

KATHERINE TINGLEY *Wisdom of the Heart pp. 51-57*

**TO THE STUDENT:
KEYNOTES ON THE PATH 1**

First Thoughts Upon Waking

When rising in the morning our first thought shall be, I shall make the day one of sunshine. I shall put into each duty no matter how small unselfish thought.

Aim to conduct your life as though each moment were the most precious in eternity, keeping an endless sacred festival in your heart and living all the year in the joy of service to humanity.

No day is commonplace if only you have eyes to see its splendor. With every nightfall a door is closed for the soul. Other lives and myriads of days will come to you, but never just the day that is ending, never that environment, those moments, those opportunities. They are gone, and long cycles of effort must be traversed before what they offered can return.

This very day you can make or mar your lives, and render them a blessing or a blasphemy. You can fill all the hours of it with such powerful affirmation of your hopes that they will become the world's hopes and the illumination of all life. No duty can come to you but will bring the possibility of doing kingly service.

Hence the importance of first thoughts upon waking. If one rises in the morning in a mood through which the Soul can express itself, one is at peace during the whole day. Remember how great is the creative power of the imagination. Build up with it, upon waking, a picture of hope and joy. Lay aside all that belongs to the lower self, and going up into the temple of the heart, dedicate the day to self-purification. Do this and you invite an invasion of the gods. But rise with the brain-mind dominant, and a day of perplexing difficulties awaits you.

Practical Steps on the Way

Electing difficult things while they are easy, and managing great things in their beginnings — this is the way, as the sages of antiquity have taught. The wise man takes account of small things and so never has any difficulty.

Do not worry; do not fear; do not think about results. Set plans come from the brain-mind, and in creative work that cannot be allowed to rule. There is a method of fashioning the life so that this will not be; then the brain-mind will keep its place as the servant, not the tormentor of the soul. It is something to think about when you get up in the morning and when you retire at night. It is very close to what I mean when I speak to you of trust in the Higher Law.

System, self-discipline, orderly habits: these are the things that set the soul free and allow the mind to gather such breadth from its experiences that it comes to see itself a factor in the infinite harmony of law-governed manifested being. We have to learn to conserve our energies if we are to do our duty by the world.

How much we waste in a day for lack of this knowledge! How we talk ourselves to death on trifles, and die of chattering long before our time! What tearings, worryings, and confusion the poor brain-mind suffers where there has been no self-training in disciplined methods of thought!

Self-Directed Effort

There must be shadows, but we have the power to dispel them. When discouragement comes, and doubt and lack of faith, that is the time to bring imagination into play, to invoke the power of silence, to dig into the inner depths of one's own nature and discover there the beauty and grandeur of life, the glory of the Law. Had we no difficulties we should make no effort. Had we no temptations there would be no need for self-control. Had we no trials there would be nothing to call forth our patience and trust. Trust in what? In those universal Divine Laws that hold our life in their keeping. They are there, and all existence is governed by them. And therefore those who base their living on law and order are on the path of progress whether they know it or not; and those who live without discipline are retrogressing.

The secret of human life in its fulness is self-directed effort. Let man take the first step boldly in honest self-examination, with a daring that stops before nothing that may impede his path, and he will find very soon that he has the key to wisdom and to the power which redeems. Discovered through his own efforts, by the law of self-directed evolution, this key will open before him the chambers of the Self.

You ask, If I am divine by nature, why have I so many efforts to make, and so often unsuccessfully? The answer is that it is a part of the Scheme of Life. We are born into this world that we may grasp our opportunities to assert the nobler side of our consciousness. It is the law that man shall ever be changing, ever growing. The Soul's designs and the processes of its evolution move him, interiorly and otherwise, from condition to condition. The whole purpose of life is change, growth.

Some are burdened and aged by the consciousness of their failings. To give way thus is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Remember that two things cannot occupy the same place at the same time; and that of the two Companions, either the angel or the demon must win; they cannot both be in possession. There is great danger for the one who in working towards his Higher Nature permits himself to dwell too long upon his failings. Indeed, to think of them at all is a mistake, and a sign that the courage is weakening.

