

Simplify your life and learn how to set real goals.

## **The Thinking Trap**

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at  
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/4583.html?s=pdf>

Self-esteem and positive thinking are half of the modern-day Thinking Trap. These aspects of this first half constitute a huge portion of the hidden knowledge appeal of Personal Development. By themselves, self-esteem and positive thinking are useful. After all, thinking the best of every situation is an admirable trait. As is valuing one's self. But in today's Personal Development climate, they have been blown out of proportion. Self-esteem has become an end in itself.

Self-esteem – and positive thinking, which is almost always linked to self-esteem – is taught as the keystone of Personal Development. To achieve any significant results in life, we are told, we must have a good self-image. And we must project that “positiveness” into the world to have any power over our lives. Through our knowledge we empower ourselves.

So self-help books by the dozens are sold, each one telling us how to improve our self-esteem. We buy them, because each book helps us feel good about our worth and ourselves as human beings. We figure that if a book raises our awareness of how good we REALLY are, it helps our self-esteem. And self-esteem is tantamount to living a full, successful life.

On the practical side, the problem with self-esteem is that it is self-absorbed. We only look in at ourselves for fulfillment. Thus, we stunt ourselves. We short-change our potential. When

all we think about is ourselves, our perception of the universe shrinks. It becomes selfish.

Yes, we are awesome beings. Yes, we have unlimited potential. That is the essence of every self-esteem book ever written. So why do we keep buying more books that all say essentially the same thing? Why do we think that this particular author will finally unlock the secret to a fully realized self-worth? Even after we have already read so many other self-esteem works? Why?

Because we hunger for more.

But can other people fill this need of ours? With divorce rates so high – and climbing – it is apparent that one human being cannot fulfill another's needs. We are too frail, too prone to making mistakes, to not disappoint each other.

So what to we do? Where do we turn? Sadly, many of us turn to Personal Development. As proof, we only need to look at the multitude of books mentioned earlier. We hunger for something and figure we can get it through self-esteem. But we cannot. There is only one way to meet those needs.

The only true source for meeting our emotional and mental needs is in Jesus. He will fill our souls and minds with

what we need. And He will solve our self-esteem problem, while freeing us from the Thinking Trap.

The problem with self-esteem is that it is self-directed. It is directed inward. All self-esteem is is us concentrating on ourselves. The problem is that we are not self-sustaining. We are not self-sufficient. We need things outside of ourselves to survive. Sunlight, food, water, and oxygen are simple examples. So no matter how great we may be – which is what self-esteem is all about: pointing out how great we are and making ourselves realize how awesome we, as human beings, are – we can never satisfy ourselves. We cannot sustain ourselves with only ourselves. So we will always need something outside ourselves to complete ourselves.

All that the books on self-esteem do is tell us how great we are. They never really help us with our need for fulfillment. They cannot. Self-esteem is too self-focused. It is all about looking inward at us. And we cannot take care of our own needs. But the Personal Development Gurus tell us we can.

So we read a Personal Development book. Its emphasis is on self-esteem. The theories we read makes sense, after all, we are a great and talented species. It even seems to fill an intellectual and emotional void in our life. Then, the affects fade. So we find and read another Personal Development book, emphasizing self-esteem because that first book “put us on the

path” to filling our needs. A different book, a different way of saying it. Same self-esteem message, but with a different voice. The book may make us think about self-esteem differently, but it is in the same vein. This book also gives us a boost. But then, it too, fades.

We get trapped in a cycle. We crave something we think can be filled through knowledge alone. So we seek to fulfill this need with self-esteem. We buy more books, audios, and seats at events. We are then trapped in a self-esteem snare.

And the vicious cycle perpetuates itself. We look for something to fill this aching need we have. Personal Development makes us feel good about being human, with all the great potential we as human beings have. But it does not last. Because we cannot fill this need ourselves.

We cannot satisfy our needs. Other people cannot fill our craving. But we get trapped into thinking they can. Or that we can.

The way to counter this self-esteem trap is humility. Because humility includes the awareness that there is something out there apart from us that can satisfy our deep need for emotional and intellectual completeness. That something is God, in the person of Jesus Christ.

