Man-Making:
The Purification of the Self

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(Lao-tzu)

Dedicated to
Sant Kirpal Singh
Man-Making:
The Purification of the Self

It is not reasonable to expect to attain to the higher planes without perfecting yourself to a great degree.
(Sant Kirpal Singh)

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
(Jesus Christ)

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
(Jesus Christ)

Without virtue, God is only a word.
(Plotinus)
Understand this if nothing else: spiritual freedom and oneness with the Tao are not randomly bestowed gifts, but the rewards of conscious self-transformation and self-evolution.

(Lao-tzu)

If a man who beholds a lesser happiness beholds a greater one, let him leave aside the lesser to gain the greater.

(Buddha)

One who conquers himself is greater than another who conquers a thousand times a thousand men on the battlefield.

(Buddha)

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; the hardest victory is over self.

(Aristotle)
The need of that long slow process of transcendence, of character building, whereby she (the mystic) is to attain freedom, become capable of living upon high levels of reality, is present in her consciousness. Those in whom this growth is not set going are no mystics...

(Evelyn Underhill)

If you don’t give up these worldly things you are not ready for this path.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

It is difficult to control your senses, to rise above body consciousness, to keep thoughts pure and not to think ill of others. If we accomplish these things, it is not difficult to realize God.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)
Perennial joy or passing pleasure? This is the choice man is to make always. The wise man recognizes this, but not the ignorant. The first welcomes what leads to abiding joy, though painful at the time. The latter run, goaded by their senses, after what seems immediate pleasure.

(Katha Upanishad)

Overcoming and giving up outward tendencies, stilling the mind and dying while alive is not easy. The inner gate opens only when the outer gates are closed. There is no other way to get in. People wish to continue to run out through the outer gates and also wish to get into the inner. This is impossible. Two things cannot happen at the same time. One is to be given up to achieve the other.

(Baba Sawan Singh)

So long as the student has no control over his mind and is a slave of his senses, he can get nothing even if he sits in meditation for eight hours every day.

(Baba Sawan Singh)
Rationalizations enter the mind - perhaps the thought:  
“Won’t God be just as pleased with me if I live a good, moral life?  
Must I give up everything human - everything normal,  
and be left in the end with, perhaps, nothing?”  
(Yogananda)

Change, even change for the better, is often approached with apprehension.  
In giving up something people think, “Will I be left with - nothing?”  
It takes courage to renounce the known for the unknown.  
It is not easy even to renounce a familiar pain for an unknown,  
and therefore uncertain, happiness.  
(Yogananda)

In the quest for Divine Bliss, there lingers subconsciously in the mind a  
certain apprehension: the fear of bereavement, of losing one’s old  
associations and familiar sense enjoyments; most of all,  
of losing one’s own self-identity.  
(Yogananda)
All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another.

(Anatole France)

Even though we know that the bondage of the mind is the cause of suffering, somehow we don’t want to become free from its clutches, because our mental fantasies, ideas, and concepts have created our life. When the time comes to free ourselves from these things, we feel we are going to flounder, we feel we will lose the reality that we have known for so long and have grown so accustomed to. We get scared, and even though we know the bondage of the mind creates so much suffering, we don’t want to be free of it.

(Gurumayi)

I was held back by mere trifles, the most paltry inanities, all my old attachments. They plucked at my garments of flesh and whispered: “Are you going to dismiss us? From this moment we shall never be with you again, for ever and ever. From this moment you will never again be allowed to do this thing, or that, for evermore.”

(Saint Augustine)
I was swept up to Thee by Thy beauty, and torn away from Thee by my own weight.
(Saint Augustine)

Urged by desire, I wandered in the streets of good and evil. I gained nothing except feeding the fire of desire. As long as in me remains the breath of life, help me, for Thou alone can hear my prayer.
(Ansari of Herat)

Ramakrishna

If you spent one-tenth of the time you devoted to distractions like chasing women or making money to spiritual practice, you would be enlightened in a few years.
(Ramakrishna to a disciple)
The road to pleasure is downhill and very easy, so that one does not walk but is dragged along; the way of self-control is uphill, toilsome no doubt, but exceedingly profitable.

(Philo)

So did my two wills, one new, the other old, one spiritual, the other carnal, fight within me and by their discord undo my soul.

(Saint Augustine)

It is easy to keep things at a distance; it is hard to be naturally beyond them.

