



The Chronicles of Yen Tzu

Following Dreams

'You say that without dreams achievement becomes impossible,' said a disgruntled student toward the end of a lesson. 'Well I have a problem with that. I cannot ever remember my dreams.'

Yen Tzu raise a quizzical eyebrow: 'Do you not have desires either?'

'Of course I have desires. I desire to be prosperous, that is why I am here at the academy. But desires are not dreams.'

'Healthy desire is the starting point of all achievement. The desire to live, for instance, is the unconscious motivation to take our first breath of life. Dreams are both an unconscious and conscious expression of what we ardently desire.'

'Our dreams are the catalyst to attract what we vividly desire. The experiences we manifest in our lives come from what we consciously or unconsciously attract to us. Our success and failure, sorrows and joy, all depend on what we desire as it...'

'But why would anyone want to desire elements which are undesirable, such as failure and sorrow?' Interrupted the student.

'... it is the nature of the intent behind those desires that counts,' continued Yen Tzu. 'For example, one does not seek pain purposely; one seeks pleasure, yet very often pain is hiding behind the facade of pleasure. Similarly a seeker of success may not see failure hiding behind what he or she believes to be success.'

'One who desires a partner to merely satisfy the intent of parental pressure, appearance, security, jealousy, obsession, infatuation, habit or loneliness, will soon discover pain behind short-lived pleasure. Another who desires success, due to the intent of promotion, status, title or earning respect, will similarly experience hollowness to their rewards.'

'As the whole principle of creation is based on the power of intent, it is important to consider what you dream and why you want it. When you enter into business with another, you must know the philosophy of your partner. When young people are in love, the intensity of their passion blinds their respective philosophies. With the short-term need satisfied, long-term limitations to deeper desires are overlooked.'

'In complaining to ourselves that we never receive what we consider we are duly entitled to, there is no end to our complaining. Unconsciously we, in effect, desire something to complain about. Therefore, in order to have no complaints, we must become aware when and why we complain.'

'Including complaining that we have no dreams or that we are not deserved of them,' said the Student resignedly.





'In desiring things, we must distinguish, that which we want to attract to ourselves and that which we do not want. Our futures are decided by our innermost dreams, generated by what we might wittingly, or unwittingly, desire from life. Fortune is not external; it is decided by how you desire it. Let me illustrate with a story...

'The brothers Po and Jo of Sung were inseparable as youths. Po dreamed of success as a merchant while Jo had resigned himself to the monastic tradition of his ancestors.

'Please do not enter commerce,' Jo entreated his brother, 'for the ways of business will make you unworthy to enter the Garden of The Jade Emperor and we will no longer be together.'

'It is not the ways of business that makes one unworthy, it is how much one allows one's self to be influenced by the needful habits of others. Anyway, learning to recognise such things may lead to the worthy cause of influencing others positively - who knows, I may run a state in time?'

'But you know as well as I do,' persisted Jo, 'that abundance and spirituality are incompatible. Both our elders and parents have always taught us to believe that it is both selfish and improper to visualise and desire success and material things. Already I fear that your ambition places you above your station.'

'Six months after being persuaded by his brother's relentless admonitions to follow him, Po was talking to a visiting traveler.

'I would have liked to enter commerce but it was an unworthy dream and realised it was only for selfish reasons,' said Po, in answer to a question posed by the traveler.

“Nonsense! When you deny your dreams to follow a particular path,” said the traveler, ‘you deny yourself as the person you truly are. You cannot blame your brother’s seemingly selfish action for making you feel unworthy about getting what you want and guilty for wanting it. Whatever you have, you allow yourself to have. Understand that what you really want matters, because that is what becomes matter. Material form is how the spirit of all things makes itself known to us. It is not selfish to want whatever you do in life and you should not be ashamed when what you want happens.’

“But it’s too late. Everyone is content that I am a humble monk now. It is not worthy for me to receive what I once longed for.’

“It is true that what you receive is proportionate to what you believe you are worth, but never say that others made you into what you are today,” said the traveler. ‘Accept that you chose instead to acquiesce to the demands of others. From this moment say to yourself that you will be willing to accept full responsibility for whatever you bring into your life. Doing so will automatically place you in the position of becoming increasingly worthy to attract and receive whatever you desire.’

‘Awaking, Po realised that there had been no traveler, he had simply been dreaming. Sharing his dream with the Patriarch of his brotherly Order, he was counseled to ‘follow your heart’s desire, for in so doing you become worthy of it and it becomes worthy of you. Everyone’s path is different, yet only a few ever recognise the integrity of a true desire, and in doubting it cause themselves to become unworthy to receive it.’



‘Following his dream Po became a successful trader and, in time, his worth was recognised by Duke Mu of Ch’in, who made him his high minister.’

Yen Tzu paused to observe his students for a moment before continuing. ‘All of you must become aware that too often we allow the conditioned beliefs and admonitions of others who have low self-regard, to exert influence and power over us. In doing so we put on the clothes that validate the unworthiness that for so long has adorned them. Thinking that success and riches are incompatible with being an upstanding citizen, for example, is one of the largest contributors to feeling unworthy.’

'It is a sad fact that the amount of self-worth a child feels reduces dramatically during its formative years. Whenever children are able to resist the consistent hypnosis of being limited in their abilities, they are able to express their unlimited selves and manifest the abundance and opportunity they want throughout their lives.'



'But it is, of course, impossible for most children to resist the ideas and limiting beliefs of their surrounding influences. Adhering to a curriculum of teaching to get by in life, rather than get on in life, the emphasis, unwittingly, is on reducing self-worth, and thereby limiting the child's potential rather than releasing it. Most teachers and parents will freely admit that although they recognise that praise develops growth, the emphasis is on correcting mistakes.'

'It is therefore vital, as adults, to accept personal responsibility for redeveloping our worthiness to receive. This means acknowledging that our self-esteem comes from ourselves, not from others; accepting ourselves without complaint and refusing guilt into our lives.'

'To accept yourself does not mean to accept every conditioned behaviour, as these can be altered, but it does mean to stop mentally chastising yourself and putting yourself down. Self-repudiation and persistent feelings of guilt that prevent you from manifesting anything worthwhile, and instead attract to you the very same things about which you are sending out messages. Such things, when received, frustratingly provide yet further rationalised evidence that you are not worth what you dream of having.'

'In refusing to allow former conditioning to dictate the limits of what you deserve in your life, you begin to bring about the realization of your dreams.'