

Thinking for Results - Christian D. Larson | The Power of Thought

Christian D. Larson's *Thinking for Results*, originally published in 1912, is a self-help book emphasizing the power of positive thinking to achieve desired outcomes. **The book argues that a person's thoughts directly shape their reality**, advocating for "scientific thinking"—a purposeful, systematic approach to thought that aligns with natural laws. **Larson outlines key mental attitudes**, such as peace, poise, harmony, and aspiration, to cultivate this scientific thinking. **He stresses the importance of focusing on positive mental states, avoiding negative self-talk and purposeless thinking**, to achieve personal growth and success.

Central Theme

The book emphasizes the transformative power of thought and its direct influence on an individual's life, destiny, and achievements. Larson advocates for "scientific thinking", a purposeful and systematic approach to thought that leads to desired results.

Key Ideas

Thought as the Architect of Reality:

"Man is as he thinks he is, and what he does is the result of the sum total of his thought."

Larson posits that our thoughts are the underlying cause of everything that happens in our lives. We create both good and evil unknowingly due to random, purposeless thinking.

Scientific Thinking for Designed Results:

"When we understand the laws of thought and think accordingly, we have begun what may properly be termed scientific thinking... thinking for results." Scientific thinking involves understanding the laws governing thought and consciously applying them to achieve desired outcomes. It's purposeful, systematic, and results-oriented.

Right vs. Wrong Thought:

"Everything in life that retards growth is wrong. Everything that promotes growth is right."

Right thoughts are constructive and promote growth and advancement in all areas of life, while wrong thoughts are random, destructive, and hinder progress.

Cultivating the Right Mental States:

The book outlines several essential mental states for effective thinking:

Peace: Foundational calmness for growth and energy conservation.

Poise: Combining calmness with power, holding energy ready for action.

Harmony: Aligning oneself with the powers and laws of life for effective action.

Aspiration: Aiming for the high places of attainment, inspiring great thoughts.

Contentment: Utilizing the present while aspiring for greater things.

Gratitude: Openness to new opportunities and blessings.

Appreciation: Recognizing worth, leading to higher consciousness of worth.

Optimism: Focusing on the good, the better, and the strong sides of things.

Cheerfulness: Mental sunshine for growth and constructive thinking.

Kindness: Unfolding the larger self through giving one's best.

Sympathy: Connecting with the superior side of others, not their weaknesses.

Idealism: Dwelling on the upper plane of thought, focused on superiority and worth.

Superiority: Recognizing inherent superiority over personal limitations.

Supremacy: Ruling supremely in one's domain, fostering self-mastery.

Positiveness: Filling thoughts with a forward-pressing current of determination.

Push and Perseverance: Increasing results through continuous effort.

Courage and Patience: Embracing challenges and remaining steadfast.

Self-Reliance and Self-Confidence: Trusting in one's own power and abilities.

Non-Resistance: Overcoming negativity by building up the positive.

Forgiveness: Releasing condemnation and focusing on growth and improvement.

Justice: Acting fairly and recognizing the rights of others.

Refinement, Receptivity, and Faith: Essential attitudes for mental growth and action.

Applying Scientific Thinking:

Larson provides specific guidance on applying scientific thinking:

Focus on Present Work: Give undivided attention to the task at hand.

Think Positively about Work: View work as a path to greater things, embrace challenges.

Recognize Success: Believe in your potential for success and claim it.

Employ Effective Plans and Methods: Utilize knowledge of constructive action, both physical and mental.

Cultivate Powerful Faith: Believe in yourself and your goals.

Focus on Ideal Side: Concentrate on the best, the larger, and the superior in all things.

View Challenges as Opportunities: Reframe setbacks as stepping stones to greater things.

Think Truthfully: Formulate thoughts based on the inherent truth and possibilities within everything.

Detailed Briefing**I. The Power of Thought**

This section introduces Larson's core premise: individuals can shape their destinies through deliberate, purposeful thinking. He argues that random thinking leads to a chaotic life, while understanding the laws of thought allows for the conscious creation of desired outcomes. Larson underscores the absolute nature of these laws, likening them to the unwavering laws of the natural world.

II. Scientific Thinking: Design and Purpose

Here, Larson defines "scientific thinking" as thinking with a clear purpose, aligning with specific laws to achieve desired results. He emphasizes the need to eliminate aimless thinking, advocating for a structured approach where every thought contributes to personal growth. This section sets the stage for the four essential components of scientific thinking that follow.

