

Peace of Mind in Daily Life

By Remez Sasson

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One Free Chapter

Foreword

In a world where stress, strain, rush and restlessness abound, peace of mind is of paramount importance. It is a treasure that everyone desires, but only very few know how to gain it, and even fewer really do something to get it.

With all the advancement of science, no remedy has yet been found for lack of inner peace. Often, even when being in good financial condition and in good health, people have no peace of mind, which only proves that peace of mind does not depend on external conditions or on any scientific or technical progress. The solution has to come from within, not through external means.

It is not always possible to change external conditions, but you can certainly change your inner attitude and learn to stop allowing outside influences affect your moods and states of mind.

Peace of mind is not something to be found only on the Himalayas, by monks and hermits. It is attainable here and now, wherever you are, irrespective of your external circumstances, since peace of mind is an inner state, and is independent of circumstances and external conditions.

Peace of mind manifests when the incessant inner chatter of the mind slows down. When peace of mind appears, anxiety, stress, worries, fear, mental and emotional restlessness, nervousness and impatience disappear. It is a state of inner calmness, tranquility and serenity, which brings forth happiness, tolerance, inner poise, inner balance and self-control.

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“Peace of mind in daily life” will truly bring peace of mind into your daily life, if you read the book, think about what you read, and most important, follow and practice the advice, instructions and exercises.

Peace of mind is an acquired skill, which requires time, practice and perseverance to develop, just like any other skill. If you have the knowledge, desire, motivation, patience and perseverance, you are sure to attain at least some degree of inner peace.

Peace of mind will enable you to manifest calmness and tranquility in your daily life, and also in difficult and trying situations. It will allow you to display emotional and mental detachment whenever needed, and thereby avoid being too affected by other people’s words, feelings and behavior. It will also enable you to control your reactions and become a happy, patient, tolerant and open-minded human being.

Following and implementing the advice in this book, even for just a few minutes a day, will make a noticeable difference in your life, and you will soon become aware of positive inner changes within you. You will learn to free yourself from stress, strain, worries and fears, as well as be able to clear your mind from negative and useless thoughts.

The aim of this book is to help people overcome restlessness, anxiety, stress, worries, impatience and intolerance, and help them attain peace of mind. It contains information and advice, which I have learned and practiced, as well as information, advice, and techniques gained or developed through personal experience.

This book is a practical manual, with practical, working techniques, and is the product of many years of studying and practicing inner growth methods. It will take you through all the required steps to bring real peace of mind into your life.

I have written this book in the form of a conversation between a teacher and a pupil, which made it possible to pose questions the reader might ask, and answer them in a simple and easily understood language. This format has

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also made it possible to clarify, advise and instruct in a more personal way, as if the reader is actually in the presence of a teacher.

Both complete beginners and those well advanced will find this book informative and helpful, with plenty of useful and practical information, which will transform their life and help them gain peace mind. I hope and believe that earnest study of this book will bring the nectar of peace and happiness into your life, and into the lives of all the people who read the book and practice what it teaches.

Read and study each chapter before following the instructions or practicing the exercises. Don't skip from one chapter to another or try to practice anything, before the previous steps have been well practiced. This is a progressive method of training, which requires you to follow and practice each step, only after the previous one has been successfully accomplished. It is therefore most important that you practice the advice and exercises in the exact order they have been presented in the book.

You will find in this book everything you need to embark on the joyful and rewarding journey to lasting peace of mind. Apply the advice and follow the instructions, and you will enjoy the journey and be richly rewarded.

Don't wait for the perfect circumstances to start working on gaining peace of mind. Start here and now, regardless of the kind of life you are living, and irrespective of your circumstances. This might require some effort on your part, but it is a worthwhile project and the rewards are great.

Talking on the perfect circumstances, this book for example, was not written in a quiet and tranquil environment. I have written it at home, amid the usual hustle and bustle of daily tasks and chores, being married and having two children. I was able to shut down my inner ears and concentrate on writing, even if I had to get up now and then, take care of some task or chore and then go back to writing. Quite often, I used to get up very early in the morning, and sit down to write, while all the other members of the family were still sleeping.

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This shows that with a strong desire and determination, everything is possible.

I hope this book will bring peace of mind and happiness for everyone who reads and studies it, and will also bring peace and happiness into the world.

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Chapter 1

The chatter of the mind

The restless mind

Teacher: A young man approached his spiritual teacher and said: “I am weary of my restless thoughts and worries. They do not let me have one moment of rest. What can I do to attain peace of mind?”

