

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

HAPPINESS



P R O S V E T A

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The topics of these reflections are treated in greater detail in the following volumes of the Izvor Collection:

N° 211 Freedom, the Spirit Triumphant

N° 213 Man's Two Natures: Human and Divine

N° 221 True Alchemy or the Quest for Perfection

N° 231 The Seeds of Happiness

N° 233 Youth: Creators of the Future.

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Take charge of your own happiness

Why is it so difficult to find happiness? Because you wait for it.

Observe yourself and you will see that this is so. You are waiting to meet the love of your life; you are waiting to meet with success; you wait for wealth and recognition to come to you, and when they do not come, you are unhappy. Some people even consult clairvoyants or astrologers who encourage them to believe that love and success will soon be theirs, that in six months or a year, when a certain planetary transit or conjunction occurs, everything will change. Thus reassured, with hope renewed, they continue to wait.

Unfortunately they are deluding themselves. Happiness is not something that comes or does not come from outside ourselves. Happiness is a state of consciousness, and it depends on a correct grasp of reality. It is no good imagining that we are here on earth for no other purpose than to enjoy a life of ease, pleasure, and prosperity. We have come here in order to learn and to perfect ourselves. And how shall we ever become perfect if we are not continually given new problems to resolve? Let this be

perfectly clear: the earth is a school, and as in all schools, only those who learn and make progress can be happy. So you must not wait for happiness to come to you in the form of an agreeable encounter or improved circumstances. True and lasting happiness can only come from within, from the way we look at things.

Put this to the test for yourself. Talk to people who enjoy some of the material advantages you dream of, and they will reveal to you that they are not as happy as you imagined. Or, if they are happy, it is because they possess qualities in their heart and soul that enable them to appreciate their good fortune, and they would be just as happy in less enviable circumstances. In any case, as we very well know, given identical circumstances, different people react differently.

Take an ordinary example from everyday life: a traffic jam. Notice how widely the drivers' reactions vary: one becomes agitated, honks, and curses the other drivers; another calmly scans the newspaper or listens to the radio; and others chat with their passenger, or, if it happens to be their sweetheart, takes the opportunity to kiss and hug. And yet others but they are few and far between profit from this pause to establish within themselves a state of peace and harmony, to make contact with the divine world, and to radiate light and love to every

creature on earth.

It is the same in almost all circumstances in life, which shows that it is in our own minds that adjustments need to be made. It is our thoughts that influence our state of mind. If we reason correctly and have a good outlook, a good philosophy of life, we can take charge of our own happiness. In circumstances in which others become irritated, tormenting themselves and poisoning the life of those around them, you can do the exact opposite. You can strengthen and enrich yourself. Gradually, thanks to your experiences, you will be in a position to advise or help others simply by your attitude and your radiant presence, by the power, light, and peace which emanate from you.

Be very clear about this: you must not wait passively for happiness to come to you from without. On the contrary; it is up to you to be active and to apply the methods that will enable you to change your sorrows into joy and your failures into success.

Accept your trials as a challenge

What is it that constantly drives mountaineers to attempt higher and more difficult climbs? What is it that compels athletes to swim, or run, or drive their cars faster and faster? What is it that makes chess players ponder for

hours before moving a pawn? Nothing outside themselves. It is they who impose these efforts, these problems, these exploits on themselves. And what joy every victory brings!

It is extraordinary how many activities, games and contests of all kinds human beings have invented. And this shows that they have a deep seated need to go ever higher, farther, and faster, always to surpass and outdistance themselves. But why, I wonder, does it never occur to them that the qualities of endurance, skill and intelligence needed in their games must also be applied in everyday life? Why do they always complain about the efforts that life calls for?

Many of the sporting contests practised today were invented centuries ago by initiates. As time passed, most of them changed greatly, and today we see only the outer aspect. Their deeper significance has been lost. For the initiates who created them, however, these games were a reflection of life, a transposition of the problems that face each one of us day by day. They were based on the irrefutable law that the same phenomena are to be found, in one form or another, on every plane of existence: physical, psychic, and spiritual.

And since these games are a reflection of the problems we encounter in life, why should we not turn the relationship around and see our problems as games?

Instead of feeling overwhelmed or exasperated by every little difficulty, tell yourself that it is simply one more opportunity to practise, one more test of your abilities. Assess the difficulty before you, be sure that you understand its true nature, and then challenge yourself to overcome it. You might say, for instance, 'I will not stop walking until I reach my destination... I will carry this load patiently and without complaining... I will triumph over this obstacle... I will sail these tumultuous seas without going under... I will rise above this region of dust and clouds and reach the highest peak. Once there I shall breathe pure, unpolluted air, and the sun will always be visible...' Yes, challenge yourself in this way from time to time, just as athletes challenge themselves, and you will find that the trials of life will seem lighter and easier to bear.

It is very important to understand this: happiness does not consist of a life free of trials, obstacles, or suffering. That is an illusion, a pipe dream! Happiness lies in being able to endure your trials without surrendering, in emerging from them stronger and richer than before. Yes, it is in our triumph over obstacles that we find happiness.