(Bunan)

The disciple does not abstain from the things which he has been told to, but instead he blames the Master for not getting any progress.

(Swami Ji)
No one can be enlightened unless he be first cleansed or purified and stripped.
(Theologia Germanica)

Some there are that for all their effort have not attained the Vision… They have received the authentic Light, their soul has gleamed as they have drawn near, but they come with a load on their shoulders which holds them back from the place of Vision. They have not ascended in the pure integrity of their being, but are burdened with that which keeps them apart. They are not yet made one within.
(Plotinus)

During eight and twenty years of prayer, I spent more than eighteen in that strife and contention which arose out of my attempt to reconcile God and the world.
(Saint Teresa of Avila)

The important thing is this: to be ready at any moment to sacrifice what you are for what you could become.
(Charles Dubois)

To the true lover of the Absolute, purgation no less than illumination is a privilege, a dreadful joy.
(Evelyn Underhill)

The only worthwhile accomplishments are not those we achieve outwardly but the victories we win over ourselves.
(Yogananda)
We must be willing to get rid of the life we’ve planned, so as to have the life that is awaiting us… The old skin has to be shed before the new one is to come.
(Joseph Campbell)

What is the use of going over the old track again? You must make tracks into the unknown.
(Henry David Thoreau)

Because of your love I have broken with my past.
(Rumi)

The desire to change the direction of your life is one of the surest signs of grace…For a while you may not know the direction in which to go. But you will know without doubt that the direction you have been going in is wrong.
(Eknath Easwaran)
So long as we do not sacrifice that to which we are most attached, at the altar of God’s Love, we cannot obtain Salvation. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

Anyone who does not give up all he has can not be my disciple. (Into Great Silence)

Find for yourself what habits are obstacles in the way of truth; get rid of them by and by, and fill their place with good ones. (Baba Sawan Singh)

When you realize that something is unwholesome and bad for you, give it up. And when you realize that something is wholesome and good for you, do it. (Buddha)

Abstinence is easier than moderation. (Saint Augustine)

My foes - desire, hatred, and their kindred - are without hands, without feet. They are neither cunning nor valiant. How do they enslave me? They dwell in my spirit, and there at their ease they smite me. I will never turn back from fighting them. I make war on them all. (Shantideva)

The intelligent desire self-control; children want candy! (Rumi)
Offer unto me that which is very dear to thee – which thou holdest most covetable. Infinite are the results of such an offering.
(Krishna)

We will do many things for those whom we love which we would not ordinarily do - which we would not ordinarily have the strength of mind and power to do. How many habits have we been able to break through love, which we would never have had the strength to break without love?
(Meher Baba)

Meher Baba

O Winebringer, bring me some wine, for I am surely mad and need Your cure if I am to give up all feasting and happiness for You!
(Hafiz)
I once had a thousand desires, but in my one desire to know You all else melted away.

(Rumi)

In order to overcome our desires and to renounce all those things, our love and inclination for which are wont so to inflame the will that it delights therein, we require a more ardent fire and a nobler love—that of the Bridegroom. Finding her delight and strength in Him, the soul gains the vigor and confidence which enable her easily to abandon all other affections. It was necessary, in her struggle with the attractive force of her sensual desires, not only to have this love for the Bridegroom, but also to be filled with a burning fervor, full of anguish...if our spiritual nature were not on fire with other and nobler passions we should never cast off the yoke of the senses, nor be able to enter on their night, neither should we have the courage to remain in the darkness of all things, and in denial of every desire.

(Saint John of the Cross)

When will you find God? When all your desires for other things are finished. When you realize that the only thing worth having is Him, when every thought, every feeling is drenched with the love of God.

(Yogananda)
Brother, stand the pain! Escape the poison of your impulses!
(Rumi)

Without suffering the pain of self-restraint, no recompense can follow.
(Rumi)

Know that every bad habit is a thorn bush. After all, many is the time its thorns have pierced your feet.
(Rumi)

We have to suffer to reshape ourselves, to destroy the old and forge the new.
(Sant Kirpal Singh)

However harsh its form, however painful the activities to which it spurs him, the mystic recognizes in this breakup of his old universe an essential part of the Great Work.
(Evelyn Underhill)

…Birth pangs must be endured in the spiritual as well as in the material world: adequate training must always hurt the athlete. Hence the mystics’ quest of the Absolute drives them to an eager and heroic union with the reality of suffering, as well as with the reality of joy.
(Evelyn Underhill)

The mystics have a profound conviction that Creation, Becoming, Transcendence, is a painful process at the best.
(Evelyn Underhill)
The object of this self-discipline is, like the object of all purgation, freedom: freedom from the fetters of the senses, the “remora of desire,” from the results of environment and worldly education, from pride and prejudice, preferences and distaste: from selfhood in every form.

