

Habits are formed by training the mind in a certain course of action.¹ The human mind will have action. If it is not active in the right direction, it will be active in the wrong.²

This simple principle if understood and wisely appreciated is one of the keys to a changed life. Mental activity is the well spring of actions. Repeated actions form habits, and habits form character. It is character which decides one’s eternal destiny. The ability to enjoy heaven and whether or not a person can be trusted in heaven will depend upon the settled, established state of

his or her thoughts and feelings at the end of that person’s life. Give careful attention to the quantity activity you provide for your mind and to the quality of activity that you allow your mind to participate in. It is shaping your character and determining your destiny.

PRINCIPLE

THE MIND MUST WORK OR IT WILL DWINDLE. IT WILL STARVE UNLESS IT HAS FRESH SUBJECTS TO THINK UPON. UNLESS IT IS MADE TO THINK HARD IT WILL SURELY LOSE ITS POWER OF THINKING.³ THE MIND GAINS STRENGTH, BREADTH, AND ACUTENESS BY ACTIVITY.⁴

THE MENTAL FACULTIES MUST BE CONSTANTLY EXPANDED BY EXERCISE, THAT THEIR HIGHEST USEFULNESS MAY BE DEVELOPED.⁵

WHERE THERE IS NO PURPOSE, THERE IS A DISPOSITION TO INDOLENCE, BUT WHERE THERE IS A SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT OBJECT IN VIEW, ALL THE POWERS OF THE MIND WILL COME INTO SPONTANEOUS ACTIVITY.⁶

THE MIND LEFT TO ITSELF, UNCULTIVATED, IS GENERALLY LOW, SENSUAL, AND CORRUPT.⁷ THE MIND, WHEN NOT PROPERLY OCCUPIED, DWELLS UPON IMPROPER THINGS.⁸

UNLESS THE MIND IS CONTINUALLY DISCIPLINED BY THOROUGH WORK IN INVESTIGATING LINES OF TRUTH, IT WILL BE CONTROLLED BY SLOTHFUL HABITS, AND DO BUT THE MOST SUPERFICIAL WORK.⁹

IMPORTANCE

Tells why the mind must work and be made to think. Tells how strength of mind is acquired.

Tells why the mental faculties must be exercised.

Tells why the mind must have purpose and sufficiently important objects in view

Tells why the mind should not be left uncultivated and why it should be occupied with proper things.

Tells why the mind must be disciplined to investigate lines of truth.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE LAW OF MENTAL ACTIVITY

IF THE MIND IS HABITUALLY GIVEN DIFFICULT TASKS,
IT ACQUIRES EFFICIENCY AND POWER.¹⁰

THROUGH CONTINUED EXERCISE, THE MIND WILL BECOME STRONG TO BATTLE WITH
INTERNAL FOES, AND TO SUBDUE SELF, UNTIL THERE IS
A TRANSFORMATION OF THE MIND.¹¹

THE ELECTRIC POWER OF THE BRAIN, PROMOTED BY MENTAL ACTIVITY, VITALIZES THE
WHOLE SYSTEM, AND IS THUS AN INVALUABLE AID IN RESISTING DISEASE.¹²

SUMMARY THOUGHT: MENTAL ACTIVITY LEADS TO CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

UN-CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER - Developed by intentionally viewing, hearing or thinking about killing, adultery, stealing, covetousness, lying, swearing, dishonor of parents, self-worship, idol worship or dishonor to God

CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER - Developed by intentionally viewing hearing or thinking about whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things [are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; any virtue, and anything worth genuine praise.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it [are] the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23

Let the words of my mouth, *and the meditation of my heart*, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. Psalms 19:14

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.
1 Timothy 4:15

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies [are] **my meditation**. Psalms 119:99

SOP REFERENCES:

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| 1. {Ms 15, 1888} | 6. {2T 429.1} | 11. {RH, August 17, 1886 par. 5} |
| 2. {CE 17.2} | 7. {ST, April 17, 1884 par. 6} | 12. {Ed 197.2} |
| 3. --Letter 33, Feb. 27, 1886 | 8. {1T 395.2} | |
| 4. {RH, December 8, 1885 par. 4} | 9. {SSW, August 1, 1892 par. 2} | |
| 5. {RH, October 22, 1889 par. 3} | 10. {ST, April 1, 1897 par. 7} | |