

Stimuli Art

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Celebrating the art of life!

SHAPE YOUR LIFE ■

Your Thoughts Can Change Your Life

CHAPTER 1: Where Do We Go from Here?

“There’s no use taking him upstairs, Joe. He won’t last until morning anyway.”

Dimly these words soaked into my troubled mind as I struggled to regain consciousness. I was lying on a stretcher in the receiving ward of a large New York hospital one bleak midnight not too many years ago.

My eyes blinked weakly under the merciless glare of the lone overhead light. It was the sound of my own groans that pulled me back to the threshold of awareness; I began to realize that I was still alive. The wracking pain along my right side confirmed that. I writhed helplessly in the grip of the worst suffering I had ever known.

My gasps of agony brought the two white-uniformed interns over to my stretcher. As they gazed down at me, one of them said sardonically, “Well what do you know? He’s still with us Joe. Where there’s life there’s pain, eh? Joe, hand me that needle will you? Might as well make him comfortable for as long as he’s around. But as I said, he probably won’t make it to morning.”

Suddenly I realized, “*He’s talking about me!*”

“Hey, wait a minute,” I protested. “I’m not ready to die! What are you talking about? This is nothing – I’ve had this pain all my life. I’ll be over it in a couple of days. It’s just...”

My voice trailed off as the hypo took hold. I hovered on the brink of consciousness for a few minutes as my life passed in review with terrifying clarity. I realized that this was it. I had come to the end of the road. I was about to die. Actually, the prospect was not too unwelcome. I was too sick to be frightened, and at least it would bring an end to the pain – pain that had plagued me since I was a child.



In this section, a publication from yesteryear is highlighted because it offers useful ideas for shaping and improving your lifestyle.

Today, you have an opportunity to enjoy “**Your Thoughts Can Change Your Life**” by Donald Curtis.

Although this book was published in 1961, you can appreciate how this information still relevant today.

Where Do We Go from Here?

“At least I won’t have to put up with you anymore,” I laughed as I struggled with my old antagonist. But even as I said it I knew that it was all an act. I knew that dying would make absolutely no difference. My pain would go with me, because in my delirium I had confirmed what I had always suspected: *My pain was not only in my body. It was in every part of me. I had brought it on and I alone could get rid of it.*

Then and there, I decided I had too much unfinished business to be taken care of! This was no time to die!

By extending all my will power and strength, I called the intern and managed to gasp out the name of a friend who I knew would help me. He could get my own doctor and do whatever else was necessary.

The intern agreed to call my friend. “O.K., Mac,” he said. “I’ll call him – not that I think it will do much good, but you’re the doctor.”

Little did he realize – nor did I – the truth he had spoken.

Oh, I had other doctors – a whole crew of them – specialists, surgeons, and around-the-clock nurses. But in the final analysis I *was* the doctor.

During the crisis – and after I had come through it successfully – I knew that I had had the help of *something greater* than either myself or the doctors and nurses who had pulled me through. I also discovered a lot of other things. First, I knew that I alone was responsible for my illness. Second, I concluded that by changing what was wrong with me in my character – my inner consciousness – I could get well. Third, I determined to lead an entirely different kind of life when I did get well.

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Where Do We Go from Here?

When I was finally released from the hospital for a long period of convalescence, I knew that I had plenty of work to do for the rest of my life. First, however, I had to pick up the threads of my life and my career. A few months before, I had been financially well off, for there were substantial funds in the bank, which I had saved over a number of years as a Hollywood movie actor. But now those savings were gone and I was deeply in debt.

But this didn't really bother me. The important thing was that I was alive! It was getting started on the way back that was my immediate concern.

I sought spiritual guidance – and found it – from Dr. Raymond Charles Barker, minister of the First Church of Religious Science of New York and from Dr. Ervin Seale, minister of the Church of Truth. These fine men had developed large churches in New York City by teaching the spiritual philosophy of the Science of Mind. This philosophy was successfully rebuilding the lives of thousands of men and women like myself who were seeking help in meeting their problems.