(Evelyn Underhill)

Make up your mind whether you would like to conform to the dictates of your mind or to the commandments of the Master. The choice lies in your own hands; you are free to choose; no one else can make the choice for you.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

Beware! Don’t allow yourself to do what you know is wrong, relying on the thought, “Later I will repent and ask God’s forgiveness.”

(Rumi)

Try to realize, and truly realize, that what stands between you and a different life are matters of responsible choice.

(Gary Zukav)

As you choose to empower yourself, the temptations that you challenge will surface again and again. Each time that you challenge it, you gain power and it loses power.

(Gary Zukav)

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

(Saint Paul)
We must always change, renew, rejuvenate ourselves; otherwise, we harden.
(Johann Goethe)

You are not here to change the world, the world is here to change you.
(Shantidasa)

To know what is right and not to do it is the worst cowardice.
(Confucius)

How much better to pursue a straight course and eventually reach that destination where the things that are pleasant and the things that are honorable finally become, for you, the same.
(Seneca)
To know and yet not to do is in fact not to know.
(Wang Yang Ming)

Consciousness means freedom from attachment.
You realize that the only thing you have to do is to keep yourself really straight, and then do whatever it is you do.
(Baba Ram Das)

I persist on praising not the life I lead, but that which I ought to lead.
I follow it at a mighty distance, crawling.
(Seneca)

Don’t allow your animal nature to rule your reason.
(Rumi)

Life is a campaign against foes, it is a battle with obstacles, temptations, hardships and limitations. These foes are within man and so the battle has to be incessant and perpetual.
(Sathya Sai Baba)

Wisdom begins with sacrifice of immediate pleasures for long-range purposes.
(Zen Soup)
If you can disentangle yourself from your selfish self all heavenly spirits will stand ready to serve you. If you can finally hunt down your own beastly self you have the right to claim Solomon’s kingdom. You are that blessed soul who belongs to the garden of paradise! Is it fair to let yourself fall apart in a shattered house? You are the bird of happiness in the magic of existence! What a pity when you let yourself be chained and caged. But if you can break free from this dark prison named body soon you will see you are the sage and the fountain of life!

(Rumi)

Time is a factory where everyone slaves away, earning enough love to break their own chains.

(Hafiz)

The path of the Masters is diametrically opposed to the path which the learned and the public follow.

(Baba Sawan Singh)
To become spiritual, you must die to self, and come alive in the Lord. Only then will the mysteries of God fall from your lips. To die to self through self-discipline causes suffering but brings you everlasting life. (Rumi)

Discipline is a difficult word for most of us. It conjures up images of somebody standing over you with a stick, telling you that you are wrong. But self-discipline is different. It’s the skill of seeing through the hollow shouting of your own impulses and piercing their secret. They have no power over you. It’s all a show, a deception. Your urges scream and bluster at you; they cajole; they coax; they threaten; but they really carry no stick at all. You give in out of habit. You give in because you never really bother to look beyond the threat. It is all empty back there. There is only one way to learn this lesson though. The words on this page won’t do it. But look within and watch the stuff coming up - restlessness, anxiety, impatience, pain - just watch it come up and don’t get involved. Much to your surprise, it will simply go away. It rises, it passes away. As simple as that.

There is another word for self-discipline. It is patience. (Henepola Gunaratana)

Fiery lust is not diminished by indulging it, but inevitably by leaving it ungratified. As long as you are laying logs on the fire, the fire will burn. When you withhold the wood, the fire dies, and God carries the water! (Rumi)

You’re cheating on God. If all you want is your own way, flirting with the world every chance you get, you end up enemies of God and His Way. (Saint James)
The process of self-purification is not the work of a moment, nor of a few months but of years - nay, extending over a series of lives. The later a man begins the living of a higher life, the longer must be his period of probation, for he has to undo the effects of a long number of years spent in objects diametrically opposed to the real goal. The more strenuous his efforts and the brighter the results of his work, the nearer he comes to the threshold. If his aspiration is genuine - a settled conviction and not a sentimental flash of the moment - he transfers from one body to another the determination which finally leads him to the attainment of his desire.