Make the most of your spiritual wealth

All human beings aspire to peace, freedom, and happiness. In fact many people desire these not only for

themselves, but for others as well. In spite of their admirable aspirations, however, very few know where to find the things they aspire to or how to achieve them. As a result, most people are not only unhappy themselves but cause unhappiness in others.

There is only one way to find happiness, and that is to give matters of the interior life priority over material things. Of course many will say that they already know this: they know that neither money nor material possessions nor fame brings happiness, but they conduct their lives as if they did not know it. They are endlessly preoccupied with the organization of their material well being. This is why, even if they are successful, they will always be unhappy and make others unhappy as well.

There is so much fuss made of material success today! As long as the rich and famous receive so much attention on television, on the radio and in the press, those who are less successful will continue to feel inferior and unworthy of attention, and this will inevitably increase their feelings of envy, resentment and hatred.

I am not saying that social success is of no importance whatsoever. I am simply saying that if we could get human beings to understand that it is more important to make the most of their inner wealth, society would be far better off. In the first place, people would be more

generous. How can you expect those who devote all their energies to material gain to be truly generous? They are constantly dogged by the feeling that their hold on their wealth is insecure, that they are at the mercy of events and of the ill will of those who are more able and more energetic. This makes them reluctant to share with others something that they live in terror of losing. In fact, not only will they refuse to share their wealth, they will do everything in their power to keep it for themselves, even if this means being selfish, heartless, and even cruel.

Those who have worked to acquire spiritual wealth, on the other hand, are always willing to share their treasure with others, for they sense that not only do they lose nothing in doing so, but that by trying to help others they become even richer.

Human beings need role models, people they can imitate. When they see successful men and women of outstanding ability, they want to be like them. Be careful, therefore, if the superiority or success you represent consists in having more money, more power or more fame, for these things will not make you a good model. It is wealth of this kind that makes people want to dominate, humiliate, and destroy others. If, on the other hand, your success is spiritual in nature, if it stems from kindness, wisdom, self mastery, integrity, generosity, purity, and

altruism, then not only will you feel secure in your possession of these riches, but they will enable you to face up to every circumstance, however difficult. What is more, you will be helping others to follow a path that leads to happiness. All human beings need models. Not models of material success, but models that help them be more aware of their true spiritual wealth, the wealth that resides in their heart and soul and spirit.

Do not burden others

When people feel worried, irritable, or unhappy, what do they do? Instead of making an effort to control themselves, to become calmer and more rational, they pick up the telephone or run round to a friend or neighbour and start spilling out all their complaints. Once they have done this, of course, they feel better. They are delighted to have relieved themselves of such a weight. Yes, but they do not realize that when they unburden themselves on their friends in this way, it is as though they dumped the contents of their rubbish bins on them.

I am not saying that you should never talk to your friends about your difficulties. The advice and support of a friend can sometimes be a tremendous help. What I am saying is that you must not use a friend as a rubbish bin. You must not get into the habit of pouring out every little anxiety, every disappointment, irritation, or anger on

others. No good can come of such a habit... especially as your friends, who are probably no wiser than you, will then go and find others on whom to unburden themselves. And on and on it goes!

I repeat, there is nothing wrong in seeking encouragement from a friend. The trouble is that what people seek is not always courage. They are not asking for wisdom or good advice. They simply feel the need to unburden themselves. And although this may make them feel better at the moment, the improvement will be short lived, for, having made no inner effort to surmount their problems, the next time something occurs to upset them, they will find themselves in the same state of distress. In short, not only have they passed on their poison to their friends, but they have done nothing to improve their own situation.

There are ways of unburdening yourself of anxiety and distress other than giving them to your friends and neighbours. When you feel depressed or irritable, you would do better to stay quietly at home and do some work with light, and pray, meditate, sing, or listen to some music. Or you can go for a walk in the midst of nature and breathe deeply while communing with the earth, the trees, and the heavens. Resist the temptation to seek the company of your friends until you feel released,

unburdened, and capable of giving them something good, luminous, and constructive.

Observe yourself and you will see that you usually do exactly the opposite: when things are going badly, you hasten to share your troubles with others, and then when all is well, you have nothing to say. How extraordinary! When everything is going well, you have nothing to say! Do you not agree that there is something to put right here, that it would be far better if you learned to share only your good states with your friends and acquaintances?

In fact, you can go even further: when you experience a moment of peace, joy, and wonder, make a point of sharing these privileged states. Devote a few minutes to thinking of all those in the world who are in anguish and despair. Focus your thoughts on them, saying, 'My dear brothers and sisters throughout the world, what I have is so beautiful and luminous that I want to share it with you. Receive this beauty. Take this light.' Since you know that your inner state of mind generates waves that spread out to the rest of the world, you must not attempt to keep your happiness for yourself. Share it with others! In this way you will not only be doing them good, you will also enhance and amplify these states in yourself. For this is a magical phenomenon: the best way to hold on to your joy is to share it.

Lighten the psychic atmosphere

More and more people complain that the air is no longer fit to breathe, that the atmosphere is fast being poisoned by smoke and fumes from cars and factories and by quantities of other toxic substances. This is all too true, and it is also true of the psychic atmosphere of the world.

