THE SEARCH

NEVILLE GODDARD

About This Edition

This edition presents the original public-domain text by Neville Goddard in its original form.

For expanded commentary, modern interpretation, and structured study, see the revised editions available on Amazon or the Living Neville's Teachings curriculum.

Introduction

The Search is one of Neville Goddard's most intimate and mystical works. Unlike his other books, which emphasize the practical application of imagination as the creative power, this short volume opens a window into the inner journey that shaped his teachings. Written in 1946, *The Search* is both autobiographical and symbolic a vivid account of visionary experiences through which Neville discovered the hidden identity of man as God in expression.

In these pages, Neville reveals the inner world behind the external teachings: the fiery meditations that lifted him beyond the senses, the visions in which he saw the Perfect Man, and the powerful union with his "Greater Self" that dissolved the boundaries between the human and the divine. He shares these revelations not to impose belief, but to offer a living testimony to those seeking the law of life, the law that our conception of ourselves forms the world we experience.

Here, Neville demonstrates a simple but profound truth: every transformation begins within. The outer world is a mirror of the inner state. Through intense meditation, the individual becomes one with the ideal contemplated, and what is seen inwardly must eventually take form outwardly. The only true search is the search for one's own identity the hidden God within.

The Search invites the reader into that interior journey. It is an intimate record of union with a deeper Self, a Self-older than life yet nearer than breath. The world we inhabit, Neville reveals, is the dream of imagination, and each of us is the eternal dreamer—creating, dissolving, and reforming the world through the concepts we hold of ourselves.

To read this work is to enter Neville's own awakening and to glimpse the profound simplicity of his message:

There is nothing to change but self.

The Search

To Victoria, The fulfilment of a dream

Once in an idle interval at sea, I meditated on “the perfect state”, and wondered what I would be, were I of too pure eyes to behold iniquity, if to me all things were pure and were I without condemnation. As I became lost in this fiery brooding, I found myself lifted above the dark environment of the senses. So intense was the feeling, I felt myself a being of fire dwelling in a body of air. Voices as from a heavenly chorus, with the exaltation of those who had been conquerors in a conflict with death, were singing “He is risen – He is risen”, and intuitively I knew they meant me.

Then I seemed to be walking in the night. I soon came upon a scene that might have been the ancient Pool of Bethesda, for in this place lay a great multitude of impotent folk – blind, halt, withered – waiting not for the moving of the water as of tradition, but waiting for me. As I came near, without thought or effort on my part they were, one after the other, molded as by the Magician of the Beautiful. Eyes, hands, feet – all missing members – were drawn from some invisible reservoir and molded in harmony with that perfection which I felt springing within me. When all were made perfect, the chorus exulted, “It is finished”. Then the scene dissolved and I awoke.

I know this vision was the result of my intense meditation upon the idea of perfection, for my meditations invariably bring about union with the state contemplated. I had been so completely absorbed within the idea that for a while I had become what I contemplated, and the high purpose with which I had for that moment identified myself, drew the companionship of high things and fashioned the vision in harmony with my inner nature. The ideal with which we are united works by association of ideas to awaken a thousand moods to create a drama in keeping with the central idea.

I first discovered this close relationship of moods to vision when I was aged about seven. I became aware of a mysterious life quickening within me like a stormy ocean of frightening might. I always knew when I would be united with this hidden identity, for my senses were expectant on the nights of these visitations and I knew beyond all doubt that before morning I would be alone with immensity. I so dreaded these

visitations that I would lie awake until my eyes from sheer exhaustion closed. As my eyes closed in sleep, I was no longer solitary but smitten through and through with another being, and yet I knew it to be myself. It seemed older than life, yet nearer to me than my boyhood. If I tell what I discovered on these nights, I do so not to impose my ideas on others but that I may give hope to those who seek the law of life.

I discovered that my expectant mood worked as a magnet to unite me with this Greater Me, while my fears made It appear as a stormy sea. As a boy, I conceived of this mysterious self as might, and in my union with It I felt its majesty as a stormy sea which drenched me, then rolled and tossed me as a helpless wave.

As a man I conceived of It as love and myself the son of It, and in my union with It, now, what a love enfolds me! It is a mirror to all. Whatever we conceive It as being, that it is to us.

I believe it to be the center through which all the threads of the universe are drawn; therefore, I have altered my values and changed my ideas so that they now depend upon and are in harmony with this sole cause of all that is. It is to me that changeless reality which fashions circumstances in harmony with our concepts of ourselves.

My mystical experiences have convinced me that there is no way to bring about the outer perfection we seek other than by the transformation of ourselves.

