

# Chapter XXVIII - Making Over Oneself

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Now comes the question "In what respect shall I make myself over?" And this is a question that I cannot answer for you, because each one of you would have to be answered differently, and I would have to understand the requirements of each particular case before I could so answer. But, after all, each and every man or woman who studies these chapters has a very good idea of his or her particular strong or weak points of character. Each one knows just about what qualities need to be strengthened and built up, and just which ones need to be restrained. Every person knows his short comings in the lines of personal qualities or character, for he or she has been forced to this knowledge by coming in contact with the world. If you are considering the question of character architecture in your own case, I would advise a strict self-examination with a pencil and paper, in which you must set down the degree of development of each particular quality, without fear or favor toward yourself. When you have done this you will know just how to proceed. You will have given yourself a mental diagnosis. I herewith give you a general list of qualities, etc., as an aid in this work of self-examination as a basis of mental architecture. In using it ask yourself the question: "What degree of this quality do I possess?" And answer the question "on honor."

Below I give you a list of the "faculties" usually given in works on phrenology, which will aid you very materially in preparing your report on yourself. Each faculty relates to some quality of character possessed by you, and regarding which you are asking yourself the question mentioned above:

Sexuality.	Ideality.
Friendship.	Mirthfulness.
Love of Life.	Sense of Size.
Physical Appetites.	Sense of Order.
Cautiousness.	Memory.
Firmness.	Language.
Faith.	Judging Human Nature.
Ingenuity.	Parental Love.
Imitation.	Stick-to-it-iveness.
Sense of Shape.	Determination.
Sense of Color.	Secretiveness.
Sense of Locality.	Self Esteem.
Musical Taste.	Hope.
Comparison.	Sympathy.
Domestic Qualities.	Sublimity.
Love of Places.	Observation.

Fighting Qualities.	Sense of Weight.
Acquisitiveness.	Sense of Number.
Love of Praise.	Sense of Time.
Integrity.	Originality.
Veneration.	Agreeableness.

Every one of the above mentioned faculties or qualities may be increased or decreased by the practice of the methods given in this lesson. Auto-suggestion, visualization and acting-out-the-part—that triple method of character architecture will enable anyone to “make himself over” in any one or more of the above qualities. You will, of course, always remember that the methods named act in the direction of stimulating the growth of the brain-cells in the particular centers, areas and regions in which the particular faculty or quality is manifested. The immediate cause of the growth of the brain-cells is the desire of the individual manifesting itself along physical lines; coupled with that law of Nature which causes increased physical or mental growth in accordance with necessity or need. The earnest desire, heightened by visualization and auto-suggestion, stimulates the brain centers manifesting the desired qualities, and by so doing causes a more rapid production of new cells and the greater development of the existing ones. Then the acting-out-the-part, with its physical manifestations, creates a direct demand upon the brain for means of manifestation, and the brain responds by growing additional cells to meet the demand.

There is in Nature a law that tends to furnish to the organism that which is needed for its development and necessities. The horse has evolved from a three-toed animal into a one-toed one, in response to the demands of its environments, and the necessities of its life. Birds of prey have claws and beaks adapted to their needs and wants; beasts of prey have great teeth, claws and shape of body adapted to their wants and necessities—and so it is all through Nature. But remember this, that animals constantly change as their environments alter, for Nature always is ready to supply that which is demanded by the necessities of the organism. Evolution gives us many convincing illustrations of this fact, which I regret not being able to mention here. If a part of the body is brought into unaccustomed use, it becomes tired at first and then Nature sends to its relief increased nutrition and development so that in time it can meet the new requirements with ease. And so it is in this matter of the brain-cells. Make a demand upon Nature for increased power along certain lines and she responds. And the way to make the demand for new brain-cells in order to manifest certain qualities to a higher degree is to follow the methods given you herein—auto-suggestion; visualization and acting-out-the-part. I trust that you now understand not only the “how” of this subject, but also the “why” of it. It is impossible in the space of a few chapters to give detailed instruction regarding the development of each separate faculty of the mind. That would require a good sized book by itself. But I have given you the general principles and directions and you should be able to work out the rest of the problem yourself. I shall, however, give you special directions for the development of the particular qualities most necessary to the dynamic individual mentioned in the chapters on personal influence. Before proceeding to this last mentioned phase of the work, however, I wish to say that not only may one “make himself over” by the methods given, but he may “make over” other people by the same methods applied in the forms of suggestive treatment.