Most human beings, living as they do without light, or love, or any inkling of their responsibilities, continually pour into the atmosphere such sombre, vicious, poisonous thoughts and feelings that the earth resembles nothing so much as a swamp in which all kinds of creatures swarm, depositing their refuse and excrement which other inhabitants are obliged to breathe and swallow. This is the sad truth: urban areas particularly are swamps into which human beings throw all their anguish, envy, hatred, and frustrated hopes. If you were the least bit clairvoyant, you would be able to see the horrible, black, viscous forms that emanate from so many people and gather in dense layers in the atmosphere. Even if you cannot actually see these things, it is impossible not to sense at certain moments the heavy atmosphere hanging over a town like a dark, leaden mantle.

Thus, even if all the world's people did everything possible to combat the pollution of the air, water and soil,

it would still not be enough, for humanity is also being asphyxiated by the invisible smoke, exhaust fumes, and toxic elements that pollute the psychic atmosphere. Many of today's diseases are caused not only by the polluted air we breathe, or the contaminated food and water we eat and drink, but also by psychic poisons. If the psychic atmosphere in which they are immersed were not so heavily polluted, human beings would be capable of neutralizing the external poisons that threaten them. But the major threat is from within. When you are inwardly strong and in harmony with yourself and others, it is as though you were permeated by currents of energy that repel every impurity even physical impurities and your body is better able to resist disease.

It is first of all on the inner plane that we are vulnerable, and only later do the consequences of this vulnerability manifest themselves on the physical plane. One can see examples of this among nurses and doctors. Those whose faith is very strong and whose blood is pure can live with and care for people who have a highly contagious, deadly disease without being contaminated. While others are infected even if they try to run from it, because they have allowed invisible impurities to invade them, and these impurities are a provender that attracts microbes and virus. The best defence against disease is not only the purity of our blood, but even more important, the purity of

our thoughts and feelings. Once the ill is present in our thoughts and feelings, in our hearts and our desires, the door is wide open, and the affliction can easily work its way down to the physical plane.

Henceforth, we must be conscious of the psychic atmosphere. We know that nothing stays put, that everything flows and spreads. This means that if each human being took care to produce less toxic emanations and worked instead to impregnate the atmosphere with pure, luminous, helpful thoughts, these thoughts would spread throughout the world, bathing all men and women in a blessed tide of purification. But where are the enlightened beings who are willing and able to work in this way? They are few in number. Most human beings are too busy trying to satisfy their own lusts and longings, too busy fighting tooth and nail to succeed against all odds. And it is this attitude, this reliance on aggression that is so damaging to humanity, for the atmosphere in which we live is charged with these chaotic vibrations and toxic emanations. If there were sufficient numbers of enlightened men and women who, by their way of life, worked to purify their own spiritual atmosphere, many others would gradually be led to do the same. This is why I talk to you so often about the necessity of using your thoughts to create an atmosphere of purity, harmony and brotherly love. Do this wherever you go, so that one day

the earth may be a beautiful flower garden in which all may dwell in happiness.

Face up to discouragement

In order to avoid giving in to despair, there is one thing to know from the beginning, and it is this: whatever your ambition in life, however noble and worthy your work, you will have to confront evil in the shape of difficulties and obstacles in your path. It is very dangerous to be blind to evil. Those who never anticipate evil do not take precautions against it, and by failing to avoid or neutralize its influence, they end by falling into its trap. Blind trustfulness always has to be paid for very dearly, and we pay for it first of all through discouragement. Those who are full of illusions lose their balance and fall by the wayside at the first sign of difficulty.

We are all continually threatened by discouragement, but there are ways of facing up to it without giving in. The first thing to do when you begin to feel overwhelmed or defeated is to tell yourself that the feeling will not last. Take refuge in some corner of your inner being, as though you were hibernating, and stay there for a few moments until you feel that you have caught your breath and the spark of life is brighter. Discouragement is like winter, and after winter comes spring. Sometimes spring comes early and sometimes late sometimes very late but in the

long run, it always comes. This is why you must never give up hope. Sooner or later you will feel energetic and stimulated again. The pity is that so many people give up at the last minute, just before the forces of spring start to flow again. They would be safe if they held on just a little longer, but because they fail to sense the forces of renewal that are so near, they succumb.

To dwell on all that is wrong is extremely detrimental; it only makes everything worse. However great your torment, therefore, you must never allow your inner skies to cloud over completely. Say to yourself, 'Perhaps all is not lost yet. I'll hang on for a little longer.' And little by little the darkness will dissipate and the cold will move off.

It is important to know that we are all obliged to pass through periods of difficulty sometimes of very great difficulty. Life on earth is necessarily subject to ups and downs, to the alternation of day and night, heat and cold, joy and sorrow, spring and winter. We simply must accept and learn to work with these elements, for there is one thing you can count on: as soon as you have triumphed over one lot of difficulties, another will arise. But each time, the experience you have already gained will enable you to triumph once more.