As soon as we succeed in transforming ourselves, the world will melt magically before our eyes and reshape itself in harmony with that which our transformation affirms.

Two other visions I will tell because they bear out the truth of my assertion that we, by intensity of love and hate, become what we contemplate.

Once, with closed eyes made radiant from brooding, I meditated on the eternal question, “Who Am I?” and felt myself gradually dissolve into a shoreless sea of vibrant light, imagination passing beyond all fear of death. In this state nothing existed but myself, a boundless ocean of liquid light. Never have I felt more intimate with Being.

How long this experience lasted I do not know, but my return to earth was accompanied by a distinct feeling of crystallizing again into human shape.

At another time, I lay on my bed and with my eyes shut as in sleep I brooded on the mystery of Buddha. In a little while, the dark caverns of my brain began to grow luminous.

I seemed to be surrounded by luminous clouds which emanated from my head as fiery, pulsating rings. I saw nothing but these luminous rings for a time. Then there appeared before my eyes a rock of quartz crystal. While I gazed upon it, the crystal broke into pieces which invisible hands quickly shaped into the living Buddha. As I looked on this meditative figure, I saw that it was myself. I was the living Buddha whom I contemplated. A light like the sun glowed from this living image of myself with increasing intensity until it exploded. Then the light gradually faded and once more I was back within the blackness of my room.

Out of what sphere or treasury of design came this being mightier than human, his garments, the crystal, the light? If I saw, heard and moved in a world of real beings when I seemed to myself to be walking in the night, when the lame, the halt, the blind were transformed in harmony with my inner nature, then I am justified in assuming that I have a more subtle body than the physical, a body that can be detached from the physical and used in other spheres; for to see, to hear, to move are functions of an organism however ethereal. If I brood over the alternative that my psychic experiences were self-begotten fantasy, no less am I moved to wonder at this mightier self who flashes on my mind, a drama as real as those I experience when I am fully awake.

On these fiery meditations I have entered again and again, and I know beyond all doubt that both assumptions are true. Housed within this form of earth is a body attuned to a world of light, and I have, by intense meditation, lifted it as with a magnet through the skull of this dark house of flesh.

The first time I awoke the fires within me I thought my head would explode. There was intense vibration at the base of my skull, then sudden oblivion of all. Then I found myself clothed in a garment of light and attached by a silvery elastic cord to the slumbering body on the bed. So exalted were my feelings, I felt related to the stars. In this garment I roamed spheres more familiar than earth, but found that, as on earth, conditions were molded in harmony with my nature. “Self-begotten fantasy”, I hear you say. No more so than the things of earth.

I am an immortal being conceiving myself as man and forming worlds in the likeness and image of my concept of self.

What we imagine that we are. By our imagination, we have created this dream of life, and by our imagination we will re-enter that eternal world of light, becoming that which we were before we imagined the world.

In the divine economy nothing is lost. We cannot lose anything save by descent from the sphere where the thing has its natural life.

There is no transforming power in death and, whether we are here or there, we fashion the world that surrounds us by the intensity of our imagination and feeling, and we illuminate or darken our lives by the concepts we hold of ourselves. Nothing is more important to us than our conception of ourselves and especially is this true of our concept of the deep, hidden One within us.

Those that help or hinder us, whether they know it or not, are the servants of that law which shapes outward circumstances in harmony with our inner nature.

It is our conception of ourselves which frees or constrains us, though it may use material agencies to achieve its purpose.

Because life molds the outer world to reflect the inner arrangement of our minds, there is no way of bringing about the outer perfection we seek other than by the transformation of ourselves.

No help cometh from without; the hills to which we lift our eyes are those of an inner range.

It is thus to our own consciousness that we must turn as to the only reality, the only foundation on which all phenomena can be explained. We can rely absolutely on the justice of this law to give us only that which is of the nature of ourselves

To attempt to change the world before we change our concept of ourselves is to struggle against the nature of things. There can be no outer change until there is first an inner change. As within, so without. I am not advocating philosophical indifference when I suggest that we should imagine ourselves as already that which we want to be, living in a mental atmosphere of greatness, rather than using physical means and arguments to bring about the desired change.

Everything we do, unaccompanied by a change of consciousness, is but futile readjustment of surfaces. However we toil or struggle, we can receive no more than our subconscious assumptions affirm.

To protest against anything which happens to us is to protest against the law of our being and our rulership over our own destiny.

The circumstances of my life are too closely related to my conception of myself not to have been launched by my own spirit from some magical storehouse of my being.

If there is pain to me in these happenings, I should look within myself for the cause, for I am moved here and there and made to live in a world in harmony with my concept of myself.

