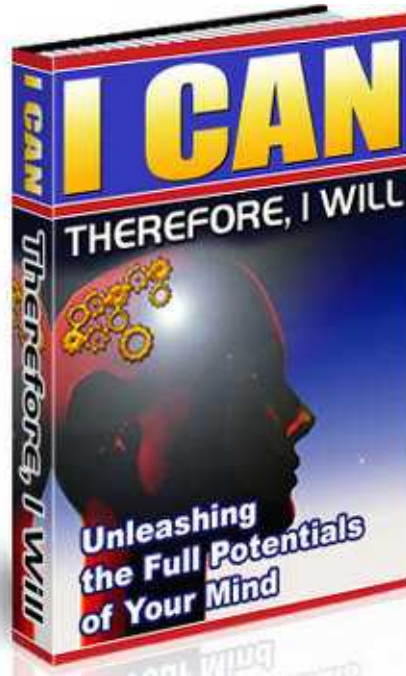


I Can. Therefore, I Will

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Introduction

Before we begin, let me first ask you a simple question. Don't worry. This won't bend your mind nor twist your brain. It's a no-brainer, actually. Ok, here goes: What do Superman, Spiderman, Batman, the X-men, and the Incredible Hulk have in common? See, it's easy, right? Yes, they all have supernatural powers – special abilities that make them supreme, invincible and indestructible, and which cause them to be recognized as superheroes. They use these special powers to do good things to people and defeat evil entities. But, unfortunately, they are not real. They are only works of man's creative imagination. They don't exist in the real world. That's why, unlike in comic books and movies, when our city is in trouble, there is no superhero to call to save the day. It really seems to be too good to be true, isn't it?

Now, let us try to add another one in the list; this time, a real person, say you, me, your teacher, my next-door neighbor, or simply anyone who exists in this world. The list would now be like this: Superman, Spiderman, Batman, the X-men, the Incredible Hulk, and you. Again, same question: What could be the common factor among those in the list? Remember, it includes you now. So before answering, you might ask another question first. Is there really something we all possess? Indeed, there is. Even changing the last entry to me, your teacher, my next-door neighbor, or whoever real person you may think of, still there will always be something common between a superhero

and a real person like you and me, and that is power.

Ever envied a superhero for having supernatural powers? I think we all have. Just imagine how cool and fascinating it would be to become invisible even for just a minute or two, to fly across mountains and seas, to climb tall buildings and walls, to create fire or ice depending on what the situation needs, or to simply have that special physical strength to be able to do things that normal people can't do. But are these kinds of power only necessary to make us superior over others? As real people in the real world, we can never possess any of these supernatural physical powers. What we have is the power to mold our personality, to shape our future, to create our destiny, and to determine who and what we are – a power greater than any other supernatural powers, a power that builds reality and not mere imagination, a power which everyone possesses and can make him a hero in his own ways. This is the power of the mind.

Funny how we tend to be so addicted in looking outside ourselves that we have almost totally lost access to our inner being. We are so afraid to look inward because we might not be happy with what we could see. We make our lives so hectic that we eliminate the slightest risk of looking into ourselves. Therefore, we settle on observing things outside of our own. We make comparisons, judgments, and evaluations which only lead us in concluding and, worse, accepting the fact that we are inferior among others.

What we don't know is that we have the power to reverse what the outside world makes us believe in. If it says that we are wrong, we have the power to make us right. If it says we are losers, we have the power to be winners. If it says we are non-existent, we have the power to make everyone see that we are alive and surviving. And that is how the power of our mind works – making us more supreme, invincible, and indestructible than any other superhero is.

If the world says you can't, say “I can. Therefore, I will.”

CHAPTER 1

The Nature of the Human Mind

No species possesses a purpose beyond the imperatives created by genetic history...

The human mind is a device for survival and reproduction, and reason is just one of its various techniques.

- Edward O. Wilson (1929-)

On Earth, man occupies a peculiar position that sets him apart from all other entities in our planet. While all the other things – animate or inanimate, living or non-living – behave according to regular patterns to balance nature, man seems to enjoy – within definite limits – a small amount of freedom. Man controls his way of living, speaks his own language, perceives and learns great amount of knowledge, manages his emotions, and deals properly with problems he faces. All of which is unique to man only. There is, in fact, within the infinite expanse of the universe a small field in which man's conscious conduct can change the course of events.

It is this fact that causes man to distinguish between an external world subject to unstoppable and endless necessity, and his human faculty of thinking, cognizing, and acting. In Philosophy, mind or reason is contrasted with matter, something that is extended in space and persists through time. Fully aware of

the fact that his own body is subject to the same forces that determine all other things and beings, man attributes his ability to think, to will and to act to an invisible and intangible, yet powerful, factor he calls his mind.

The mind, including the processes it carries out such as thinking, learning, memorizing, remembering, and the likes, is one characteristic that distinguishes man from any other being in the world. The nature of the human mind is like that of a mirror; having different functions and features: (a) open and vast, (b) reflects in full and precise details, (c) unbiased towards any impression, (d) distinguishes clearly, and (e) potential for having everything already accomplished.

Open and Vast

Martin H. Fischer (1879-1962), a German-born U.S. physician and author, quoted “All the world is a laboratory to the inquiring mind.” Isn’t it ironic how small the human brain where mind processes undergo is, and yet it encloses matters in as huge as the universe? That’s how open and vast the mind can be. It can consist of things as trivial as the number of moles you have in your body, or as essential as how many dosages of cough syrup you need to take in when you are sick. It can create illusion or reality, bring delight or sadness, trigger conflict or peace, and generate love or hatred. And most importantly, it can make you, by influencing you how to be the best of who

you are, or break you, by covering you with all the fears, embarrassment, and shame you least need in going through everyday.