(letters from the Masters of Wisdom)

On the plane of outer action, it does not base itself on a dry and rigid discipline that is often laden with the consequences of psychological repression. It holds that some discipline is necessary, but adds that it must ultimately be inspired by inner spiritual experience and be a matter of spontaneous living, and not of rigorous asceticism and a too deliberate self-abnegation. The seeker must strive toward a state of equipoise and must therefore cultivate the virtue of moderation in thought and deed. The integration he thereby achieves enables him to gain greater concentration, and so higher inner experience, and this inner experience must in turn have repercussions on outer thoughts and action. The relationship of ethical living to inner experiences is a reciprocal one; each enlivens and gives meaning to the other, and one without the other is like a bird with a single wing. How can the spirit be brought to perfect one-pointedness without the purity of mind and body, and how can the soul transcend all human attachments and imperfections without centering itself in the love of the Divine?

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

People fancy they are enjoying themselves, but they are really tearing out their wings for the sake of an illusion.

(Rumi)
An intending disciple said to Dhu-L-Nun, the Egyptian mystic: “Above everything in this world I wish to enroll in the Path of Truth.” Dhu-L-Nun told him: “You can accompany our caravan only if you first accept two things. One is that you will have to do things which you do not want to do. The other is that you will not be permitted to do things which you desire to do. It is ‘wanting’ which stands between man and the Path of Truth.”

If you really want to rid yourself of present bad habits you have no greater recourse than meditation. Every time you meditate deeply on God, beneficial changes take place in the patterns of your brain. (Yogananda)

When you come in contact with Light and Sound Power within, you have not to adopt any virtues, but everything, all virtues, will come within you of themselves. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

Through the practice of listening to this Music, all sins, impurities and afflictions are removed… (Sant Kirpal Singh)
The result of contacting that eternal Sound or Music of the Spheres is that you become more attached to that higher bliss than to the outside; then you are in the world and yet out of it. This is the first result. Passions do not assail you, because you have more bliss inside: your attention is always drawn by that higher power within you.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

The Path in a Few Words

The goal of union with God can never be achieved by negation. We must always set before the mind something which has a greater power of attraction. When the attraction for the Master becomes dominant in one’s life, then all lower attractions cease. This is the end of desire and the beginning of immortality.

At first we have to content ourselves solely with controlling desires; but controlling and destroying are two very different things. We may refuse to yield to the pull of desire and go on doing what we know is best. This is temporary mastery. Even if we cannot destroy it at first, we can subdue it, hold it in check and refuse its demands. Then, by centering our attention upon that which is within us, following the Master to those higher and more attractive worlds, there we contact that life stream in its fullness and its maximum power. When that is consciously entered, when we hear its heavenly music and feel its overwhelming attraction, then we automatically forget all else. That current absorbs our entire being.

To help us up to that point we have the Master. We see Him; we learn to love Him, we come to delight in following Him. As the love for the Master grows, the pull of worldly attractions slackens, until it is no longer difficult to deny all lower desires and follow the Master to the inner regions. There the great life stream is contacted, the soul is merged into it, and liberation is then accomplished.

(Julian Johnson)
Each effort to stand brings first a glorious sense of growth, and then a fall: each fall means another struggle to obtain the difficult balance which comes when infancy is past. There are many eager trials, many hopes, many disappointments. At last, as it seems suddenly, the moment comes: tottering is over, the muscles have learnt their lesson, they adjust themselves automatically, and the new self suddenly finds itself—it knows not how—standing upright and secure. That is the moment which marks the boundary between the purgative and the illuminative states.

(Evelyn Underhill)

When the fruit grows, the petals drop off themselves. So when divinity in you increases, the weakness of humanity will vanish.

(Ramakrishna)

I know there is a gold mine in you, when you find it the wonderment of the earth’s gifts you will lay aside as naturally as does a child a doll.

(Rumi)

With initiation and spiritual practice, one gradually becomes aware of his shortcomings and tries to weed them out; and the more he purifies himself, the more he grows into Divine Life.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)
There is no specific time limit for this second stage (man-making). It all depends upon the disciple’s aptitude for self-discipline, obedience to the commandments of the Master, and developing a love for Him.
(Sant Kirpal Singh)

May your soul be happy; journey joyfully.
(Rumi)

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