



THE ALIGN WITH YOUR DIVINE BOOK CLUB

As a Man Thinketh

by James Allen

A study guide for reading together

ALIGN WITH YOUR DIVINE • STUDY GUIDE

A small book with a big idea

First published in 1903, *As a Man Thinketh* is only a few dozen pages long, yet it has quietly shaped more than a century of thinking about the mind and personal growth. Its message is simple and life-changing: our thoughts shape our character, our circumstances, our health and our future, and because our thoughts are ours to choose, so is much of our life.

This guide is your companion as we read it together. For each of its seven chapters you will find a short summary, a few of Allen's own words, questions to reflect on, a simple practice for the week, and a note on how it connects with the wider work of Align With Your Divine.

Reading it

The book is in the public domain, which means it is free for everyone. You can read it online, without charge, at Project Gutenberg: gutenberg.org/ebooks/4507.

A note on language

Allen wrote in 1903, and like most writers of his time he uses “man” and “he” to mean all people. As you read, feel free to hear every “man” as “each of us”.

Gently, one chapter at a time

- 1 **Read the chapter**, slowly, perhaps twice. Underline anything that stirs you.
- 2 **Read the summary and Allen's words** in this guide, and notice which line speaks to you most.
- 3 **Sit with the questions**. Write your answers if you can; even a few lines help the ideas settle.
- 4 **Try the practice** for the week ahead. Allen's ideas come alive when they are lived, not just read.
- 5 **Bring what you noticed** to our online gathering, where we share, listen and learn from one another.

There is no homework and no test. Read what you can, when you can. Whether you arrive having read every page or only a few, you are warmly welcome.

Thought and Character

Allen begins with his central idea: we are, quite literally, what we think. Our character is the sum of all our thoughts, and every thought we allow, kind or harmful, becomes part of who we are. The hopeful news is that, because thought is ours to choose, so is the shaping of our character.

In Allen's words

"Man is made or unmade by himself."

Questions to reflect on

1. Which thoughts have you been carrying so long that they feel like simply "who you are"?
2. Where do you see a quality in yourself, good or difficult, that grew from repeated thinking?
3. If your character is still being shaped, what would you love it to become?

A practice for the week

For three days, gently notice one recurring thought each evening. Write it down, and beside it write the thought you would rather grow.

Connects with Thinking Into Results, lessons 3 and 4, Your Infinite Mind and The Secret Genie: how our thinking shapes who we are from within.

Thought and Character

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

Effect of Thought on Circumstances

Our outer world, says Allen, is shaped by our inner world. Circumstances do not create us; they reveal us. When we change our thinking, our circumstances gradually change to meet it. This is the longest chapter, and the one most worth reading slowly.

In Allen's words

"Circumstance does not make the man; it reveals him to himself."

"Men do not attract that which they want, but that which they are."

"Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results."

Questions to reflect on

1. Which circumstance in your life feels most like it is "happening to you"?
2. What might it be revealing to you about your own thinking?
3. If you changed one habit of thought, what might begin to change around you?

A practice for the week

Choose one situation that troubles you. Write down the thoughts you usually think about it, then write three thoughts that would help you meet it with more strength.

Connects with Thinking Into Results, lesson 6, The Environment Is Our Mirror: our outer world reflecting our inner one.

Effect of Thought on Circumstances

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

Effect of Thought on Health and the Body

The body follows the mind. Anxious, fearful thoughts weigh on the body; calm, cheerful and kindly thoughts support its health and grace. Allen does not promise that thinking replaces care, but he invites us to see how deeply mind and body belong together.

In Allen's words

"The body is the servant of the mind."

"Clean thoughts make clean habits."

Questions to reflect on

1. How does your body feel after a day of worry, and after a day of peace?
2. Which thoughts seem to tire you, and which seem to restore you?
3. What would a kind thought towards your own body sound like?

A practice for the week

Each morning this week, before you rise, think three kind thoughts: one about your body, one about your day, one about someone you love.

Connects with the mind, body and soul together: the whole-person approach at the heart of Align With Your Divine.

Effect of Thought on Health and the Body

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

Thought and Purpose

Without a purpose, Allen writes, thought drifts. A clear aim gathers our scattered energy and gives our days direction. And if we cannot yet see our great purpose, we begin by doing today's duty well, because strength of purpose grows through practice.