I had previously been exposed to this philosophy in Los Angeles by hearing Dr. Ernest Holmes, the founder of Religious Science. I hadn't followed through on it, however. It took the sledgehammer blow of my illness to bring me to my senses. I determined to learn more about the Science of Mind teachings so that I could get my life back in order and continue my career as an actor. But as I shuttled back and forth between New York and Hollywood during the next few years, I made little headway in this study, less in my career, and seemingly none at all in my life in general.

From the book jacket:

"Specific techniques for mastering the amazing powers of the mind and emotions...with 12 guides to daily living showing you how to gain self-control, success, and happiness."

About the Author

"**Donald Curtis** is Director of Science of Mind Church of Religious Science in Los Angeles, California, where he succeeded Dr. Frederick Bailes. Formerly a professional actor and teacher, Dr. Curtis has an increasingly large following in metaphysical circles today."

Where Do We Go from Here?

I had lost fortune, family (through divorce), and friends. In time, I landed in the hospital; my body was unable to stand up under the physical, mental, and emotional punishment I had given it.

We are not punished for our sins: we are punished by them. I thought as I lay on the operating table. This is a truth that I have never forgotten. At last I made up my mind that I wasn't going to put off doing what I had to do any longer. I called Dr. Barker and asked for some instruction and prayer treatment while I was in the hospital. He set me straight on a lot of things, and my recovery was rapid and complete. With Dr. Barker's help, I was healed of something which had been "bugging" me all my life – something in the vast inner space of my psyche – and I have never been ill since, in any but the most minor ways.

As soon as I could, I enrolled in all of Dr. Barker's and Dr. Seale's classes. These started me on a road which has led steadily upward to this day, even though there have been many setbacks along the way.

In this book I shall tell you something of my experiences along that upward road. This book also points out methods that I have found essential in reconditioning the inner mind – strengthening it so that we can make it a useful servant rather than a destructive master.

Later in this book I will tell you of some of the events which guided me into the teaching of this philosophy and the use of it to help others. But of greater interest here is the teaching itself – the techniques which help people *help themselves* to find meaning in the adventure of life.

From the book jacket:

- ARE YOU PROJECTING RIGHT NOW?
- DO PEOPLE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOU?
- ARE YOU SURE OF YOURSELF?
- DO YOU EXPRESS AUTHORITY?
- ARE YOU REGISTERING THE IMPRESSION YOU WANT TO GIVE?
- ARE YOU CLICKING IN LIFE, OR ARE YOU MISSING THE BOAT?

"If you answer 'No' to any of the above questions this book is for YOU"

Where Do We Go from Here?

Over the years, in addition to teaching and lecturing to large audiences both in person and over radio and television, I have spent the major part of my time working with people on the individual level. I have tried to help them to achieve that *inner* change which inevitably leads to improved *outer* conditions in their lives.

A typical case among the thousands whom I have helped is that of a young couple who came to see me a few years ago in New York.

The young woman's crying stopped just long enough for her to sob out, "I don't know what we are going to do, Dr. Curtis. We've tried everything, but we're just not getting anywhere."

I spoke reassuringly, and put out my hand to comfort her. Then the girl's handsome young husband stopped pacing and put his arm around his wife, murmuring "Now don't cry, honey. That won't help any."

"If we only knew how to pray," she continued. "There must be some way out of this. I know God can help us, but I don't know where to start. We've tried to pray, but I guess we don't know how. At least our kind of prayer isn't getting us anywhere."

There it was again – the frustration of not being able to make any progress against a seemingly hopeless situation. Not an uncommon feeling for any of us, is it? This couple had prayed, but had received no answer. The goal was ahead but they couldn't seem to reach it.

Why? They were simply too bogged down in their problem to help themselves through prayer or any other means. And they were in a mess.

From the book jacket:

"If you feel that you are being cheated of the happiness, success, and peace of mind that is your God-given right, read the inspiring and helpful message in this book. It gives you positive guidance, the techniques and the results which show positive proof that *Your Thoughts Can Change Your Life.*"

Where Do We Go from Here?