This is particularly true in the case of children, whose characters are extremely plastic, and who yield readily to constructive shaping and guidance. It is not necessary for me to go into this matter in detail, for in my chapters on “Mental Suggestion” and “Mental Therapeutics,” as well as in the present lesson, I give the principles of such treatment and the methods of applying the same. I trust that you have paid sufficient attention to what has been taught to be able to understand and apply this form of suggestive treatment to others. What I have said about treating the “John Smith” part of you is true when you are actually treating others. The same principles apply. In addition to these you may advantageously use treatments by mentative currents, which will tend to induce in the mind of the other person the desired mental state, which in time will result in the production of the new brain-cells needed to “establish” the mental character-cure. In treating

others for a change of character, proceed exactly as you would in treating them for a physical ailment—the principle is the same, for the trouble arises from a similar underlying cause. In both cases you are treating mind, remember. And now to the building up of the dynamic individual. We have seen what he was like, and now we must try to “make ourselves over” to resemble him. The methods given in the present chapter, and the one immediately following it apply to this work, of course. Let us now form a mental picture of the dynamic individual and see what qualities he possesses, and then learn how to develop and cultivate those qualities.

Our dynamic individual is possessed of a strong desire. He knows how to “want” a thing the right way. No mere “wishing” or “sighing” for a thing—when he wants a thing he wants it. We all think that we want things, but the majority only want them in a half-hearted way. The flame of desire burns feebly and gives little light or heat. One of the first things you will notice in coming in personal contact with the men “who do things” in the world is that they are filled with that intense, eager, longing, craving, hungry, ravenous desire that urges them on to mighty effort and achievement—which makes them demand things instead of begging for them.

Even among the animals that we speak of as “strong” and “masterful,” you will find that this desire quality is strong, so much so that it impresses itself in their every movement and action. And on the other hand, you will find a lack of that same quality in the species of animals that are preyed upon, hunted and devoured by the others. This class of weak-desired animals impress us as “weak” and “spiritless.” And so it is with men. No one ever did anything or got anything unless, he was filled with a strong, hungry desire for that thing. If a man feels a hunger for attainment, just as he feels a hunger for his meals, he will make mighty efforts to satisfy that hunger. Just think of what you would do to satisfy a craving hunger! Well, these men feel the same way about other things for which they are hungry. Desire is a form of hunger—And the hungrier a man is for a thing the more Desire-Force will he manifest and the greater efforts will he make to get that thing. People have fallen into the habit of speaking and thinking of “desire” as an unworthy, low, animal, selfish quality—but they are seeing only a half truth while thinking that they are seeing the whole thing. They seek to escape by speaking of “high desires,” “aspiration,” “ambition,” “zeal,” “ardor,” “love,” and a number of similar terms—but these things are merely our old friend “desire” with a new name. Let me give you a few words used in speaking of some form of desire. Here they are: Desire, wish, want, need, exigency, mind, inclination, leaning, bent, animus, partiality, penchant, predilection, propensity, willingness, liking, love, fondness, relish, longing, hankering, solicitude, anxiety, yearning, coveting, aspiration, ambition, eagerness, zeal, ardor, appetite, appetency, hunger, thirst, keenness, longing, craving, etc., etc. Quite a formidable list!

The truth is that all of the “feelings” that incite one to action of any kind or sort, are forms of desire. Without desire one would cease absolutely from action. Preceding every action there must be desire, either conscious or unconscious. Even those people who make a virtue of renunciation of desire, and who claim to have “conquered desire absolutely,” are acting in response to a more subtle form of desire. How is this, you ask? Well, simply because they are carrying out a desire not to desire certain other things. Desire is at the bottom of the renunciation, just as it is at the bottom of the very desires they wish to renounce. This must be so always, for desire is a fundamental natural law, and is always manifest. Not only in the doing of things is desire manifest, but also in the refraining from doing the same things. One man desires to smoke—another desires not to do so. Desire in both cases! “Lack of desire” to do a certain thing simply means a desire to pursue an opposite course of conduct and action. And so it goes—“desire is manifest in every action and refraining from action” so long as one has the capacity for action. Nothing has ever been done, created, Oneself or manifested without desire. The very atoms manifest desire in their combinations. And so, all the universe has been built up through the operation of the law of desire, and the law of will—both of which are phases of the one law. Desire underlies all life—it rests in the very heart of life itself. And the greater the manifestation of vitality, the greater the force of desire. But remember always, that there are wise desires and unwise desires. And the dynamic individual learns to distinguish between the wise and the unwise desires—between the “good” and the “bad” ones—and governs himself accordingly. He examines his desires and picking out the “good and wise” ones he discards the “bad and unwise” ones—then he proceeds to develop and build up the ones he has selected.