The teacher looked at him and said: “Go to the river, sit on a rock, and for one hour watch the fish swimming in the water.”

The words of the teacher bewildered the young man and he asked: “Do you mean that I Just sit down and watch the fish swimming in the river?”

“Yes, watch the fish and how they move, but also be aware of your thoughts, sensations and surroundings. After you do that come back to me.”

The young man was a bit confused, but he obeyed the teacher’s instructions. He went to the nearby river, sat on a rock and looked at the fish swimming in the water. He watched them moving to and fro, swimming from one place to another, never standing still.

“They are always on the move, they make my head spin!” He said to himself.

After sitting by the river for some time, a revelation suddenly flashed through his mind and he shouted excitedly: “My mind and my thoughts are restless too, exactly like the flock of fish. This is probably what the teacher wanted me to understand.”

He continued watching the fish, becoming more and more acutely aware of the great similarity between the fish’s behavior and the behavior and his mind. The fish stayed for a little while in one spot, then abruptly moved elsewhere. So did his mind. It focused on one thought for a little while, then

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moved to another thought, and then again to another one, and so on and on, restlessly and ceaselessly.

“My mind and thoughts behave exactly like these restless fish,” he said to himself, “constantly jumping from one subject to another, restlessly and aimlessly.”

“When the fish do not move, something that hardly happens, there are no ripples and there is silence and peace in the water. So is my mind. If my thoughts and mental movements could stop, there would have been peace. The mental activity takes away the peace, just as the movements of the fish disturb the tranquility of the water.”

The young man became very fascinated by the way the fish moved, by the movement of the water, and by the silence in which the fish lived. His mind became so absorbed in what he was observing that he lost awareness of the passing time.

The next day, the young man returned to the teacher and enthusiastically recounted his experiences and revelation:

“I understand why you have sent me to the river to watch the fish. I have discovered that my thoughts behave exactly like the fish. Both are restless, never standing still. If I want to gain some inner peace, I need to learn to calm down the incessant and never ending chatter of my mind.”

The teacher smiled and said: “You have certainly got it. Thoughts, inner chatter, and external impressions coming through the five senses distract the attention of the mind, and put it in a state of continual movement. The constantly changing thoughts create ripples and waves in the mind, just like the fish that move to and fro create ripples and movement in the water.”

Pupil: This is so true! Fish stir the water and thoughts stir the mind.

Teacher: Exactly!

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Pupil: Thank you for this enlightening story, and for drawing my attention to the fact that the mind and the thoughts are always in constant activity.

Teacher: You are welcome.

Seeking peace of mind

Pupil: Can an average person, like me, who is constantly harassed by all kinds of problems and worries, attain peace of mind?

Teacher: Of course! Peace of mind is not the privilege of special people. On the contrary, any person who is earnest about attaining inner peace, and is willing to devote the necessary time and energy, can learn to reduce the restlessness of his mind and attain at least some measure of inner peace. Every earnest step taken in this direction, even the smallest one, will take you closer to inner peace.

Everyone desires freedom from worries, unpleasant thoughts, anxiety and the hustle and bustle of daily life, but too often, the solutions are sought through various external activities that might bring some temporary peace. Few know that true peace of mind comes from within, and is not dependent on outer conditions and situations.

Pupil: Yes, this is so true!

Teacher: Any activity that shifts the attention away from worries, anxiety and restless thoughts, brings some temporary inner relief and peace.

Tell me, why are you seeking peace of mind?

Pupil: I have got several good reasons for desiring it:

- I often find my mind jumping from one subject to another or thinking on irrelevant matters, not letting me concentrate or think clearly.

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- Worries and anxieties keep coming into my mind, by day and by night.
- Too often I find myself thinking over and over again on a past unpleasant event, reliving it in my mind, and experiencing all the unpleasantness that was associated with it.
- Unpleasant emotions and feelings often rise up, due to external situations or causes, arousing unrest and inner emotional storms.
- Worries, fears and negative thoughts often fill my mind, not giving me a moment of rest.
- Sometimes my thoughts and worries do not let me fall asleep, and when I do sleep, I do not sleep soundly enough because of them.
- There is an inner conversation and inner chatter inside my head that never seems to stop.

All this is tiring, straining and weakening and brings lack of peace and unhappiness. I believe that peace of mind will free me from all these disturbing and exhausting experiences.

Teacher: Everyone, in various degrees, experiences what you have described. The restlessness of the mind and the inner conversations are very common occurrences.