I am not saying that through thick and thin you must keep up the pretence of being blissfully happy. No, I am

simply saving that the trials you meet with in life are not synonymous with ultimate disaster and should not prevent you from being happy. This is not the same thing. Suffering and sorrow are terrible realities. It is absolutely impossible to deny that they exist. But however great your torment, it is always possible to work with your powers of thought so that you are able, not only to hold fast in the midst of suffering, but to emerge from it enriched. And the riches gained in this way will not be yours alone. Simply because of your attitude and the way you face up to difficulties, others will necessarily receive a share.

Why do you insist that happiness must come in precisely the form you imagine? There are so many different possibilities open to you, but you cannot see them. You do not want to see them. You cling to your own ideas, hoping that one particular door will be opened to you... and it remains firmly shut! Instead of weeping before it, why not consider that there are other doors near by which are on the point of opening. Suppose you expect great things of someone, and not only do they not give you what you had hoped for, but they are very unpleasant and ungrateful into the bargain. Instead of being prostrated by disappointment, take a better look around you, for there are sure to be others who are ready to help you. If your nose is glued to your first disenchantment, and you are completely preoccupied with negative thoughts about

those who have let you down, you will not even see the friends gathering round you. It is in this sense as well that your trials can be useful: they oblige you to do and discover things that you would never have done or discovered without them.

Understand this well: if you fail to find the solution to your difficulties, it is often your negative attitude that is the cause. This is why life continually shakes you up, saying, 'For heaven's sake, are you blind? Are you deaf? Wake up and look around. Can't you see all the possibilities that are open to you?' Believe me, I am not saying these things only to you; I say them to myself as well. In fact, it is precisely because I have been through such experiences millions of times already that I can talk to you about them and try to help you. Do you think I could talk in this way if I had not lived through very great trials myself?

When you are faced with certain difficulties and feel discouragement and despair threatening you, do not consider them as enemies that have no right to attack you. Unfortunately they do have this right. You must submit to their attacks, knowing that, thanks to them, things will be much better later. This is absolutely true: after a period of terrible discouragement, one receives an extraordinary influx of energy. Where has all this energy come from? It has come with the discouragement. Naturally, you have to

keep careful watch on your discouragement to see that it does not overpower you, that it does not sweep you away like a powerful torrent and drown you. Accept it as inevitable while at the same time keeping a watch on yourself. There, this is yet another exercise for you.

Henceforth, instead of asking to be spared the experience of discouragement, ask to understand it, for this experience always brings with it extraordinary riches and treasures: the joys of spring that inevitably follow the hardships of winter.

Turn on all your lights

However great your trials and tribulations, you must try never to show a sad, gloomy face to the world. On the contrary, you must turn on all your inner lights. The worse things get, the more you need to turn on your lights, for that is the only way to overcome your difficulties and earn the sympathy and help of other people.

In the mistaken belief that your misfortunes will touch people's hearts, you describe them in detail. You even exaggerate their gravity in the hope of arousing the compassion of your audience. No, this is not the way to go about it. Of course they will probably offer you words of encouragement and consolation, but inwardly they will be looking for an excuse to escape from you as quickly as

possible. Yes, for better or for worse, this is the way people are. If you want to put them off, talk about your misfortunes, your illnesses, or your sorrows; instead of listening to you, the one thought in their minds will be how to get away!

It is beauty, light, and love that attract others. When you have problems, therefore, instead of talking about them to all and sundry, get in touch through thought and prayer with the powers that can help you to solve them. This is what I mean when I say you should turn on your lights. Remind yourself that everybody has all kinds of problems of their own. Why should you add to their burdens by telling them about yours? There is nothing they can do about them. Not only do you waste time by talking about your difficulties to no useful purpose, you also debilitate yourself and become less able to cope with them. Not only that, you risk losing the esteem of others as well.

The best way to solve your problems is to turn inwards and make contact with all those luminous entities of the spiritual world who are there within, ready and able to help you. It is they who will give you the strength and light you need to solve your problems. This way of working will necessarily benefit those around you as well, for when they sense something different in you and see you enduring your difficulties and tribulations without

complaint, they will admire you, gather round you, and take you for their model. And those who are in a position to do so may even try to offer you some help and encouragement. But if you are always defeated, always feeble and dispirited, not only will you fail to gain their sympathy, but you will actually be doing them harm.

However great your difficulties, therefore, try to adopt the attitude or find the words that will be helpful to those around you. It is thanks to this effort of selfless generosity that you will resolve your own problems.

A timely gesture

Many people suffer from psychological problems and serious depressions simply because, through negligence, they do not make the effort to counteract a malaise as soon as it appears. When afflicted by a disappointment, a bereavement, or a setback of some kind, they allow themselves gradually to be submerged by their discouragement to such an extent that they become really ill. This outcome could very well have been avoided if they had made the effort to transform their state of mind immediately. Unfortunately, most people do not react. They wait for things to sort themselves out. And of course it is true that in most cases things do sort themselves out, and life goes back to normal. But some cases are more difficult, and if one is not careful, things may become

more complicated.

The worst of it is that many people do not realize they are on a dangerous downward slope, and because of this they sink gradually deeper into a state of morbidity until they are finally engulfed. Something that began as hardly more than a discomfort has become a serious illness.