And how does our dynamic individual develop his desire when desire in itself is not a separate mental faculty, but, instead, manifests through and in each faculty? He proceeds to hold up to it the mental image of the things to be desired, and the Desire-Force within him flows forth, and manifests more and more energy according to the stimulus. Desire-Force is always inherent in the person just as is Will-Power, but both need an incentive to action—a stimulus to manifestation. It is a well-known law of psychology that desire flows out and manifests itself in response to an object. This object of desire is always something that affords pleasure, satisfaction or content to the individual, or else that will rid him of pain, discontent, discomfort, or dissatisfaction, either immediate or remote in both instances, and sometimes indirectly; that is, the pleasure or pain may be occasioned by the pleasure or pain, immediate or remote, of some other person in which the original person is interested.

The clearer the mental image of the object of desire, the greater will be the degree of desire manifested, all other things being equal. A child may be filled with discontent—it wants something, but does not know what it wants. Then the child thinks of “toys” and it begins to want still harder. Then it sees a toy—and then its want becomes very intense. One may feel hungry in a degree, but when he sees some particular object of taste, the hunger becomes far more intense. And so it follows that if one will keep on presenting to his desire the suggestion and mental image of the object, then will the desire begin to burn more fiercely and strongly and may be cultivated to almost any degree. You know how one may awaken desire in another this way, by means of suggestion, and by presenting the mental image of the object, in conversation, etc.—how many of us know to our cost how the “sight” of an unthought of thing makes us begin to “hanker” after it and long for it? The book agent plays upon this trait of character in us—and so does the department store man on bargain days and by his window displays. You will remember what I told you in the chapters on suggestion, about the steps in “salesmanship,” the important point being to “arouse desire” in the customer—and what I said about the same thing in the case of the advertiser. This idea underlies all forms of suggestive influence and is manifest in the lives of every one of us, every day of our lives. And if this be so, can you not see that by auto-suggestion you may arouse the same degree of desire in yourselves that others arouse in you and you in others?

The threefold method—auto-suggestion, visualization and acting-out-the-part, will develop desire in you. In auto-suggestion, along these lines, you must “treat” yourself for desire. Tell the “John Smith” part of you how much he desires this or that—how much he aspires to this or that—how strong is his ambition for this and that, etc. Then visualize the object, that is the thing desired, until you can see it plainly and clearly. See yourself in possession of it, or as having attained it. Keep this mental image always with you, for it will act powerfully in arousing your Desire-Force. Then act-out the idea of gaining headway and moving on to the possession or attainment. Cultivate the outward actions and demeanor of the man who has “arrived.” If you are after success, then act-out the part of the successful man. You need not be told why, after what I have said. In conclusion, I will again remind you that the objects of this development of desire are, (1) that your will may be called into play, and (2) that your Desire-Force may be set into activity and thus begin in its “drawing,” “attracting” work. Read what I have said about Desire-Force in the previous chapters. Now, do not dismiss this part of the subject lightly. It is most important to you. Desire and will are the two phases of Mind-Power, and you must develop both of them in order to get the best results. Keep the flame of right desire ever burning brightly. Feed its lamp with the ideas of the objects of desire by auto-suggestion, visualization and acting-out. Remember my parting words about desire: The first thing in the direction of doing things, or getting things, is to want the things hard enough! A strong, ardent, keen desire will clear away the undergrowth of the path of success. It will attract you to the people and things needed for its satisfaction, and will attract to you the people, things, circumstances, environments, etc., needed for its satisfaction. Desire is the soul of the law of attraction.

And now let us consider the second attribute of our dynamic individual. It is will-power. Our man is an example of living will. He is filled with the force of action. He is determined. He keeps his will on an object just as a machinist keeps his chisel on the hard metal, letting it bite in deeper and deeper until the desired impression and end is obtained. I have told you how the will is always set into operation by the urge of desire. When you develop and cultivate desire you are doing much to cultivate Will-Power. So I need not repeat this part of the process—I have just told it to you under the head of desire. But there is another feature about the use of will which I must call to your attention. It is the feature of its determined application and manifestation. It is all very well to have a

strong will, but it will avail you nothing unless you learn how to apply it.

The secret of the resolute will lies in determination and persistency. And the first thing to be acquired is the capacity for attention. Writers on psychology will tell you that a "tenacious attention is one of the strongest factors of a cultivated will." That is it—you must acquire tenacity of attention. You must acquire the art of patiently dwelling upon a thing until you accomplish your purpose. You must learn to do things thoroughly and completely. You must learn to concentrate your will upon a thing and not allow it to be distracted or to wander off until you do what you set out to do. You must cultivate stability, decision, perseverance, tenacity and stick-to-it-iveness. And you can do all of these things by the triple method given in these chapters. Each quality is capable of cultivation and development in the same way. You can do these things "if you want to hard enough." First stir up your desire to accomplish the task—then will that you shall do it—then do it. Thousands of others have done these things—and so may you if you are an individual and are not a mere personal shadow. I shall now give you some advice regarding will-development, to which I ask you to pay close attention.

