



your will to the Divine Will, but to do so joyfully and with radiance, knowing it is the best way in the end. The ordinary way of meeting the circumstances of life is to have a negative, passive submission to God's will and to blame every circumstance that was unfortunate on the "Will of God" and to be unwillingly resigned to this condition and to do nothing to change it. Many become bitter and at enmity with life because of obstacles and calamities, and their faces register discontent and unhappiness.

"The death of one thing is the birth of another," said Marcus Aurelius. "Watch the eternal course of destruction and realize that the universe itself sustains no harm amidst all this change. The only true good is religion, which teaches us to keep our guiding principles pure and untainted by bodily impressions. Nothing external can influence us unless we pronounce it good or evil. Cease your complaint and you are not hurt."

Epictetus advised: "Dare to look up to God and say, 'Deal with me for the future as thou wilt, I am of the same mind as Thou art; I am Thine; I refuse nothing that pleases Thee; lead me where Thou wilt, clothe me in any dress Thou chooseth; is it Thy will that I should hold the office of a magistrate; that I should be in the condition of a private man; stay here; or be an exile; be rich; be poor, I will make Thy defense to men in behalf of all these conditions."

"He who frets himself because things do not happen just as he would have them, and secedes and separates himself from the law of the universal nature, is but a sort of an ulcer of the world."

Be acquiescent and things will change. God closes one door and opens another.

"Is anyone afraid of change?" asked Aurelius "I would gladly know what can be done without it? And what is dearer and more suitable to your universal nature? Pray, must not your wood be transformed (i.e., into fire) before your bath can be ready for you? Must not your meat be changed to make it fit to nourish you? Indeed what part of life can go forward without alteration? Now in all likelihood a change in your condition may be as serviceable to the world in general as those alterations above mentioned are to you."

When we are radiantly acquiescent our fears and worries disappear, what we ourselves cannot overcome or accomplish, we place in the hands of God, living in the faith that God can and will make all things well, and as our faith is, so is it always done unto us. When you feel that you live within God's protection you will never fear, you know you are safe and secure; fully protected at all times and nothing but good can come to you. If we would only learn radiant acquiescence. Since things cannot always be as we wish them it is better for us to acquiesce to realize that after all in the great Divine plan it may be better for us that they are changed, therefore let us be glad!

When things do not give you pleasure, proceed instead to create pleasure in your own heart and soul, and you can if you will always be glad. Besides

things will change for the better if you continue in the spirit of rejoicing. When things do not please you, resolve to please yourself by being glad. When evil befalls you consider the fact that the good that is yet in your possession is many times as great as all the evil you could ever know. \*

"It is a great thing to feel, when our small plans are in a moment destroyed, our own ambitions in a moment thwarted forever, that instead of losing we are exchanging a lower for a higher thing; that the fall of the blossom means the coming of the fruit; the opening up a soul to newer and greater truth." \*\*

Radiant acquiescence means "not my will but Thine be done." Let us approach our disappointments, our failures with the thought, "This is all right but different," and how much better it would be.

A famous doctor who radiated sympathy and gladness had as his motto, "That's all right, that's the way it should be." Nothing ever upset him.

He would work quietly to accomplish results and leave them in God's hands, perfectly willing to accept the ends as justifiable to the means.

"Magnify the faith in yourself and you will minimize the obstacles in your way," Marden has said.

"With God nothing shall be impossible."

When difficulties are to be met they should be met in the attitude of radiant acquiescence and joy, so that we may look upon them as a privilege through which the power of the Holy Spirit may be brought into action; this generates strong thought currents and attracts strong forces to help us.

A wonderful way to show your love for God and His Cause is to radiate from your personality the sunlight of His love. To be it is to live it.

"Resist not evil" has been sounded by all the prophets and a thoughtful perusal of their lives indicates how they met the circumstances in which they were placed-how they treated their enemies. To resist, to use force is against the law of harmony. All nature practices this law. In a storm when the wind is blowing, the trees in its path bend before its fury, those that resist it are snapped in two and broken off. It is better to let others learn through experience that they are on the wrong path than to force them to see it our way.

The best way to rise above the petty irritations and delays which attack the nervous system is to meet them with non-resistance. All the prophets have taught us not to resist evil. 'Abdu'l-Bahá calls it "radiant acquiescence." This is the most practical way to handle the affairs of life, to drop resistance to things we cannot change, be willing (and that happily) that circumstances should go against us, that others shall be unkind, unjust, impolite or disagreeable. Through this practice the mind is kept quiet and clear and greater power to go through life successfully is engendered. Resistance produces poisonous toxins in

the glands which undermine the health. Most of the nervous illness in the world today (and there is much of it) is caused by resistance to circumstances or to people, which has kept the nerves and brain in such a state of tension and irritation that a breakdown is the only ultimate result. In order to get rest and healing, we should say to ourselves, "Drop it, what difference does it make?"