This shows you how important it is to become conscious, to recognize the thoughts, feelings and sensations that pass through you, and to refuse to allow negative states to take hold in you. The moment you sense an inner malaise, you must react. It is often enough to make some simple gesture — water your plants, smile at someone, say a kind word, or give someone something they need or that will give them pleasure. A simple gesture is enough, that is, as long as you make it deliberately, with the intention of steering your inner state away from danger. Also, of course, it must be made before the situation has become serious. What matters above all is not to remain in a state of apathy or stagnation, but consciously to trigger a positive reaction.

Always try to keep an eye on your inner state, so that some tiny negative element does not have the chance to snowball, swelling and becoming so enormous as more and more snow sticks to it, until it blocks your path completely. Then you will find yourself crying, 'I cannot

get by! But whose fault is that? Who put this great snowball in your way? You did! You have entertained all kinds of negative thoughts and feelings and allowed them to reach gigantic proportions in your heart and your head, and now you are stuck. What can you do about it? Strike a match and hold it close to the snowball, so that the heat melts it and the water runs off and irrigates your gardens and orchards and gives you an abundance of flowers and fruit. In other words, light the fire of love, for love will melt all the snowballs, all the tumours within you.

Yes, love manifests itself in all these apparently insignificant everyday gestures. You must not count on exalted deeds to save you and ensure your equilibrium. It is the little things that do the most good. If you get into the habit of taking them seriously, you will be acquiring an attitude and developing strengths on which you can call one day for protection. There are so many little things one can do. For instance, you can pick up something unsightly paper or an empty bottle that is littering the road or the park; you can push aside a rock or some broken glass that is liable to cause someone to trip and hurt themselves. Be on the look out. Keep trying to find some little thing to do, knowing that every gesture that is made with care, sincerity, and love is a creature of light capable of driving out darkness or preventing it from entering you and wreaking havoc.

Give in order to be rich

Why are you always complaining that you lack this, that somebody owes you that, that no one cares for you or thinks of you? Is it because you believe that all this moaning and groaning will bring you happiness? Let me tell you that, on the contrary, with such an attitude you are preparing a lifetime of disappointment and suffering for yourself. Begin by paying a little less attention to yourself and a little more to others, and you will soon see that your situation improves.

Of course there are certain things you lack. I know that. And you must realize that this will always be the case, but you must also realize that if you continue to have this negative attitude, the situation will only get worse. Forget about the things you have not got, and enjoy the things you have. And learn to work with them. How can anyone feel poor and alone when they know, as you do, that they can use their powers of thought to embrace the whole universe and be in communion with all the luminous creatures that inhabit it? What more do you need in order to understand that you are rich and privileged? To understand also that you are in a position to help others? You will never be happy until you start thinking about making others happy. No one can be happy until their consciousness has expanded to such an extent that they

sense that it embraces the universe. And only love can bring about this expansion of consciousness.

The trouble with human beings is that they are always afraid of losing something, so they curl up in themselves and lock their doors. It never occurs to them that it is precisely this lack of openness that makes them poor. If you want to be rich, you have to give. He who takes becomes poorer, and he who gives becomes richer. This is because when we give, we arouse hidden forces which are sleeping or stagnating within the depths of our being. Then we are astonished to feel them flowing through us and to find that although we give and give, we are becoming richer and richer!

Well, this is the new life. People keep saying that life must change, that society must change, but how can we create a new society if we continue to cling to the old mentality that urges us to take and take, never to give? We have to make it a habit to give, to give of our best. Human beings have primarily learned to take. Materially, emotionally, and mentally this is their first concern. People and things interest them only to the extent to which they hope to get something out of them. With such a philosophy, how can anything change? How can human beings help but feel isolated, poor and unhappy?

Henceforth you must make a habit of giving. Look at a

spring of water: human beings and animals are attracted to a spring because it can quench their thirst, and plants and trees flourish in its vicinity. Why? Because it continually pours out its pure waters, its life blood. A spring teaches us that there is only one infallible way to attract others, and that is to give, to give all that is best in our heart and soul. Why be afraid of ingratitude? If people are ungrateful, so much the worse for them; they will always be poor. And if you are a freely flowing spring, so much the better for you; you will always be rich.

The aura is our best protection

Human beings, like the earth, are surrounded by a kind of atmosphere, and this atmosphere is known to initiatic science as the aura. It is through the medium of our aura that we communicate with the forces and currents that flow through space. Depending on the quality of our aura on its sensitivity, its purity, and its strength we receive or repulse certain currents. We are permanently surrounded by the negative influences and currents that circulate throughout the world, but if our aura is very strong and luminous, such currents cannot reach our consciousness or harm or upset us. Why is this? Because before reaching us, they encounter our aura, and our aura acts as a customs guard at the frontier and prevents them from passing through.

The quality of our aura and its ability to protect us depend on the way we live. The aura of someone who indulges all his lowest inclinations is like the murky waters of a swamp. It attracts only currents of gloom and darkness. How can anyone expect to attract anything good if, by their hostile thoughts and their feelings of resentment and frustration, they constantly surround themselves with an atmosphere of destruction? Understand that even when good things come their way, their aura is such that it repulses them.

