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CHAPTER

The Secret Of Health, Success And Power

James Allen (1864-1912)

➔ About the Author

James Allen is an eminent American writer. His essays are famous for moral teachings. They enable the readers to cultivate good habits. He is both, a thinker and a philosopher. His famous books are — 'From Poverty to Power', 'By ways of Blessedness', 'Majesty of Destiny' and 'As a Man Thinketh'.



➔ About the Lesson

This lesson has been selected from the famous book 'From Poverty to Power'. It is highly inspiring. In the essay, the author shows how a man can become healthy, successful and powerful. The secret of all this is pure and unselfish spirit, purity and faith and singleness of purpose. He says that secret of good health lies in a harmonious mind which is free from all kinds of tensions. The secret of success lies in faith in God, in law and in the work. For power, one should cultivate pure and unselfish spirit and combine it with purity, faith and singleness of purpose.



Where there is sterling faith and uncompromising purity there is health, there is success, there is power. In such a one, disease, failure and disaster can find no lodgment, for there is nothing on which they can feed.

The sooner we realise and acknowledge that sickness is the result of our own error or sin, the sooner shall we enter upon the highway of health. Disease comes to those who attract it, to those whose minds and bodies are receptive to it, and flees from those whose strong, pure and positive thought-sphere generates healing and life-giving currents.

If you are given to anger, worry, jealousy, greed or any other inharmonious state of mind and expect perfect physical health, you are expecting the impossible, for you are continually sowing the seeds of disease in your mind. Such conditions of mind are carefully shunned by the wise man, for he knows them to be far more dangerous than a bad drain or an infected house.

If you would be free from all physical aches and pains, and would enjoy perfect

physical harmony, then put your mind in order, and harmonise your thoughts. Think joyful thoughts; think loving thoughts; let the elixir of goodwill course through your veins, and you will need no other medicine. Put away your jealousies, your suspicions, your worries, your hatreds, your selfish indulgences, and you will put away your dyspepsia, your biliousness, your nervousness and aching joints. If you will persist in clinging to these debilitating and demoralising habits of mind, then do not complain when your body is laid low with sickness.

Many people complain that they have broken down through over-work. In the majority of such cases, the breakdown is more frequently the result of foolishly wasted energy. If you would secure health, you must learn to work without friction. To become anxious or excited, or to worry over needless details, is to invite a breakdown. Work, whether of brain or body, is beneficial and health-giving and the man who can work with a steady and calm persistency, freed from all anxiety and worry and with his mind utterly oblivious to all but the work he has in hand, will not only accomplish far more than the man who is always hurried and anxious, but he will retain his health, a boon which the other quickly forfeits.

True health and true success go together, for they are inseparably intertwined in the thought-realm. By the power of faith, every enduring work is accomplished. Faith in the Supreme; faith in the over-ruling Law; faith in your work and in your power to accomplish that work—here is the rock upon which you must build if you would achieve, if you would stand and not fall. To follow, under all circumstances, the highest promptings within you; to be always true to the divine self; to rely upon the inward Light, the inward Voice, and to pursue your purpose with a fearless and restful heart, believing that the future will yield unto you the need of every thought and effort; knowing that the laws of the universe can never fail, and that your own will come back to you with mathematical exactitude, this is faith and the living of faith. By the power of such faith, the dark waters of uncertainty are divided, every mountain of difficulty crumbles away, and the believing soul passes on unharmed. Strive, O reader ! to acquire, above everything, the priceless possession of this dauntless faith, for it is the talisman of happiness, of success, of peace, of power, of all that makes life great and superior to suffering. Build upon such a faith, and you build upon the Rock of the Eternal, and with the material of the Eternal, and structure that you erect will never be dissolved, for it will transcend all the accumulations of material luxuries and riches, the end of which is dust. Whether you are hurled into the depths of sorrow, or lifted upon the heights of joy, ever retain your hold upon this faith, ever return to it as your rock of refuge, and keep your feet firmly planted upon its immortal and immovable base. Centred in such a faith, you will become possessed of such a spiritual strength as will shatter, like so many toys of glass, all the forces of evil that are hurled against you, and you will achieve a success such as the mere striver after worldly gain can never know or even dream of.