The Middle Way

One of the greatest obstacles on the upward path is extremism: where the brain-mind has fashioned the way and the method and worked out its comparisons and put forward its severe criticisms of life. In such cases there is always a danger of the dogmatic attitude, and of finding oneself in a rut instead of swinging far out into the universal thought and moving forward along the broad road of spiritual effort. The strain that I know exists upon the body and mind of the extremist is terrible. Though no motive may be behind to do wrong or get away from the true, where there is that intense impulse to be doing something — to be getting a result without learning how, or bringing about some quick action contrary to one's better judgment — there at once the whole make up begins to deteriorate; and in weeks perhaps, or months, something may happen that will cause its complete undoing. This extremism becomes in a time a mania, a kind of insanity, and the brightest minds are often caught in the reaction.

Safety lies in keeping to middle lines. Do not look for phenomenal occurrences, nor expect any startling manifestation through or for yourself. The Divine Laws do not work that way, but in silence in the inmost part of our being. One must not take a yardstick to measure one's spiritual advancement. And remember that if you drop a single note in a melody the whole

piece is spoiled. And so it is in our lives, the perfect harmony cannot exist if a false note is struck anywhere.

Rest within yourself. Do not depend upon another for your happiness. The moving away from the central source of one's inner life and from the duties near at hand has prevented spiritual growth in thousands, and wrecked thousands of lives. It is by endeavoring to do the great things rather than the small that we fail to find and follow the Law and to realize that our hearts are pulsating every moment in harmony with the finer forces of Nature and the inexpressible vibrations of Divine Life. It is ignorance of these facts that causes so much unrest in the nature of man.

A new life must come to humanity, else it will surely go down in darkness. We must be patient in the knowledge that we have within ourselves divine potentialities, and that to serve is to do what our souls long to do, so that all mankind may have glimpses of the blue of the future, and out beyond the shadows and horrors of the present behold the morning-star of a brighter day arisen.

For we plow the way for the human race. We cannot move along this path by ourselves, nor advance alone towards the Great Peace. We may not rest in the joy of being blessed, but by our devotion must bless the world.

Last Thoughts Before Retiring

At night it is helpful to go over the day in thought. It is the old neophyte way. You will suffer in noting lapses and omissions; but if your motive is pure and selfish you will learn and pass on. And then will flash in upon you a sense of the nearness of the Higher Self, and ere you know it a new life will be born.

In sleep the soul is free, winging its way into new spaces, finer worlds of thought and feelings, evolving, growing, expanding. And it longs to carry you with it, the *you* beyond the prosaic life. The soul is within us — and yet it is not: there is a mystery here.

If you could only know what a companion the Higher Self can be! It is a Presence, a mystic Presence. The realization of it depends of course upon the degree of your evolution; but its companionship is so real, so wonderful, so royally supreme that once you have found it you never can lose it again. Just before retiring — that is the time.

We cannot reap the real benefit of sleep if we enter upon it negatively, in ignorance, carrying to bed with us our fretfulness and dislikes, despairs or hatreds. Let us end the day with more power of thought for self-conquest than we had at the beginning of the day. Let us close our eyes tonight with a clean conscience and with a feeling of generous love for all that breathes which is the best side of our natures. Let us seek more knowledge, more light, more strength in the silence of our last thoughts before retiring. To retire in the right spirit is to set aside the worries that have followed us during the day, to pass into sleep resting in the True, in a mood of utter trust in the wonderful Law and Mystery of Universal Life, and holding within a clearly defined aspiration for a better and sweeter tomorrow, and that we may wake fortified in the strength of the Soul's majesty.

Learn thus to conserve energy and the days and moments become ever more and more laden for you with beauty and meaning. At first all may be mystery and a conundrum; but hold the aspirations at heart and the great ideals ever before you, and the knowledge latent in you will

open to your search, and you will take your position, and find in due time the peace that brings with it perfect understanding. Remember that these minds of ours that do so much thinking and cross-thinking and twisted thinking and lamentable thinking sometimes are but instruments for the Soul, the Master of all Music, to play upon.

Do well the smallest duty, and when the day is done there will be no regrets, no time wasted, then joy will come.

Let us not forget that we are gathered together at Lomaland for the purpose of serving humanity and bringing to it the knowledge that it needs; that this is not commercial effort, nor simply an ordinary education effort, but that it is a spiritual effort in the highest sense and for that reason we must be spiritually endowed with those qualities that make for true nobility.

Think on these things in the silence. And remember that when a selfish or personal thought creeps in during silence, the door is shut and the Light cannot find its place; the soul is barred, and the day will bring little you that will satisfy the better side of your nature.