

THE POWER OF SERENITY FOR THE ATHEIST

The Serenity Affirmation

"I aim for the serenity to accept the things I cannot change. I aim for the courage to change the things I can. I aim for the wisdom to know the difference. I am grateful that I alone have made myself the kind of person that is capable of all this."

If you have not much time then "I aim" will be enough. But say it in a spirit of gratitude.

Gratitude to whom? God? No. To yourself. God supposedly makes you grateful so you give him back his own gratitude as it were! Gratitude to God contradicts the notion that you create gratitude not him. You cannot give gratitude to God unless you create it. Gratitude that is not from you is not gratitude. If you were hypnotised to be grateful that would not be gratitude but a simulation.

Gratitude is only possible where good comes when there is a real alternative - not good. Gratitude to a perfect god is only possible if you secretly think he is not perfect but has a vindictive side.

Say the serenity affirmation to yourself often during the day. It is the most important affirmation of all. Sense how it is you changing you and triggering your inner strength. Sense how it makes you feel stronger. You are proclaiming your power over yourself. It is yours and not God's or anybody's. It is you alone who accepts. You must feel it is your power and yours alone. Feeling that and living and nurturing that feeling is the meaning of your life.

The Affirmation requires that you fully accept that you need and want no God to any degree. Why? Because God implies that there is a being running all things and you should expect the unexpected and you can say you cannot accept evil things for maybe they are only happening because you have not prayed enough. Acceptance of evil things and keeping calm when they happen is impossible unless you really believe there was nothing that could be done to avert them.

That is the central message. Everything else is elaboration.

The message is all about arming you so that you feel as well as possible under the circumstances and willing to deal with the future no matter what happens.

"Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change" analysed

"Accept what you cannot change" means don't worry or care any more.

But what if you only think you cannot change it? Human nature likes to see a situation as irreparable simply because they don't want to put in the sacrifice and hard work to repair it.

We are warned to not to try to change things we cannot control for we will only end up angry. The frustration will overwhelm us and grow legs. What if the situation is evil? If it is evil you cannot accept it. We are only human and we cannot accept what we cannot accept.

Worrying and caring is not about what you can change but about things being bad in themselves. Worry is about fearing the unfixable.

Though we are encouraged to feel courage and act on it in order to try and change something for the better we must ask if there are situations where it is better to do nothing. Doing nothing however in this situation is doing something - it is still doing what is best. Best and better are not the same thing. This form of courage - the courage to let what should be let be be - is not serenity. Serenity is the feeling that you must do nothing for the situation really cannot be mended in any way and involves feeling at peace with the evil for it cannot be improved.

So we see that courage is always good. What about serenity? Those who say that you cannot change something but only change your attitude to it are advocating serenity. It is odd to argue that you must get upset about thing that can be fixed so that you may do something and not okay to get upset about something that is totally unchangeable. Upset is about how something should not be and is not about trying to get motivated to do something. We enable each other to feel upset and that would be cruel if all we want is them to be driven by the upset to fight evil. It would be calculating and manipulative. So courage is always good but to say serenity is always good is just nonsense and just hypocrisy. To see something that is often good or sometimes good as always good is guaranteed to steer you and those who are influenced by you on the wrong

course.

The argument that it takes courage to accept that you and nothing can improve something bad sounds sensible but is it? It is more sensible to keep battling on in case it can be improved. Not all hopeless situations are necessarily really hopeless. What is hopeless today may not be as bad tomorrow.

The serenity brigade exaggerate the need for serenity. They tell you that when lies seem to triumph the truth will defend itself and win out. That is totally unrealistic when you consider how much error there is floating around and many are stuck in error for all their lives.

One major lie is that love is always the answer. But trying to feel and do love for an enemy on the battlefield will distract you and you will end up dead. You have to put your whole heart and soul into slaying him. Everybody who says they love everybody is in fact selective about who gets the love. Love is not the answer when it comes to the major things.

Another lie is that love always wins and when people die at the hands of terrorists it is actually a callous thing to say. Love did not win for the people that died. What makes you so sure it is going to win for you or those you love?

Serenity is dangerous for when the change you want means inviting others to do something you will reason, "I cannot change anybody else so only they can do that so there is no point."

The consistent atheist advocates courage and not serenity. It is religion that is behind the promotion of serenity.

Believers who get courage from belief in God are in fact cowards and their courage could take a dangerous turn and sometimes does. A person who cannot be brave without a crutch is not brave at all but able to act brave. Acting brave and being brave are different things.

APPENDIX - "Grant me the gratitude"

"Grant me the gratitude to accept what I can't improve, the ingratitude to try to improve what I can and the wisdom to know the difference."

I'd change it to, "I can and will grow the gratitude to accept what I can't improve, the ingratitude to try to improve what I can and the wisdom to know the difference."

Instead of thinking there is a God and that we should be grateful all the time for when evil happens we should be grateful like we would be to the poor woman who can only give us a dreadful and burnt crust to eat we should cultivate a virtue of ingratitude. Serenity would be inappropriate then. And stupid!