If you will become possessed of this faith, you will not need to trouble about your future success or failure, and success will come. You will not need to become anxious about results, but will work joyfully, and peacefully, knowing that right thoughts and right efforts will inevitably bring about right results.

Your success, your failure, your influence, your whole life, you carry about with you, for your dominant trends of thought are the determining factors in your destiny. Send forth living, stainless and happy thoughts and blessings will fall into your hands, and your table will be spread with the cloth of peace. Send forth hateful, impure and unhappy thoughts, and curses will rain down upon you and fear and unrest will wait upon your pillow. You are the unconditional maker of your fate, be that fate what it may. Every moment, you are sending forth from you the influences which will make or mar your life. Let your heart grow large and loving and unselfish and great and lasting will be your influence and success, even though you make little money. Confine it within the narrow limits of self interests, and even though you become a millionaire, your influence and success, at the final reckoning, will be found to be utterly insignificant.

Cultivate, then, this pure and unselfish spirit, and combine with purity and faith, singleness of purpose, and you are evolving from within the elements, not only of abounding health and enduring success, but of greatness and power.

Whatever your task may be, concentrate your whole mind upon it, throw into it all the energy of which you are capable. The faultless completion of small tasks leads inevitably to larger tasks. See to it that you rise by steady climbing and you will never fall. And here in lies the secret of true power. Learn, by constant practice, how to husband your resources, and to concentrate them, at any moment, upon a given point. The foolish waste all their mental and spiritual energy in frivolity, foolish chatter, or selfish argument not to mention wasteful physical excesses.

If you would acquire overcoming power, you must cultivate poise and passivity. You must be able to stand alone. All power is associated with immovability. The mountain, the massive rock, the storm-tried oak, all speak to us of power, because of their combined solitary grandeur and defiant fixity while the shifting sand, the yielding twig, and the waving reed speak to us of weakness, because they are movable and non-resistant, and are utterly useless when detached from their fellows. He is the man of power who, when all his fellows are swayed by some emotion, or passion, remains calm and unmoved.

He only is fitted to command and control who has succeeded in commanding and controlling himself. The hysterical, the fearful, the thoughtless and frivolous, let such seek company, or they will fall for lack of support; but the calm, the fearless, the thoughtful, and grave, let such seek the solitude of the forest, the desert and the mountain-top, and more power will be added to their power, and they will more and more successfully stem the psychic currents and whirlpools which engulf mankind.

Passion is not power, it is the abuse of power, the dispersion of power. Passion is like a furious storm which beats fiercely and wildly upon the embattled rock, whilst power is like the rock itself which remains silent and unmoved through it all.

If you have not this power, you may acquire it by practice and the beginning of power is likewise the beginning of wisdom. You must commence by overcoming those purposeless trivialities to which you have hitherto been a willing victim. Boisterous and uncontrolled laughter, slander and idle talk, and joking merely to raise a laugh, all these things must be put on one side as so much waste of valuable energy.

Above all, be of single aim; have a legitimate and useful purpose, and devote yourself unreservedly to it. Let nothing draw you aside: remember that, "The double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Be eager to learn, but slow to beg. Have a thorough understanding of your work and let it be your own; and as you proceed, ever following the inward Guide, the infallible Voice, you will pass on from victory to victory, and will rise step by step to higher resting-places, and your ever-broadening outlook will gradually reveal to you the essential beauty and purpose of life. Self-purified health will be yours; faith protected, success will be yours; self-governed, power will be yours, and all that you do will prosper, for, ceasing to be a disjointed unit, self-enslaved, you will be in harmony with the Great Law, working no longer against, but with, the universal Life, the Eternal Good. And what health you gain, it will remain with you; what success you achieve will be beyond all human computation, and will never pass away; and what influence and power you wield will continue to increase throughout the ages, for it will be a part of that unchangeable principle which supports the universe.