The task before you now is to learn to work on your aura so that it receives only the most beneficial currents, so that it surrounds you with a magnetic field that protects you from all harm and has a beneficial effect on all those who approach you. Without knowing why, the people you frequent will have a sense of well being in your company. This is because they will sense a certain presence, the presence of the spiritual beings your aura has attracted. For heavenly entities love light, and when they see someone who is bathed in light, they hasten to gather round.

So this is the great work to which you must devote yourself for the rest of your life: to fashion and perfect yourself so as to attract all that is best and most beautiful in the universe. If I were to ask you, 'Are you really sure

you want health, beauty, peace and happiness? Are you sure you want to be loved?' You would all reply, 'Yes, yes. We are absolutely sure!' But in that case why do you do nothing to obtain these things? You cannot expect all these blessings to come your way by chance. The most effective way to obtain them is to refine and strengthen your aura. Through love you can make it more vibrant and alive. Through wisdom you make it more luminous. Through your strength of character you make it more powerful. And through the purity of your life you give it greater purity and transparency. The aura of those who apply themselves with patience and sincerity to the practice of the virtues gradually becomes so immense that heavenly entities come to bathe in its light, and human beings find nourishment, comfort, and strength in it, and are drawn to the things of God.

Solitude does not exist

So many people complain of solitude, but how many realize that it is they who have brought about this state of affairs that the solitude they suffer from is only in their minds? The truth is that no human being is ever alone. But if this is so, why do so many feel lonely? It is because they do not love enough. 'How can you say such a thing?' they will object. 'On the contrary, we love too much. We dream of nothing but love!' Exactly! It is here that men and

women make their great mistake. They dream of love and long for a prince charming or a fairy princess, and this is why they are lonely. They wait for love to come to them instead of seeking it within themselves. The love that you wait for passively will never come. You must never expect it to come to you from somewhere or someone else. Love is already within you, and the one true way to find it is to let it out, let it manifest itself.

We are never alone. The whole universe is tuned in to us. Not one of our words or gestures fails to evoke a response. When you leave home on the way to work in the morning, for instance, you can greet the whole of creation with a smile and a word: 'Hello, hello, hello.' And you will never feel a moment of loneliness, for all day long you will sense that from every corner of the universe, voices are echoing your greeting in response: 'Hello, hello, hello.' Human beings open their doors and go out in the world each day, but inside themselves they are all locked up. They see and hear other people all around them, but they do not look at or listen to them. Is it so difficult to remember that the world is full of beings who deserve to be recognized, who deserve to receive wishes of light, peace, and joy from you? Is it so difficult to open up to them, to smile at them, to be the first to make a friendly gesture? Everybody waits for someone else to make the first move... and while waiting, they complain that they are

alone.

Begin immediately, today, to change your attitude, and you will find that you never feel lonely again. Perhaps you will object, 'Yes, but I find the people I see in the street, or in shops, or at work, very uninspiring. Besides, if I started smiling at them, they would not understand.' That is no doubt true. There are many who would not understand if you said good morning or smiled at them. They would probably wonder what had got into you! But for every one who is incapable of understanding, there are many who would both understand and respond gladly. In any case, do you live only for the few human beings you meet? No, your life concerns the whole of creation, and in the invisible realms of creation there are countless beings who are fully capable of appreciating your love. That is what matters.

Besides, could you not learn to be less superficial in the way you judge those whom you find so uninteresting? Why do you not look beyond external appearances? It is true that appearances can be very off putting, but there is more to a human being than his outward appearance. Each one possesses a soul and a spirit, and even if that soul and spirit rarely manifest themselves, they are always there and always capable of appearing and expressing themselves. It is not a mark of intelligence to have such a

superficial perception of human beings. A wise man knows and always bears in mind that men and women are the sons and daughters of God. Not only does it make him happy to approach others with this in mind, but in doing so, he is working creatively by stimulating the divine in them. Believe me, the best way to behave towards others is to discover and focus on their qualities, their virtues, and their spiritual riches, and to forget about the rest.

There is no merit in discovering a person's failings. It is all too easy, and besides, everybody does it. From now on, instead of dwelling on the less glorious details, seek out and concentrate on the divine principle that dwells in each human being. How much better it would be if you had a sacred respect for the divine, eternal dimension in others! In this way you would be doing some positive work both for yourself and for them. Whereas by dwelling on their faults and failings, you are not only feeding on impurities and thereby harming yourself, you are also hindering their advancement. And in this case, is there any wonder you feel lonely? By continually criticizing others and emphasizing their failings, you are simply broadening and deepening the gulf that separates you from them. When you learn to unite your soul and spirit to all the souls and all the spirits on earth, when all that is best in you encounters all that is best in others, believe me, you will never again feel lonely.

Live poetically

Wherever one goes, in the streets and shops, on buses and trains, the people one sees have closed, wooden expressions without a spark of light. Is it normal that human beings should manifest so little joy when they are together, and inflict such a dreary, unpoetical spectacle on each other? Why do they not express a little more warmth and life? Why are their faces so unsmiling and lifeless? Even if you start the day with no reason of your own to feel gloomy, the mere sight of them influences you. By the time you reach the office or get back home in the evening, you are depressed and ill tempered yourself. And then you pass on that bad mood to your fellow workers or your family. What a miserable life humans continually inflict on each other!