Humility is the real self-esteem boost that never needs a recharge. It acknowledges that we are great, but only as a reflection of Him who made us. It is not a denial of our potential, but a proper understanding of our gifts and a true direction for our energies.

Jesus can satisfy us. Jesus – being God – is self-sustaining. And because He is self-complete, He can fulfill us.

Humility is realizing that Jesus is all-powerful, and that we are good because He says so. And we are lovable because He loves us.

Humility is not self-deprecation. It is not an attitude of “I’m worthless.” Humility includes a proper perspective of ourselves.

Humility includes knowing what really matters.

So many people think humility is self-debasement. That to be humble is to see ourselves as worthless. That is not humility. That is hatred.

Humility includes putting ourselves in proper perspective. It is knowing that everything we have, everything we are, is from Jesus. And we are good, because of it. Not

because of anything we have done, or anything we have, but because of the goodness of Jesus.

Humility is not self-hate. It includes self-revelation at its most basic. We do not say: “we are bad, therefore Jesus is good.” We say: “Jesus is good, Jesus made us in His image, therefore we are good.” Humility includes the ability to keep all things in perspective. It includes knowing our relationship to Jesus and acting accordingly. And when we do that, we are freed from the modern day Personal Development self-esteem aspect of the Thinking Trap.

Humility includes loving ourselves because Jesus loves us. Pride is loving ourselves because we are alive. Humility is the opposite of arrogance. Arrogance says: “I am right. Do not bother me with another point of view.” Humility allows us to accept corrections.

Humility is not weakness. Nor is humility bashfulness. Humility realizes that ONLY with God is anything possible.

Humility is good for several reasons. The first of which is our emphasis changes. Once we realize we are not self-sustaining and once we concentrate the efforts we were spending on self-esteem toward Jesus our energy is where it should be. When we concentrate on Jesus, our efforts begin to spread outward into the world. To be truly great in any

endeavor, we must put our energy into the world – for and through Jesus Christ – and not put our energy into ourselves.

A second reason humility is good is because a humble person is less disturbed by detractors than a proud person. Because when a detractor says, “Oh, you just think you’re so great!” we, being humble, can say, “If I am great, it is simply a reflection of He who made me that way.” Or, “No I am not great. Jesus is great, and He is great in allowing me to do this task for Him. I am simply a tool of the Lord’s.” And we take away the ammunition a detractor has. Where will they go from there? How can a detractor attack a humble person?

The world loves to see successful people fail. And even more gleeful joy is taken when a proud successful person fails. But when a humble successful person fails, the world cannot make itself rejoice quite as robustly. Being humble makes us less of a target.

Humility is a first step to gaining greatness. It seems like a contradiction, but it is not. The more humble we are – the more we realize God’s greatness is shining in our lives – the more we can accomplish in our lives. Humility also clears out our lives. When we focus on Jesus we eliminate mental and emotional clutter from our lives. This means our efforts are more potent. Our energy is better spent. We get better results. And we have self-fulfillment.



Humility breaks us free from endlessly searching for satisfaction. Jesus is enough. Humility makes us emphasize Him. We are free of worrying about our development. And since Jesus is perfect and self-sustaining, we do not worry about His development. He fills us, as only He can. When we are focused on Him, and not on ourselves, that is humility. Freedom comes from Jesus in the form of true humility.

Humility includes knowing this truth and accepting it.

So humility is the key to self-fulfillment. It is also a practical way to achieve greatness with limited disturbance by detractors. A paradox of humility is that true humility facilitates greatness.

Humility takes the emphasis away from us – away from self-directedness – and points our energies toward Jesus. And humility asks Him to fulfill us. Humility gives Him the honor we have been giving to ourselves. It includes knowing our place and how we will never satisfy ourselves and then asks Jesus to do so.

How do we get humility? We cannot just say, “I’m humble” and be humble. It does not just happen overnight. Not for most of us. The question is: how do we become humble?

How, in a world so concerned with the self, do we turn toward Jesus and away from ourselves?

The answer is in practical humility. Three steps are needed to begin the journey.

Simplify your life and learn how to set real goals.

## **The Thinking Trap**

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at  
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/4583.html?s=pdf>