indeed, this is the test of greatness.

As a matter of fact, students, the greatest achievements in all times have been accomplished by men and women who have been misunderstood and criticised. But they were great enough to rise above all these things and continue their work in the face of opposition. We have observed both here and elsewhere that there are but comparatively few people who are large enough to be superior to their aches and pains and disappointments. The great majority are always talking about them, projecting their dark shadows into the other fellow's atmosphere, cutting off their sunshine with their clouds. Their ailments and their hard luck and misfortunes seem to be the biggest

thing about them. The person who cannot rise above the things which trouble him, who cannot overtop his aches and pains, annoyances and disappointments, rendering them of no moment in comparison with his great aim in life, will not achieve much.

There is an unwritten law for people who may be termed thoroughbred—the real gentleman and the real lady—which compels them to keep their troubles, their ailments, their sorrows, their worries, their losses, to themselves. There is a fine discipline in this. It mellows the character and sweetens the life. But when these troubles and afflictions are not borne heroically they mar the character and leave ugly traces in the face; their hideous forms appear in the manner as well and tend to disfigure the whole life. Boys, girls, readers, start in now to learn to consume your own smoke. If you have misfortunes, pains, diseases, troubles, do not advertise the fact. Those who know you have them will love and admire you infinitely more for this suppression. A stout heart and persistent cheerfulness will be more than a match for all your troubles.

What kind of an expression do you wear habitually? Is it sour, morose, repellent? Is it stingy, contemptible, uncharitable, intolerant? Do you go about among your friends with a thundercloud expression, with a melancholy, despondent, hopeless look on your face, or do you wear the sunshine expression which radiates good cheer and hope, which indicates a feeling of good will and of helpfulness? Do people smile and look happier when you approach them, or do they shrink from you, and feel a chilly, goose-flesh sensation overcome them as you draw near? It makes all the difference in the world to you, and to those whom you influence, what kind of an expression you wear. The effort to be cheerful, kind, considerate and gentle, no matter what wars may be rankling in your heart, has an influence in transforming the life.

What a satisfaction is it to go through life radiating sunshine and hope instead of despair, encouragement instead of discouragement, and to feel conscious that every-one with whom you come in contact gets a little dash of sunshine. It costs nothing to give a smile and to make people feel that you have a warm

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