This, then, is the secret of health,—a pure heart and a well-ordered mind; this is the secret of success,—an unfaltering faith, and a wisely-directed purpose; and to rein in, with unfaltering will, the dark steed of desire, this is the secret of power.

||Glossary||

sterling faith	— strong and true faith (दृढ़ विश्वास)
uncompromising	— goodness and virtue under all conditions (दृढ़ बने रहना)
lodgment	— a place to stay at (ठहरने का स्थान)
acknowledge	— admit (स्वीकार करना, मान लेना)
flees	— runs away (दूर भागता है)
jealousy	— envy (ईर्ष्या)
in harmonious state	— restless condition of mind (बेचैन एवं व्याकुल करने वाली मनः स्थिति)
of mind	
shunned	— hated, avoided (घृणा करना, उपेक्षा करना)
physical aches	— bodily pains (शारीरिक दर्द)
harmonise	— keep balanced and in good order (संयमित एवं सरस स्थिति में रखना)
indulgences	— enjoyments (मनोरंजन)
dyspepsia	— indigestion (अजीर्ण, मन्दाग्नि)
biliousness	— disease of headache and liver (सिर दर्द तथा लीवर की बीमारी)
persist	— continue (लगातार, निरन्तर)
debilitating	— weakening (कमजोर करने वाली)

demoralising	— corrupting (भ्रष्ट करने वाली)
frequently	— often (प्रायः, बारम्बार)
friction	— struggle (संघर्ष)
retain	— keep (अधिकार रखना, बचाना, स्थापित करना, आज्ञा-पालन)
forfeits	— loses (अधिकार खो देना, दण्ड रूप में देना)
accomplish	— complete (पूरा करना)
beneficial	— useful (उपयोगी)
persistence	— continuity of peace (निरन्तर शान्ति)
anxiety	— sorrow, misery (दुःख, कठिनाई)
oblivious	— forgetful (भूल जाने वाला, भूलक्कड़)
intertwined	— became twisted (आपस में जुड़े हुए, गुथे हुए)
circumstances	— situations (स्थितियाँ)
promptings	— readiness (इच्छा, उत्साह, शीघ्रता)
dark-waters	— doubts and uncertainty (सन्देह और अनिश्चितता)
exactitude	— correctness (सहीपन)
crumbles	— disappears (गायब हो जाती है या ठहर जाती है)
possession	— wealth (सम्पत्ति)
dauntless	— fearless (निर्भीक)
talisman	— magical charm (जादुई आकर्षण)
rock of the eternal	— permanent and solid foundation (मजबूत व स्थाई आधार)
transcend	— go higher above and beyond (श्रेष्ठता को प्राप्त होना)
accumulations	— collected things (एकत्रित वस्तुएँ)
hurled	— thrown (फेंका गया)
spiritual strength	— power of soul (आत्मशक्ति)
shatter	— break (बिखरा हुआ, टूटा हुआ)
inevitably	— definitely (निश्चित रूप से)
bring about	— produce (पैदा करना)
determining factors	— deciding points (निर्णायक बिन्दु)
impure	— adulterated (अशुद्ध, भ्रष्ट करना)
mar	— destroy (बिगाड़ना, दूषित करना)
insignificant	— unimportant (महत्वहीन, निरर्थक)
cultivate	— develop (उन्नति करना, खेत जोतना, सभ्य बनाना)
abounding health	— good health (अच्छा स्वास्थ्य)

enduring	— stable (दृढ़ रहना, सहन करना, टिकना)
constant	— regular (नियमानुसार, व्यवस्थित, प्रचलित)
wasteful physical excesses	— over eating, over drinking which prove harmful (अनुमान से अधिक खान-पान)
excesses	
frivolity	— silly things (चपलता, छिछोरापन)
poise and passivity	— peace of mind and quiet thoughtfulness (मानसिक शान्ति और विवेकशीलता)
immovability	— firmness (स्थिर)
detached	— separated (पृथक होना, अलग होना)
swayed	— moving in an irregular manner (अनियमित ढंग से हिलना)
hysterical	— violently emotional (अत्यन्त नाजुक)
psychic currents	— spiritual tendency (धार्मिक अभिरूचि)
trivialities	— purposeless things (तुच्छ विषय)
hither to	— here and there (यहाँ-वहाँ)
boisterous	— violent (शोर-शराबा वाला)
legitimate	— proper (उचित)
unstable	— temporary (अस्थायी, अस्थिर)
infallible	— not capable of error (विश्वासपात्र)
protected	— guarded (सुरक्षित)
prosper	— wealthy (सम्पन्न, धनी)
disjointed	— fragmented (अपूर्ण, खण्डयुक्त, टूटा हुआ)
self-enslaved	— made a slave of oneself, slave of desires (इच्छा का गुलाम)
computation	— calculating (गणना, गिनती)
dark steed of desire	— desire is compared to the horse, dark in colour (इच्छा की तुलना काले घोड़े से की गयी है)
unflinching	— without deficiency, firm (बिना हिचकिचाहट, स्थिर)