In Allen's words

"Until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment."

Questions to reflect on

1. Where in your life does your thinking "drift"?
2. What purpose, large or small, most deserves your focus now?
3. What is one duty in front of you that you could do with your whole heart?

A practice for the week

Write one sentence that begins, "The purpose I choose to give my energy to is...". Keep it where you will see it each morning.

Connects with Thinking Into Results, lesson 1, A Worthy Ideal: choosing a goal that truly inspires you and gives your life direction.

Thought and Purpose

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

The Thought-Factor in Achievement

Everything we achieve, and everything we fail to achieve, begins in our thinking. Achievement asks something of us: to lift our thoughts, to persevere, and to give up lesser habits for the sake of greater aims.

In Allen's words

"All that a man achieves and all that he fails to achieve is the direct result of his own thoughts."

"He who would accomplish little must sacrifice little; he who would achieve much must sacrifice much."

Questions to reflect on

1. What would you love to achieve that you have not yet allowed yourself to aim for?
2. Which thoughts tell you it is not possible for someone like you?
3. What would you willingly give up for the sake of it?

A practice for the week

Name one small habit you are ready to release, and one daily action that moves you towards your aim. Practise both for seven days.

Connects with Thinking Into Results, lessons 7 and 8, Crossing the Terror Barrier and The Power of Praxis: moving through doubt with steady action.

The Thought-Factor in Achievement

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

Visions and Ideals

The dreamers, says Allen, are the saviours of the world. The vision we hold in our hearts is the seed of what we will one day become, so we are to cherish it, protect it, and let it grow. Here the book rises to its most hopeful and poetic.

In Allen's words

"The dreamers are the saviours of the world."

"Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become."

"Cherish your visions; cherish your ideals."

Questions to reflect on

1. What vision have you quietly carried, perhaps for years?
2. What has stopped you from cherishing it fully?
3. What would it look like to treat that vision as the promise of who you are becoming?

A practice for the week

Describe your vision in a short paragraph, written as if it has already come true. Read it aloud once a day.

Connects with Thinking Into Results, lessons 1 and 12, A Worthy Ideal and The Mind Expansion: holding a vision and continuing to grow.

Visions and Ideals

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

Serenity

The book ends in stillness. Calmness of mind, Allen writes, is the fruit of long and patient self-mastery, and it is a gift to everyone around us. Serene people are trusted, loved and quietly powerful.

In Allen's words

"Calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom."

"Self-control is strength; Right Thought is mastery; Calmness is power."

Questions to reflect on

1. Where in your life would more calm make the greatest difference?
2. What usually unsettles your peace, and how do you tend to respond?
3. Who do you know whose calm you admire, and what do you notice about them?

A practice for the week

When something unsettles you this week, pause for three slow breaths before you respond. Afterwards, note what changed.

Connects with Thinking Into Results, lesson 9, The Magic Word: the quiet power of attitude in everything we do.

Serenity

The line that stayed with me, my answers, and what I noticed as I practised.

How we meet

Once a month we gather online for about an hour, to share what the book stirred in us. Everyone is welcome to speak, and everyone is welcome simply to listen.

Arrive	A few minutes to settle, and a moment of quiet together.
The line	Each of us, if we wish, shares one line from Allen that stayed with us, and why.
Exploring	We talk through the chapter's questions together.
Practice	We share how the week's practice went: what changed, what was hard.
Taking it home	Each of us chooses one idea to carry into the month ahead.

Our way together

- We listen to understand, not to correct.
- What is shared in the group stays in the group.
- Everyone's pace is right for them.

Going further

If *As a Man Thinketh* stirs something in you, there are gentle ways to go further with Align With Your Divine:

- **A free conversation with Charlotte**, to talk about where you are and where you would love to be: alignwithyourdivine.com, then *Speak with Charlotte*.
- **Thinking Into Results**, the twelve-lesson programme that takes Allen's idea, that thought shapes results, and turns it into a practical path: mindset.alignwithyourdivine.com.
- **A Note from Your Divine**, a short, uplifting note each morning: alignwithyourdivine.com/daily-note.html.

“Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become.”

James Allen