The first obstacle to be overcome in the work of cultivating Will-Power is to overcome the old habits of weak will, and to replace them by new habits of strong will. This question of habit is a most important one, for we are all more or less slaves to habit. Habit is second nature which is often much stronger than our ordinary natural impulses. In order to develop the dominant will you must cultivate some new habits. And of these things I shall now speak. The following rules for the development of new habits will prove of great benefit to you, if you will study them carefully and then put them into practice.

Rule 1. Get control of your physical channels of expression and master the physical expression connected with the mental state you are trying to develop. For instance, if you are trying to develop your will along the lines of self-reliance, confidence, fearlessness, etc., the first thing for you to do is to get a perfect control of the muscles by which the physical manifestations or expressions of those feelings are shown. Get control of the muscles of your shoulders that you may throw them back manfully. Look out for the stooping attitude of lack of confidence. Then get control of the muscles by which you hold your head up, with eyes front, gazing the world fearlessly in the face. Get control of the muscles of the legs by which you will be enabled to walk firmly as the positive man should. Get control of the vocal organs, by which you may speak in the resonant, vibrant tones which compel attention and inspire respect. Get yourself well in hand physically in order to manifest these outward forms of will, and you will clear a path for the Mind-Power to manifest itself—and will make the work of the will much easier. But it takes will to do these things and you must be prepared to use it. Keep your attention on these outward forms of expression until you acquire the habit and make it "second-nature."

Rule 2. Learn to concentrate. By so doing you will be able to focus your will upon any object desired, and thus get the greatest effect. In using the will endeavor to make it "one-pointed" as the orientals say. That is, have for the object of the will some one main object and then focus the will firmly upon that object. Cast from your mind all ideas and thoughts not in harmony with the one idea upon which you are concentrating your will. In the beginning it will be well to avoid all persons, environments, etc., calculated to distract you from the main idea. But after a bit you will be able to interpose a resistance to these distracting things and banish them from you by a mental command. While acquiring will in this way you will find that it often takes even more will to turn away from these outside objects than to follow your main object. You must learn to master these temptations even if in so doing you find it necessary to act like Ulysses who made his companions stop up their ears with wax lest they be fascinated by the song of the Sirens.

Rule 3. In acquiring a will-habit use every occasion in order to repeat the effort of the will along the lines of the habit. Give your will much exercise. Every time you do a certain thing the easier does it become to repeat it, for the habit becomes more firmly established. Habit is a form of "impression," and the oftener you sink the die of the will into the wax of the mind, the deeper is the impression. Exercise, exercise, exercise—practice, practice, practice.

Rule 4. The greatest struggle is at the beginning of the practice or formation of a new will-habit. Here one has to fight with all his might—but the first battle well won, the after-fights moderate and finally become mere skirmishes. Hence it behooves one to gird on his armor firmly and grasp his sword with strength at this first fight.

Let one stop smoking or drinking, for instance, and he will find that three-quarters of the entire struggle is condensed in the fight of the first week if not the first day. Remember the case of Rip van Winkle with his â€œwell, this glass donâ€™t countâ€”he never could get started. And, beware of a single slip at the start, for such slips weaken one more than he can regain in a whole day of success. After having made up your will to acquire a habit, you must not allow a single slip for this reason. A well-known writer on the subject has compared these slips to a ball of cord which one is endeavoring to windâ€”each drop of the ball unwinds more than many windings can replace.

Rule 5. Endeavor to fix the habit as a strong mental impression by any and every means that suggest themselves to you. For when this habit becomes firmly impressed upon your mind you will find it most â€œnaturalâ€”and easy to act along its lines, and most difficult to break away from it or to act contrary to it.

You are building â€œsecond-nature,â€”remember.

Rule 6. â€œLook before you leap,â€”and â€œBe sure youâ€™re right, then go ahead.â€”Always take a good look at a thing before plunging in. Give it the benefit of your judgment and do not be carried away by the judgment of others. Use your reason and judgmentâ€”thatâ€™s why you have them. But, after once having decided a thing is â€œrightâ€”for you to do, then you must learn to â€œgo aheadâ€”to the finish. Learn to â€œplace your hand upon the plow and look not backward.â€”Learn to control your Will-Power and do not let it leap into action until you are sure it is right to do so. And all of this means rigid self-control and mastery of oneâ€™s moods as well as oneâ€™s passions and emotions. Guard yourself against yourself. And also guard your desire from the influences of others, for through your desires your will is called into action.