Perhaps you think it is not important to show others an open, friendly expression? But this is what true poetry is all about. To be a true poet, it is not enough to write verses. A true poet is one who creates poetry in his own life by doing everything possible to imbue it with purity, light, love and laughter. Some people will say that it is impossible to smile and be merry when one thinks of all the tragedies that befall humanity... all the tragedies they see around them. Ah, yes. And do you think that the sight of your long faces will make all those unhappy people feel

any better? You are quite right to say that one must do something for them, but what good will it do anyone if you who are not ill, or persecuted, or obliged to endure the same privations, go about looking miserable? If you want to help others, you should at least begin by displaying a smile and a friendly openness.

Yes, it is poetry that we love and look for in others: something light and luminous that we need to see, to feel, and absorb, something that inspires and arouses feelings of peace and harmony. Why do people never consider the unpleasant impression they make on others? They are so dreary, bad tempered, tight lipped and frowning... And even when they use all kinds of artificial means to improve their appearance, they cannot prevent the lack lustre dullness of their inner life from showing through. The great secret, the most effective way, is love, the kind of love that harmonizes and illuminates your face and the whole of your inner being.

When you go out in the morning, think of sending loving greetings to all the creatures of the universe, visible and invisible. If you do this you will see the result: your whole day will be bathed in an atmosphere of poetry, because you have radiated love to the whole world, and from every corner of the universe, love flows back to you amplified many times over. There are so many different

ways of making life beautiful and poetical! The first thing, of course, is not to allow material cares and considerations to absorb all your attention. You must set aside a little time and energy to devote to the activities that give meaning to your life.

Human beings have not yet understood this. They talk about love and want nothing better than to be loved, but they remain locked up inside themselves... gloomy, dull, unpoetical! They do not know how to live the poetical life that would make others love them. If they were a little more intelligent, they would understand how detrimental their attitude is both to themselves and to others.

Try each day to become more alive. Therein lies your salvation and that of others. And to become more alive means to dispense your light and your love. You must learn consciously to maintain an inner climate of poetry. If you practice this regularly, it will help you to be less self absorbed, less dreary and stagnant. What a joy it is to meet someone in whom all is alive and luminous! We love a tree because it bears fruit. We love a spring because of the water that streams from it, singing as it flows. We love flowers because of their colour and perfume. In the same way we love people who open their hearts and give us something limpid and luminous, something sweet scented and melodious. So learn to cultivate a state of generous

outpouring and radiance. Get into the habit of smiling, of looking at people with love, of taking a few living particles from your heart and offering them to others. It is you who will benefit the most and gain the greatest happiness.

The magical power of gratitude

If you learn to weigh all the good things that providence has given you with such generosity against all the little inconveniences of life, you cannot help but be filled with gratitude.

Is this what you do? Observe your own reactions and you will see that, far from seeing things in this way, you spend your time comparing what you consider the little you have with all the possessions of those who are better off. If you really feel the need to make comparisons of this kind, why not compare all the advantages you have with the appalling conditions of so many others in the world? The constant ingratitude and discontent of human beings show a distinct lack of intelligence: instead of keeping in mind the blessings showered on them by heaven, they find every possible reason to be miserable.

The first thing to do every morning when you awaken is to summon love and joy. Instead of beginning the day by thinking of how little money you have, of how your sweetheart has betrayed you, or of the neighbour or

colleague who is always persecuting you, how much better it would be to say, 'Thank you, Lord! I am so grateful to be alive and in good health, to breathe and to eat, to move about, see, hear, think, and love. Thank you for all these precious gifts!' Yes, get up in the morning joyfully and with gratitude to the Lord for all that you have.

Only gratitude can save us. We must even learn to be grateful for the unpleasant events that befall us, for this is the best way to transform them. If you meet them with self pity and rebellion, your situation will never improve. But if you thank God for a difficulty and realize that it is there as a lesson, that you have something to learn from it, you will sense that you are gradually transforming it into gold and precious stones. It is as though you coated it in gold or crystal, and it takes on a completely new light. Try it and see.

Nothing can resist the power of gratitude. This is why you should thank heaven every day until you feel that everything that happens to you is for your good. Here and now, say, 'Thank you, Lord. Thank you...' Be thankful for what you have and also for what you lack, for the things that give you cause for rejoicing, and for the things that cause you suffering. In this way you preserve the flame of life within you. This is a law, and it is important that you understand it. Perhaps you will say that it is not possible to

give thanks when you are unhappy or ill or destitute. Ah, that is where you are wrong. It is precisely this that is the great secret: even when you are miserable, you must find a reason for gratitude. Are you poor? Give thanks! Are you ill? Give thanks! Be grateful and rejoice! Grateful for what? For the wealth, the good health, the prosperity of others. If you do this, you will see that before long certain doors will be opened to you too, and you will be showered with blessings.