The exposure of the mind to practically ‘anything under the sun’ keeps it from hiding any secrets the world unfolds from us. But again, all information that we can easily gather from outside is not always being marked off by the society – which is good and which is bad, which is right and which is wrong, or which is divine and which is evil. Therefore, the mind, as an all-encompassing system, accesses everything and yet restricts us from nothing. Indeed, we have to agree with Fischer that the world is just a laboratory of the inquiring mind. A gigantic world of mind exists to which we are almost totally unexposed. This whole world is made by the mind. Our minds made this up and put these things together. Every bolt and nut was put in by one after the other’s mind. This whole world is mind’s world – the product of mind.

Reflects in Full and Precise Details

In her outstanding book, *Choose the Happiness Habit*, Pam Golden writes: "Take the story of two brothers who are twins. One grows up to be an alcoholic bum. The other becomes an extremely successful businessman. When the alcoholic is asked why he became a drunk, he replies, ‘My father was a drunk.’ When the successful businessman is asked why he became successful, he says, ‘My father was a drunk.’ Same background. Same

upbringing. Different choices."

The brothers chose different thoughts regarding the identical experience they've been in. One took the fact that their father was a drunk as an example for him to imitate; thus, making him one too. In contrast, the other brother thought the same idea as something not to be mimicked, making him doing the opposite thing until he became successful. Those thoughts over the years shaped the circumstances where they are now. Whatever viewpoint they had about the situation was reflected on how they are doing now.

In other words, whatever there is in our mind can be fully and precisely reflected through our actions. It is due to the process where thinking creates images in our mind. These images, in turn, will control feelings like joy or sadness. Such feelings will cause us to do actions on how we would deal with each one of them. And lastly, these actions shall create results. Therefore, the mind, particularly thinking, implies reflection and creation of results. This is simplified through the very common cliché "You are what you think of."

Unbiased towards any Impression

Whenever we look at the outside world, or just any of the things it consists of, we tend to have a very strong impression of its substantiality. What we probably don't realize is that the strong impression is merely our own mind's

interpretation of what it sees. We think that the strong, solid reality really exists outside, and when we look within ourselves, perhaps we feel empty. This is a common misconception among people. The wrong mental attitude that fails to realize that the strong impression that appears to truly exist outside of us is actually projected by our own mind. Everything we experience – feelings, sensations, even shapes and colors – comes from our minds.

To illustrate the point clearly, imagine one morning you woke up with a foggy mind and vague visual of the day ahead. Isn't it that the world around you also appears to be dark and foggy, too? On the other hand, when the world seems beautiful and light one day, you should understand that basically, those impressions are coming from your own mind, rather than from changes in the external environment. Therefore, instead of misinterpreting whatever you experience in life through judgmental wrong conceptions, you should realize that it's not outer reality but only mind.

For example, when everybody in a classroom looks at a single object, say, the teacher, each of the students has a particularly different notion on him, even though, simultaneously, they are all looking at the same thing, or person for that matter. These different experiences don't come from the teacher. They come from the students' minds. Although they all see the same face, the same body, and the same clothes, their interpretations are still superficial. Analyzing deeply, the way they perceive him and the way they feel about him, is

individual and different – all of which came from the mind of the students and not from the physical manifestation of the teacher.

This sort of equalizing wisdom of the mind is not likely to make any unfair preference on any impressions made. It only affirms that every interpretations made on a subject in the outside world is not a fact, but an idea of the mind.

Distinguishes Clearly

What we see is not always what we get. There are certain things in this world in which their physical appearance is far different from their real attributes. Using only our 5 bodily senses, we may readily accept what we see, hear, smell, taste, and feel even if it refutes reality. But with the mind, it helps us distinguish clearly what the entity really is; thus, helping us too in making wise decisions.

Take for example this situation: you overheard a person say that it will rain this afternoon. Without thinking and analyzing the circumstances, you are going to believe it unhesitatingly. You may even cancel your plans in going out in order to avoid the hassle it will bring. In other words, without any basis other than some opinion of a person you don't even know, you accept the idea as true. And so, you make adjustments.

Using the mind, we can always not believe what we sense. This is if, not only they contradict with the observations, analyses and evaluations we made with them, but also they disprove a general truth. In the situation above, the mind can intervene in several manners – observing if the clouds are darker than usual, checking the weather news in the TV or newspaper for possible pouring of rain, etc – so as not to immediately accept the idea that it is going to rain. For instance, having observed the outside climate, you found out that the sun is high and the clouds are clear. Or, having checked the weather news, you knew that there will be no rain during the day. Therefore, you may now conclude that it will not going to rain, and that you don't have to cancel any plans you have.

Hence, what our five senses cannot perform well, the mind does.

Potential for Having Everything Already Accomplished

Funny how we have always been told, at least once in our life, to “put your mind in what you're doing” whether it would be studying, working, cooking, gardening, or simply reading. What could be the reason behind that? Well, these people – our parents, teachers, guardians, bosses, and friends to name some – are obviously concerned in our welfare that they want us to concentrate and work hard in whatever it is that we are performing. In doing so, we can easily accomplish our goals and achieve success.

There is a big difference in doing a job with the body and doing a job with the mind. In the former, one uses his hands and other parts of his body in performing a certain task which eventually will get tired and should be put to rest. Since the human body is subject to weaknesses and is limited in terms of functions, abuse of it may cause fatigue and other physical incapacities. Thus, it may affect the execution and termination of a task. On the other hand, in doing a job mainly with the mind, one does not leave all the work with the body. He thinks of ways on how to minimize the possible physical activities needed, to lessen the amount of time required, and to get the most out of the job being done. In this way, the task is most likely to be accomplished in just a little time, with the least effort but with the best result. (...)

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