||Exercise||

➡ Passages for Explanation :

Explain with reference to the context of the following passages :

- Where there is sterling they can feed.
- Passion is not power through it all.
- Self purified, health, will be Eternal Good.

- (d) This, then, is the secret of health secret of power.
- (e) If you are given infected house.
- (f) Let your heart.....utterly insignificant.
- (g) The mountain, the massive.....from their fellows.
- (h) Many people complain invite a break down.
- (i) Your success, your failure with the cloth of peace.
- (j) Whatever your task maywill never fall.
- (k) If you would be need no other medicine.
- (l) If you have not valuable energy.
- (m) He only is fitted engulf mankind.
- (n) Cultivate, then, this pure greatness and power.

➡ **Short Answer Type Questions :**

Answer the following questions in not more than 30 words each :

- (i) What is secret of good health ?
- (ii) What is the cause of our sickness ?
Or "Disease comes to those who attract it." Do you agree with James Allen's view point? Give reasons in support of your answer.
Or What diseases can be caused by passions of human mind like jealousy, hatred etc. ?
- (iii) What should we do to be free from physical aches and pains?
- (iv) What should we do to secure good health ?
- (v) What is the secret of success and power ?
Or What is the secret of health, success and power in life?
- (vi) How can you acquire overcoming power ?
- (vii) What are the inharmonious states of mind ?
- (viii) What does the writer say about passion ?
- (ix) What is the result of our own error ?
- (x) What is utility of faith in life ?
- (xi) How do the trends of your thought, as described in 'The Secret of Health Success and Power', determine the quality of your life?
- (xii) Who is fit to command and control according to James Allen?
- (xiii) Who is the man of power?

➡ **Vocabulary :**

(a) Give the Synonyms of the following words :

- (i) disaster, (ii) generate, (iii) hatred, (iv) beneficial, (v) anxiety, (vi) retain, (vii) accomplished, (viii) eternal, (ix) cultivate, (x) seek.

(b) Give the Antonyms of the following words :

(i) purity, (ii) success, (iii) perfect, (iv) carefully, (v) harmonious, (vi) selfish, (vii) peace, (viii) true, (ix) positive, (x) foolishly.

(c) Below are some pairs of words. Use them in your own sentences to make out the difference in their meanings :

(i) pain, pane, (ii) heart, hurt, (iii) rich, riches, (iv) cloth, clothe, (v) practice, practise, (vi) waste, waist.

(d) Fill in the blanks with the suitable words given below :

leads, anxious, true, unstable, furious.

(i) True health and success go together.

(ii) You will not need to become about results.

(iii) Passion is like a storm which beats fiercely.

(iv) The double-minded man is in all his ways.

(v) The faultless completion of small tasks.....inevitably to larger tasks.

(e) Fill in the blanks in the following sentences, selecting the most suitable words from those given within the brackets :

(i) Passion is not power, it is theof power, the dispersion of power.
(fuse, misuse, abuse, reduce)

(ii) Many peoplethat they have broken down through over work.
(suggest, complain, write, refuse)

(iii) True health and true success go together, for they are inseparablyin the thought realm. (engrossed, intermixed, intertwined, indulged)

(iv) The double-minded man is in all his ways. (free, rigid, unstable, stable)

(v) If you would secure health, you must learn to work without
(tension, care, friction, anxiety)

(vi) True health and true go together.
(failure, wisdom, success, knowledge)

(vii) This is the secret of health, a pure and a well-ordered mind.
(mind, will, thought, heart)