Intense meditation brings about a union with the state contemplated, and during this union we see visions, have experiences, and behave in keeping with our change of consciousness. This shows us that a transformation of consciousness will result in a change of environment and behavior.

However, our ordinary alterations of consciousness, as we pass from one state to another, are not transformations, because each of them is so rapidly succeeded by another in the reverse direction; but whenever one state grows so stable as to definitely expel its rivals, then that central habitual state defines the character and is a true transformation. To say that we are transformed means that ideas previously peripheral in our consciousness now take a central place and form the habitual center of our energy.

All wars prove that violent emotions are extremely potent in precipitating mental rearrangements. Every great conflict has been followed by an era of materialism and greed in which the ideals for which the conflict ostensibly was waged are submerged.

This is inevitable because war evokes hate, which impels a descent in consciousness from the plane of the ideal to the level where the conflict is waged.

If we would become as emotionally aroused over our ideals as we become over our dislikes, we would ascend to the plane of our ideals as easily as we now descend to the level of our hates.

Love and hate have a magical transforming power, and we grow through their exercise into the likeness of what we contemplate. By intensity of hatred, we create

in ourselves the character we imagine in our enemies. Qualities die for want of attention, so the unlovely states might best be rubbed out by imagining “beauty for ashes and joy for mourning” [Isaiah 61:3] rather than by direct attacks on the state from which we would be free.

“Whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, think on these things” [Philippians 4:8], for we become that with which we are en rapport.

There is nothing to change but our concept of self.

Humanity is a single being in spite of its many forms and faces, and there is in it only such seeming separation as we find in our own being when we are dreaming.

The pictures and circumstances we see in dreams are creations of our own imagination and have no existence save in ourselves. The same is true of the pictures and circumstances we see in this dream of life. They reveal our concepts of ourselves. As soon as we succeed in transforming self, our world will dissolve and reshape itself in harmony with that which our change affirms.

The universe which we study with such care is a dream, and we, the dreamers of the dream, eternal dreamers dreaming non-eternal dreams. One day, like Nebuchadnezzar, we shall awaken from the dream, from the nightmare in which we fought with demons, to find that we really never left our eternal home; that we were never born and have never died save in our dream.

Summary

The Search unfolds as Neville's personal testament of his mystical encounters with the divine nature of consciousness and the transformational power of imagination. He begins by recounting a vision experienced during meditation at sea, a moment when deep absorption in the idea of perfection lifted him into a higher state of awareness. In this exalted state, Neville felt himself as pure fire in a body of air and witnessed the healing of multitudes by an inner power radiating through him. The scene revealed the spiritual principle that the ideal contemplated becomes the experience of the one who contemplates it.

Neville reflects on the intimate relationship between **mood, imagination, and vision**, explaining that intense emotional states awaken corresponding realities within consciousness. He recalls early childhood experiences in which he became aware of a "Greater Me" a mysterious presence felt as a stormy ocean of power yet recognized as his own deeper identity. As he matured, this presence transformed from overwhelming might into overwhelming love, revealing the truth that **what we believe the Inner Self to be, It becomes to us**.

Through a series of striking visions including dissolving into a "shoreless sea of living light" and seeing himself formed as the Buddha from a crystal of divine design Neville demonstrates the universal principle that **we become what we contemplate**. Every inner image, when held with intensity, draws its counterpart into manifestation.

From these experiences, Neville concludes that humanity is far more than a physical form. Housed within the body is a subtle spiritual organism capable of functioning in dimensions of light. Through the fires of meditation, he experienced separation from the physical form and movement through higher spheres, proving to himself that consciousness shapes every environment according to the concept of self.

Throughout the text, Neville emphasizes that **outer circumstances reflect inner consciousness**. There is no transformation of the world without a transformation of the self. Attempts to change conditions through external effort alone are futile, only a change in conception can produce a lasting change in experience. Love and hate

alike have creative power, and the qualities we contemplate become the qualities we express.

Neville explains that humanity is one being with many dream-like expressions, just as the dreamer creates multiple scenes within a single dream. The world is a projection of our inner arrangement; when we alter our conception of ourselves, the dream dissolves and reshapes itself accordingly. In this sense, life is a dream imagined by the eternal Self, and awakening is the realization that we never left our divine origin.

Ultimately, Neville's message in *The Search* is direct and transformative:

- **Consciousness is the only reality.**
- **What we imagine ourselves to be, we become.**
- **The world mirrors our inner nature.**
- **There is nothing to change but our concept of self.**

Through visionary experience and introspective insight, Neville reveals that the path to perfection is not found in external struggle but in the inner realization of the God within. The world is reshaped not by force, but by the quiet intensity of imagination united with feeling.