Whether we are aware of it or not we always arouse in others what is in our own mind. Anger in you will provoke anger in another, while love begets love. So there is a great scientific principle involved in the command, "love your enemies;" Hate begets hate, and in no way can it be changed except through love. Fear begets fear and confidence increases confidence. The cheerfulness of one person can affect a roomful of people and if persistently practiced may affect the whole neighborhood. When you feel others irritating or disturbing you, get quiet, be tranquil, summon the spirit of joy and harmony—ask for guidance and strength from the Holy Spirit. Send out harmonious thoughts and soon you will find the attitudes of others will change toward you, if you have only love in your heart. Love can melt the meanest heart. It takes two to quarrel. If one of the angry parties will practice non-resistance and puts away all discordant thinking from himself, and waits without impatience, the anger of the other must subside for it will have nothing on which to feed. Keep your mind in a condition of harmony toward the other and wait. In waiting you will accomplish wonders with the right mental attitude. "They serve who only stand and wait."

Faith is patience to wait. There should not be any attempt at verbal reconciliation unless it comes naturally and without a truce of inharmony. The important thing is in attempting to correct one's own faults and never interfering with another unless help is asked.

"However he treats me, I am to act rightly with regard to him; for the one is my concern, the other is not," Epictetus wrote.

"Nothing another does can ever make it right for me to do wrong, because wrong is never right, and no combination of circumstances can ever make it so," declared Aaron Crane.

True self-control must not be thought to be a repression of the desire to do wrong but it must go farther and remove the desire in the thinking which will thereby remove all necessity for resistance or restraint.

Substitute one thought or feeling for another.

Self-control in the spiritual sense is freedom from all control of things outside the spiritual self and of all those things that provoke discordant thoughts. The person who allows himself to be mentally disturbed is in the degree of the disturbance in the power of whatever suggested it. By relaxing the mind, by being willing that certain things should occur, by keeping the mind centered in the Holy Spirit through practicing radiant acquiescence, one will establish such habits that no attention need be given even to the control of self, because habits tend to act automatically, without conscious care or attention. This is the

freedom of mind of little children. It is the freedom of heaven. "Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." As thoughts precede actions, then to stop thinking certain thoughts is to cease doing certain things. Resistance always interferes with freedom of thought and action.

"Who has more soul than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. Who has less, I rule with like facility."

"The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act," Emerson realized.

Are you in the habit of "blowing up," of "going to pieces," when things don't suit you? If you are, you are indulging in an "emotional spree," a "nervous jag." These can be quite as disastrous to the body as an alcoholic one, due to the poisons poured out into the blood stream by the adrenalin glands. Victims of deficient self-control in time become sick, mentally. It is their excuse that something that was said or some past experience is responsible for these upsets, but the breakdown in nervous morale is due to an inflated ego, an inferiority complex or the wrong attitude toward the speech and actions of other people.

A doctor made a list of some of the things that upset some of his patients. He found as many as forty causes in the list, most of them foolish. One man was continually upset because a business partner was always saying "listen," as an introduction to his sentences. A business man became furious if anyone in his office arrived a moment late in the morning, and he saw to it that he was there early enough to indulge in his favorite nervous jag."

These nervous types must remember that no matter where the blame rests, it is better to ignore things that can't be helped, to be "radiantly acquiescent." You can't allow other people and the circumstances of life to "get on your nerves." You cannot control the habits of the rest of the world, and therefore in self-protection you must develop an attitude toward them that is less vehement. You will have to teach yourself to live in a world as it is, not as you wish it might be. Do not take yourself and circumstances so seriously. Laugh at yourself. What difference will it make in a hundred years, whether the dinner is on time or not? Decide that you will be the master of your own environment and don't expect to go through life and escape the experience of "self-abasement." We can't expect to ride on the crest of the wave always but we can direct ourselves so that we can ride more smoothly. With understanding, love, tolerance, sympathy and cooperation many of these conditions can be "ironed out." They do not affect the man who has the "light of the Holy Spirit in his life."

Next to radiant acquiescence, the next best cure for "nerves" is the habit of self-examination and of looking to one's own faults. The Divine Manifestations have ever pointed out the need for man to examine his own motives first before be presumed to judge the actions of another.

"Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but

considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye. ... Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Bahá'u'lláh in this day admonishes us:

"If the fire of self overcome you, remember your own faults and not the faults of My creatures."

Real freedom from these irritations must begin within, the motives must be changed. If we only outwardly control the appearance of anger and irritability and are a seething furnace within we have no control. We must get free from the emotion itself to be free and to be master of the situation. So everyone must look within first and be relaxed there before he can act without. "Everyone," says Bahá'u'lláh in Hidden Words, "must show forth deeds that are pure and holy, for words are the property of all alike, whereas such deeds as these belong only to Our loved ones."

No matter where we find ourselves in life, all sickness, either of the mind or body, comes from the breaking of cosmic laws. \*\*\*

When we walk in the ray of the Holy Spirit we learn to live positively and actively, to go about doing good and radiating the light of God's gift. Let our light shine upon those who live in the shadows, let us radiate that light of the Holy Spirit so that the moment others come into our presence they will sense our power, our sincerity, our love, and that we have something they need.

As human beings we unconsciously radiate those inner forces which we possess and we influence those who come in contact by our radiations for good or ill. 'Abdu'l-Bahá felt the importance of this so keenly that in His correspondence He placed great emphasis on radiance of expression. He says: "The face is the mirror of the heart," and also: "Let all people see that you have the Light, that they may recognize something in you which they themselves do not possess."

Notes

\* Christian O. Larson

\*\* Hamilton Wright Mabie

\*\*\* Except those ills and misfortunes visited upon the holy ones, whose patience and sacrifice are the example to mankind.

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