III. The Foundation: Right Mental States

This section details the first essential of scientific thinking: cultivating a foundation of "right mental states." Larson posits that these states foster harmony with the laws of life and facilitate mental development. He explores crucial states like peace, poise, harmony, aspiration, contentment, gratitude, appreciation, optimism, cheerfulness, kindness, sympathy, idealism, superiority, supremacy, positiveness, push, perseverance, courage, patience, self-reliance, self-confidence, non-resistance, forgiveness, justice, refinement, receptivity, and faith. Each state is explained in terms of its impact on personal growth and achieving desired outcomes.

IV. Applying Scientific Thinking to Life

Having established the mental foundation, Larson transitions to practical application. He argues that aligning thoughts with the natural laws of progress is key. This section outlines the three-fold purpose individuals typically pursue: success in vocation, mental development, and achieving higher states of existence. Larson emphasizes focusing on the present while incorporating a broader perspective on life, learning, and personal growth.

V. Scientific Thinking in Action: Work and Progress

This section delves into the specific thoughts individuals should cultivate regarding their work and desired goals. Larson advises against perceiving work as difficult, trivial, or burdensome. Instead, he advocates for viewing it as a path to self-realization, focusing on constant improvement, and celebrating every effort as a step towards success. He stresses the need to think constructively about progress, emphasizing the power of visualizing success and utilizing faith as a driving force.

VI. Thinking for Results in Experience and Circumstance

Larson explores the application of scientific thinking to experiences, both positive and negative. He encourages viewing every experience, even reversals and misfortunes, as opportunities for learning and growth. He explains the importance of reframing disappointments as gateways to something better and recognizing the power of a positive outlook on circumstances. Larson argues that by embracing

challenges and seeking truth within them, individuals can transform adversity into opportunities for advancement.

VII. Applying Scientific Thinking to Self-Perception

This section addresses the crucial role of self-perception in thinking for results. Larson encourages individuals to focus on their potential, envisioning themselves at their best, rather than dwelling on weaknesses or limitations. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing inherent strength and rejecting self-doubt. He argues that aligning thoughts with one's true potential unlocks the limitless possibilities within and enables individuals to shape their destinies rather than being controlled by fate.

VIII. The Power of Thinking Truth

Larson concludes by emphasizing the importance of aligning thoughts with the inherent truth in all things, going beyond surface appearances to recognize the potential within. He argues that this approach fosters a wholesome and harmonious mind, leading to increased power and effectiveness. By thinking about the possibilities within every situation, individuals can unlock greater potential within themselves and achieve greater results. Larson encourages readers to embrace the vastness of life, continuously expand their understanding of truth, and leverage the power of thought to create a richer, more fulfilling existence.

Conclusion

Larson's *Thinking for Results* advocates a conscious and deliberate approach to thought. By understanding the laws of thought, cultivating the right mental states, and focusing on the truth and possibilities within everything, individuals can harness the transformative power of thought to create the life and achieve the results they desire.

Glossary of Key Terms

Scientific Thinking: Purposeful thought designed to achieve specific results, based on an understanding of the laws of thought and aligned with natural laws.

Right Mental States: Positive and constructive attitudes of mind, such as peace, poise, harmony, aspiration, and gratitude, that promote mental growth and facilitate success.

Harmony: A state of constructive alignment between two or more forces, allowing them to work together effectively towards a common goal.

Aspiration: The desire and striving for growth, exceeding current limitations, and reaching higher levels of achievement and being.

Idealistic State of Mind: A focus on ideals, possibilities, and superior qualities, fostering a positive outlook and a drive towards self-improvement.

Thinking the Truth: Perceiving the inherent potential and positive qualities within everything, focusing on possibilities and the ideal versions of ourselves and the world around us.

Constructive Thinking: Thought that is focused on growth, improvement, and the creation of positive outcomes.

Mental Conceptions: Our mental pictures and understandings of ourselves and the world around us, which shape our thoughts, actions, and experiences.

Fate: The perceived course of events determined by external forces beyond our control. Larson argues that "fate" is actually shaped by our own thoughts and actions.

Results: The desired outcomes we seek to achieve through our thoughts, actions, and efforts.