This is a truly extraordinary philosophy: to rejoice and give thanks even when there seems to be no reason to do so. If you adopt this philosophy, it will enable you to surmount all your difficulties, to rise above the contingencies of life, to be in control of every situation. No chemist has ever discovered a substance capable of affecting a human being as powerfully as gratitude. No laboratory has yet studied the repercussions that a simple expression of gratitude can have on the human organism, the astonishing changes that it can effect in the brain, heart, and lungs, and even in the blood stream and the muscles.

How can we fail to give thanks to heaven for all its gifts? The trouble is that we do not even see these gifts, because we have made a habit of looking down. We look at what is wrong, at all the things that worry or frighten or distress

us. We forget to look up at light and beauty. We forget to look at precisely those things that could give a new impetus to our soul, that could lead us to find the means to triumph over our difficulties and be grateful for them.

Cares and difficulties will always exist, whatever you do. It is useless to try to eliminate them; they will only get the better of you. So what should you do? Exactly what you do when you have to contend with bad weather or a swarm of insects: you take the appropriate countermeasures. When you have to go out in the rain, you take an umbrella. When it is cold, you put on warm clothes or turn up the heating. When there are mosquitoes about, you install mosquito netting or use a repellent. And when it comes to dealing with life's difficulties, the only solution is to look upwards for the light and strength you need. In this way, not only will you triumph over your difficulties, but you will also learn to be grateful.

Those who aspire to happiness must learn to show gratitude for all that they have received and make an effort to give something luminous to others. In this way they will learn to rejoice. Above all they will learn to rejoice in things that they had previously scorned or neglected. From amongst all that happens during the day, they will try to find one event, one encounter, one thought that has inspired them or done them good, and conserve it

carefully in their hearts, their memories, their minds. If you thank the Lord every day, if you are content with what he gives you, you will possess the magic secret that is capable of transforming your life, and the luminous entities of the invisible world will come and give you all the help you need.

Recapture your moments of bliss

Suppose you go to a concert and enjoy a state of near ecstasy while listening to a Beethoven symphony or a mass by Mozart. Then you go home, and, still under the influence of those sublime moments, you think how wonderful it would be if you could listen to that music and experience the same rapture again and again. What do you do about it? You go out the very next day and buy the recording, and once you have it, you can listen to it as often as you like, for it has become an integral part of your record library.

Now you should know that we all have our own inner collection of recordings. Every event of our lives, however trivial, is recorded within us. Psychologists call these records the memory or the subconscious. But whatever you call them, the great thing is to learn to use them. Every fleeting moment of divine joy that you experience contains in itself the whole of eternity. It is as though you had taken a quick snapshot, and the picture lives for ever

within you. Nothing can erase it. When you feel uneasy or irritable, when you feel that you are adrift in nothingness, listen to one of these recordings from your collection. Try to recapture the moments of bliss during which, if only for a few seconds, you knew that life could be all light, peace, beauty, love, and fulfilment. Even if at this moment your circumstances and your state of mind are very different, those moments of delight are still there; they have not been erased. They are still within you, and you can recapture them and experience their beneficial vibrations once again.

You have extraordinary possibilities within you, but because you do not know about them, you cannot understand, or make progress, or use them creatively. All you need is within you, but you do nothing with it, because no one has revealed your powers to you. Time passes, life passes, and you accomplish nothing.

Every human being, even the most unfortunate, even the most destitute, has known a few moments of happiness in life and is capable of remembering them and using them as an antidote to painful thoughts and feelings. Why do people endlessly mull over their sorrows and disappointments? Because of ignorance... always ignorance! Observe your own reactions, and you will realize that you never make any great effort to recapture

your moments of happiness. How ready you are, on the other hand, to remember times of grief and distress! Why? What is the point? It is high time you learned instead to work with positive, constructive elements.

Have you never experienced moments of great happiness in your family or with friends? Or perhaps with certain books, certain works of art, or while listening to music? Or at the sight of a natural wonder? Try to recall these moments, even if you have never known more than three or four in your life... or even one. Come back to the moment over and over again. Try to remember the time and place, the circumstances, the people involved. Concentrate on them until you recapture the thoughts, the feelings, the sensations you had at the time. Little by little you will have the impression that you are living through the same experience, with the same intensity, as though it were happening all over again, here and now. The important thing is not what is happening objectively, outside you, but what you are experiencing inwardly.

Henceforth, call to mind the times when you understood and felt deeply that life was good, that it had meaning. Keep all these moments on file, as it were, so that they are ready for you when you want them. Also, according to the circumstances, you must choose the one that best fits your need, for just as one kind of music is more suitable to

certain occasions than another, one memory might be more beneficial in certain circumstances than another.

Once you have collected these moments, return to them often, for in this way you amplify them and bring them to life. Also, far from wearing out like the recordings you buy, the more you play those that are stored in your heart and soul, the more solid and durable they become. The same law applies to the beneficial recordings as to the destructive ones: the more you use them, the stronger they become.

Do you understand what I am saying? When you are feeling dejected or discouraged, it is always possible to turn back to one of those moments in which you experienced the reality of the divine life. Remember the magnificent voice that you once heard singing celestial music. Take the recording from the shelf and put it on your record player, and you will find yourself falling under its spell. Gradually you will find you have the strength to pull yourself up and go forward once again with renewed hope and courage.