These young people had come to me, as troubled people do every day, because they had not been able to find help anywhere else. Orthodox religion and orthodox psychiatry both have their place in the scheme of things but by themselves they have both proved inadequate in helping people where they most need it—*where they live*—right here and right now.

Understanding, love, and a feeling of identification—these are always necessary qualities of one who would be really helpful. This young couple came to me because I spoke their language. I had been there. Such understanding, plus the development of the techniques described in this book, has helped me help others, even though I may not always be able to help myself. Moreover, every time someone else is helped by the application of the scientific principles of right thinking, I—and all of us—are also helped. This is the great work of this modern age: to combat the forces of darkness with forces of light, thereby dissolving the negative and destructive tendencies within the individual and the race so that we may attain a higher level of experience. And the level of society as a whole cannot help but be raised as the individual conquers his problems through inner change.

Part of my technique of teaching is to remember my own experiences in solving problems, then to apply spiritual principles to helping others solve theirs. I often establish a bond of confidence by saying, “Come on now, relax and tell me all about it. There is nothing you can say which can surprise me. I have done just about everything wrong at least once—some things many times. I’m no great shakes as an example, but I can show you how, with the help of the great principle of right action, you can help yourself.” This always works, just as it did with our young couple.

From the book jacket:

“You are about to set out on one of greatest explorations of a lifetime. You are about to take a voyage into the NEW you... find a glittering new future... begin to use all the latent talents and abilities that God stored up in the treasury of your mind.”

“Here is truly a great adventure into the vast and powerful potentials of your inner self, where you learn how to master the techniques of self-emptying and God-filling relaxation... how to rebuild your body... how to allow your mind to focus on new thoughts and ideas... experience a newfound freedom beyond anything you ever dreamed possible!”

Where Do We Go from Here?

wait! There's nothing to worry about, darling. Women have babies every day."

They lived on love and laughter for a time, but finally the grim realities of existence became increasingly clear. The young man might be the greatest singer in the world, but Broadway and TV somehow remained unaware of it. The few minor singing jobs he could get were insufficient to meet expenses. Finally, after moving to a series of cheaper apartments, they were evicted for non-payment of rent with only days to go before the baby was due.

I listened to this story as it tumbled out of both youngsters. It was now two years later, the baby had been born, and they had managed somehow. The young parents would soon be twenty-one, just about the time their daughter would celebrate her second birthday. More-over, their second child was on the way. The young man's singing career had never gotten off the ground, and they had lived from hand to mouth with only an occasional job to sustain them. The couple's parents had relented and forgiven long enough to help them with expenses for the delivery of the first baby, but now this help had been cut off when the couple refused to give up the dreams of a career in the big city and to return to the security of the boy's father's business in a small New England town.

Moreover, there had been a lack of proper food which had caused illness in the little family. The youngster was obviously suffering from malnutrition, as I am sure the mother was also.

They had tried everything, including prayer, and had finally come to me as a sort of last resort. I was able to help them by making them help

From the book jacket:

"Dr. Curtis shows you the simple techniques for handling yourself and developing your mental powers. He gives you a 5-point expectancy goal-guide; 4 ways to accomplish your objective in life; 4 ways to achieve complete relaxation. Here too, he explains the 7 aspects of the spirit, what they are, and how they affect your life... how the 'raying-out' process can benefit you... how to recognize the flow of love between yourself and the Infinite Intelligence. Each chapter also contains a Daily Guide."

"You will read the amazing true stories of those whose lives were completely changed by the discovery of this wonder-working inner power."

Where Do We Go from Here?

themselves. I made clear to them that *the nature of our lives is determined by the nature of our inner attitudes of mind*. We know intuitively that we can live and think and pray in such a way that we can move from where we are to where we want to be. This young couple finally understood this. They also knew, as all of us do, that this “way” is something that each of us must develop for himself.

No one can solve our problems for us. No one can grow for us. But there is always help and guidance for those who seek it and are willing to follow through in applying sound spiritual and mental principles to this business of living.