Children, savages and undeveloped individuals manifest little or no mastery over their desires but allow themselves to be affected by every little wave from within or without and then let their will fly into action in response thereto. The individual learns to â€œinhibitâ€”(that is to â€œcheck, restrain, hold back, forbid, prohibit,â€”etc.) emotional states and feelings. By so doing he will hold his Will-Power under control for use when it is advisable. Pull the trigger of your Will-Power yourself after you have taken deliberate aim and at some object worth while. Do not allow others to pull it for you nor do you, yourself, pull it in response to a whim, a dare, an unrestrained feeling. A useful rule along these lines is given by Prof. Hoffding, who says: â€œEven if we cannot prevent a feeling from arising, we may possibly prevent it from spreading, by inhibiting the organic movement which accompanies it, the indulgence in which augments it.â€”In other words, restrain the physical action and the feeling dies.

This idea of physical expression and â€œacting-outâ€”runs shoulder to shoulder with the idea of mental states all through the subject of psychology.

Rule 7. Keep the mind filled with mental pictures of the thing which you wish to become a habit, for by so doing you are constantly adding oil to the flame of desireâ€”and desire is the cause of the manifestation of will. The feminine desire asks, and the masculine will seeks to gratify the request of his mate in any direction indicated by her. Therefore, the more she sees what she wants the more she asksâ€”and the more she asks the more eager does he become to please her. The apple was shown Eve, then she told Adam it was good and asked him to take a bite, and then Adam ate and the mischief was done. But this rule works for good as well as for badâ€”â€œitâ€™s a poor rule that wonâ€™t work both ways.â€”But the principle is the same in both good and evil cases.

Rule 8. Act out the habit as often as possible, and as well as possible. Learn to go through the motions until the part becomes perfect and easily performed. I neednâ€™t tell you students the reason for this againâ€”it should be an old story with you by this time.

Rule 9. Practice doing disagreeable things. This will strengthen the will wonderfully, for reasons that should be apparent to every student. What would be the condition of your muscles if you never had to use them? And what will be the condition of your will if you never have to exercise it by doing something unpleasant or disagreeable? Anyone, even the weakest, can do a thing along the lines of non-resistanceâ€”pleasant, agreeable things, without opposition or resistance. But it takes a true man or womanâ€”a true individualâ€”to do things against resistance from without or from within. And when one has learned to master himself, that is his own moods and

feelings”then he is able to master the outside world. And not until then, either!

Therefore often set yourself an unpleasant or disagreeable task to perform, for by so doing you acquire mental muscle, which is but another name for will.

Prof. James, the eminent psychologist, advises his readers to systematically exercise themselves in the direction of doing some particular things for no other reason than that they would rather not do it. Even if the task be nothing more than rising and giving up a seat in a street-car when you want to retain it very much indeed. Prof. James compares this exercise to the paying the premiums on insurance on one’s property”one is laying up reserve resources for a day of need. He tells us that a man who trains himself in this way can be counted upon in any emergency”he may count on himself to manifest Will-Power. As Prof. Halleck says, in speaking of such a man: “While another would be still crying over spilt milk, the possessor of such a will has already begun to milk another cow.” The men who have attained great success have, in nearly every case, so trained their wills that they can undertake a difficult or disagreeable task with a minimum of effort. They have acquired the habit. When one learns to say “Yes! or No!” to himself, he can say “yes!” or “no!” to others with the greatest force.

Rule 10. Cultivate fixity of purpose. The man of strong will must learn to see an object ahead of him and then to “want it hard enough,” and then to fix his will upon it and hold it there, while he moves to it in as straight a line as possible. But no matter how he may have to swerve from his straight line of approach, by unforeseen obstacles, nor how many times he may stumble, he still always remembers what he is after”and he keeps after it. The shifting, changeable, weathercock sort of men manifest but little will, and accomplish little or nothing. The successful men are those who know what they want and never forget it. It may take them some time to find out just what they do want, but when once they find it out they hold firmly to it to the end with an invincible determination and unswerving purpose” and these qualities always win in the long run, if for no other reason than because so few possess them and the majority of men get tired of the struggle and drop out of the race. It’s the fellow with the “staying qualities” that pulls through in the end no matter how much of a start the others may have had on him in the beginning. Concentrate and cultivate “stick-to-it-iveness.