Closing the doors of the mind

Pupil: How do I overcome the restlessness of my mind and thoughts?

Teacher: I will answer this question through a simile. Imagine that all the doors and windows of your house are wide open, and a lot of people are entering inside freely, without asking for your permission. They occupy your

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home, take up your time, and sometimes even take away your possessions. Would you tolerate that?

Pupil: Absolutely not! It is an appalling thought.

Teacher: The mind is like your house. If its doors and windows are wide open, with nothing to sort or filter out the incoming thoughts, every passing thought can enter into your mind, dwell there and disturb and affect your behavior and actions. This is a state that shows lack of control over your mental house and over what goes inside it.

In such a condition, the mind lets words, ideas, suggestions and thoughts coming from the outside, from people, the media or from any other source, find free access into your mind.

Pupil: I have never looked at my mind in this way. It is a most disturbing thought to realize that my mind is wide open to every thought that passes by.

Teacher: For most people, this is how the mind functions. It is important to find the way to close the doors and windows of your mind and prevent stray, negative and futile thoughts from occupying your mind and robbing your time and energy.

In order to enjoy peace of mind, you need to be in control of the doors and windows of your mind. You need to be able to close them, and admit entrance only to the visitors of your choice.

Pupil: How do I do that?

Teacher: This is one of the main subjects our conversations. I shall explain what you need to do, as we progress along the road towards peace of mind.

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Temporary and constant peace of mind

Pupil: On several occasions I have experienced some brief moments of pleasant peace and calmness inside me, but they did not last long.

Teacher: What were you doing when that happened?

Pupil: Nothing special. This experience came about in different situations, such as while I was reading, walking in the street, having a shower or while looking at a beautiful landscape. I have never planned these experiences. They came unexpected, and for a short while my mind was calm, almost blank. It was a peculiar, but a wonderful feeling of freedom, lightness and happiness. These experiences lasted for a brief moment, and then disappeared.

Teacher: What disturbed the peace and caused it vanish?

Pupil: My attention moved towards thoughts on diverse matters and to the world around me.

Teacher: What kind of thoughts, and where did they come from?

Pupil: All kinds of thoughts about work, family, friends, health, tasks and responsibilities or thoughts relating to what was happening around me. These thoughts always come uninvited, as if from nowhere, and fill my mind.

Teacher: The constant and never-ending mental activity is a deeply imbedded habit. It is usually only on rare occasions that the mind becomes quiet.

There are certain places, situations and activities that have a calming effect on the mind. Looking at breathtaking landscape, reading an interesting story or engaging in interesting and absorbing activities tend to focus the mind on what one is doing, and prevent unrelated thoughts from entering the field of awareness. Interesting or awe-inspiring events also tend to still temporarily

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the movements of the mind, and this usually happens involuntarily and unintentionally.

Such moments of calmness and inner peace are pleasant, relieving and refreshing, but are temporary and dependent on external conditions. For true and lasting inner peace, the mind has to be taught to stay in this state for longer periods, irrespective of where one is or what one is doing.

Pupil: This is what I want to be able to do.

Teacher: The subconscious desire for inner peace is present in everyone, and often drives people to perform various actions and engage in a variety of activities, without their being aware of the fact that it is the desire for peace of mind that is behind these actions.

Pupil: Could you please clarify this point?

Teacher: Certainly. Look at yourself and at other people in various situations, and you will find out that unconsciously, everyone is seeking peace of mind. Here are some actual examples from daily life that would clarify this point:

- After a tiring activity, do you sometimes close your eyes and cup them with your palms? It is as if you are building a wall around you, to isolate yourself from your surroundings. This is done unconsciously, in order to relax both body and mind.
- Having a coffee break is considered as a sacred time to enjoy some moments of peace.
- Listening to relaxing music, reading an absorbing book or engaging in a hobby relax the mind.
- Sitting quietly in front of the TV and watching a program or a movie, take your mind miles away from your daily responsibilities and cares.

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- Cuddling in bed under the blanket is pleasant, and also a time of inner peace.
- People often take a walk in order to refresh the mind and the body.
- Taking a day off from work or going on a vacation are also actions that show the unconscious desire for peace.

These examples and similar ones describe periods of rest and timeout from work, chores and tasks, when one enjoys a certain amount of inner peace. These activities free the mind from the grip of its incessant thoughts, and help to shut down the doors and windows of the mind for a little while, allowing the mind to relax.

Everyone seeks freedom and alleviation from worries, fears, daily stress and nagging inner dialogues. The activities I have just mentioned bring some relief, but only for a short time, and then the mind returns to its habitual, restless activities. What we need is a method that brings stable and continuous state of inner peace, rather than some fleeting moments of peace.