My young friends were eager students indeed. By being willing to help themselves, they were not only able to solve their current problems, but they developed an approach to life which, if it didn't exactly move them along to where they thought they wanted to be, did result in getting them out of their immediate difficulties.

The lives of this young couple began to change because *when we change our inner thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, our outer experiences will change automatically. There is a definite relationship between what goes on inside of us and what happens in our world. This understanding is the beginning of wisdom and harmonious, purposeful living.*

Today several million people in this country alone are also changing their lives for the better by applying simple spiritual, mental, and emotional disciplines to the everyday situations of life. Constructive attention to these three inner levels builds an inner equivalent of what we want to do, have and experience. Remember: nothing can happen on the outside until it happens first on the inside.

From the book jacket:

“How the use of this power became the key to success in the author's own life, and how he has devoted himself ever since to showing other how to bring this saving power into their lives.”

“Of special interest, too, are fascinating, behind-the-scenes stories of Hollywood actors and stage stars who have conquered the pressures and tensions of public life through the magic of mind power.”

“Begin your journey, now. Fill your life with new excitement, joy, and contentment. You can do it with the help of the 12 mental attitudes outlined in this book. You can begin right now to realize that *Your Thoughts Can Change Your Life.*”

Where Do We Go from Here?

In starting the young couple on the path upward, I worked with them on twelve basic constructive mental attitudes which changed their lives. These same twelve steps have not only transformed my own life, but have led the way to more abundant living for the many with whom I have personally counseled.

These steps progress toward integrating our whole being. They develop our understanding to the point where we are capable of entertaining larger ideas, thereby bringing us larger patterns of experience. They are a ground plan for living. Their range includes thought, prayer, and action.

In this book, we are not concerned with a lengthy analysis of negative mental and emotional factors of causation. This material is well-covered in many other excellent books. Here we intend to develop these twelve attitudes – attitudes that will give us the inner strength and resourcefulness to meet the challenges of everyday living.

Here are the twelve steps:

1. Relaxation
2. Expectation
3. Recognition
4. Unification
5. Dedication
6. Intention
7. Identification
8. Conviction
9. Realization
10. Projection
11. Action
12. Cooperation

As we strengthen our inner power by developing our understanding and use of these steps, we

Suggestions for Personal Use:

1. Study each step as explained in the following chapters and meditate upon it as part of a ground plan for your life.
2. Start right here—right now—applying these 12 steps to your life in general.
3. Apply the 12 steps to any particular condition, problem, or situation that may confront you.
4. Go through the steps whenever you are faced with any problem or situation to which you want to bring your fullest power and ability.
5. Start the day by going through this sequence of steps as soon as possible upon arising. Repeat it before retiring.

Your Thoughts Can Change Your Life

move inevitably into the conquest of “inner space,” the area out of which come the issues of life.

We are all living in the space age. Let’s learn—right now—how to go into orbit.

CHAPTER 2: The Art of Sitting Loose

“Places, please. Please!” The stage manager knocked at the door of my dressing room as the curtain was about to go up on the opening night of another play.

How I had looked forward to it! My part was a fine one, and the weeks of rehearsal had been sheer pleasure. But now that it was opening night, again there was pain—wracking, disintegrating pain. My hands shook, perspiration stood out on my forehead as I struggled to complete my makeup. At the same time I was trying to hold a hot water bottle against my bare back as a counter-irritant to the pain.

“Please, God, just let me get on stage,” I implored. “Then I know I’ll be all right.”

Years ago I had discovered that once I got into the play and was acting with sufficient intensity, the pain would disappear. It was only years later that I realized the principle involved. *As soon as I took my mind off the pain and put it on the business at hand, the pain disappeared.*

But where did the pain come from in the first place? Did it indicate a functional or an organic disorder? No one, including medical specialists, could explain why I should experience this periodic shattering pain—a pain that always appeared just before I had anything important to do.

After everything failed, my old family doctor simply said, “I guess you’ll just have to live with it, son. Maybe you’ll grow out of it.”



Thought...

“...I took my mind off the pain and put it on the business at hand, the pain disappeared.”

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