Pupil: What you are saying is so true! I sometimes find myself taking part in one of the activities you have just mentioned, and they actually relax my mind for a little while. How do these activities bring inner peace?

Teacher: Being away from your ordinary environment or performing an activity associated with pleasure, especially if it involves the five senses, causes the mind to get absorbed in the action, and for a while it forgets all its usual thoughts and worries.

The mind resembles a very sophisticated kind of engine, but even such an engine has to stop working every now and then and rest. Constant activity, without rest, wears and tears it down. The mind requires periodical rest from its incessant inner chatter and thinking.

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Pupil: I completely agree with you. Sometimes, I suddenly feel that I am at the end of the rope, and if I don't take a break, even a small one, my mind would explode. That's how edgy I can become.

Teacher: You have to be careful not to reach high levels of tension and stress. Take a small break before the pressure rises too much, to let the steam go out.

Pupil: Thank you, I will take heed of your advice.

Teacher: The examples I have just mentioned bring short and temporary peace. The aim of our conversation is to learn how to enjoy longer periods of peace, whenever we need them, and then even reach the ability of enjoying a state of constant inner peace, irrespective of our outer conditions.

Pupil: What is constant inner peace?

Teacher: Being constantly in a state of inner peace. In this state, the mind acquires the habit of being naturally and habitually quiet and tranquil, without effort or the necessity of using external means or triggers to calm it down.

Pupil: Is it possible to attain such a state inner peace?

Teacher: Yes, it is possible to reach an inner state of peace, in which peace become natural and habitual, and can be experienced always and everywhere.

It is a state of mental and emotional tranquility, in which you experience freedom from the habitual compulsion of the mind to constantly think and blabber. Furthermore, this state also enables you to enjoy inner happiness and quietude, regardless of what is happening around you.

In order to attain peace of mind you need to train your mind. This has to be done, especially in the beginning, while being alone and undisturbed. A high level of inner peace would enable you to stay peaceful anywhere, anytime,

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and under all circumstances. You will be able to work and do whatever you please, and at the same time stay in a state of inner harmony, peace, tranquility and happiness.

Pupil: There are so many factors, circumstances and situations that bring restlessness, anxieties, worries and fears. How can one live in peace and happiness in such a world?

Teacher: Suppose there is a storm raging outside, but you are safe in your house, since it is well built and constructed to withstand any storm. The storm may rage fiercely, with strong winds, rain, lightening and thunder. Yet, you are protected in your house, unaffected by what is happening outside.

True peace of mind is exactly the same. No matter what is happening around you, your inner peace will not be affected. It is like being in a house that shelters you from a hostile environment.

Right now, this state of mind might seem to you unattainable, but in time, and with the appropriate training, it can be attained.

Not everyone would want to invest the time and effort to attain the highest level of inner peace. Yet, any degree of inner peace is worth attaining and is no doubt far better than an agitated, nervous and restless state of mind that most people are used to suffer from.

Pupil: Are there different levels of peace? Are there high and low levels?

Teacher: There is just one sort of peace, but there are different levels of attainment. The differences are in the depth of the peace one attains, and in the length of time that one can keep it stay in it. As your ability to calm down the flow of thoughts in the mind grows, so does your ability to enjoy a deeper and longer state of inner peace grows.

Pupil: Is there any special process or path one should follow in order to attain peace of mind?

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Teacher: Yes, of course! This is the subject and aim of our conversation. This process will become clear to you in due course.

Pupil: Could you please tell me in a few words what are the required steps?

Teacher: We will get into this subject in detail later, but in very broad terms these are the steps:

- 1) Reducing the levels of restlessness, anxiety, stress and fears through positive attitude and positive thinking. You cannot be peaceful if your thinking is negative.
- 2) Understanding that you are not the mind. The mind is an essential, important and sophisticated tool, which you use in everything you do, but it is not the “real you”. It has to be under your control and serve you in all of your activities, and in no way it is supposed to be your master.
- 3) Developing of inner detachment.
- 4) Developing and strengthening the power of concentration.
- 5) Silencing the mind through meditation.
- 6) Turning peace of mind into a habit.

After attaining some degree of peace of mind you will discover that events, situations and people do not affect you, as they did before, and that they start to lose they power to disrupt your inner poise. Your mind will be like a quiet and peaceful island, even if a storm is raging around you.

Pupil: I am eager and waiting to start.

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