

Give Your Inner Commander a Worthy Mission

Everyone wants to have presence, but they don't know how to get there. Resolutely practicing happiness can get you toward a compelling presence faster and farther than almost anything else you do. It takes a bit of effort to choose to be happy. But you have a "self" that can make that happen.



La Victoire de Samothrace, Musée du Louvre

That self is something I would call your Inner Commander. Give your Commander a worthy challenge that encompasses all of your life: ***the continuous ambition to be happy***. If you do, you may acquire the presence, the dynamism, the consciousness and the Being—satisfaction of a worthy life well lived.

Your Commander doesn't have to be male. After all, grey-eyed Athena was the goddess of wisdom and strategic warfare. Nike (Victory) is closely connected to Athena—frequently portrayed standing in the outstretched palm of Athena's hand.

La Victoire de Samothrace (*pictured above*) isn't tiny or poised in Athena's palm. This statue is huge! Grand! It probably has the most spectacular setting of any work of art in any museum. It rises—almost floats—on the prow of a stone ship at the top of a grand staircase that splits to further stairs rising on either side of the statue. The regal space focuses your eye on this soaring celebration of beauty, grace, majesty and power. If you first see it as you approach the base of the staircase, it grabs your attention. It is humbling, brilliant, awesome, transportive.

Transportive experiences are the portal to an elevated domain—an exalted reality. Practicing consciousness is learning to live in that exalted reality. In this alive state, you *gladly work* to infuse every moment of your life with extra-ordinary involvement, care and verve.

Okay, no one does that all the time! But if you want to have notable presence, then promise yourself that you will amplify your attention to every moment of your life.

Staying awake—being fully conscious—is no easy task! But one of the great fuels to keep you on track is being happy. The problem many of us face is that we can't conjure up the energy needed to be happy in those times when we are least capable of being happy.

Here's a five-minute exercise that can keep your Inner Commander's batteries fully charged, fully fueled, to persevere in a lifelong ambition to choose happiness.

- Sit with eyes open. Don't move. Don't fidget. But don't get "comfortable"! That will make you doopey, unconscious, and you won't manage to store any of the music's powerful joy.
- Instead, sit up straight! Breathe as slowly as possible and inhale mostly through your nose. As you do this, feel that your skin is breathing in the thrilling energy of the music. Let the music's energy stay inside you as you exhale—even continue taking in more. (In other words, don't pay attention to your exhaling.)
- Also feel that the music is coming in through the soles of your feet, slowly traveling up your legs and into your torso.
- ***Do not let the energy rise into your eyes, face, head or neck!*** If you do, you'll shove the energy right out your eyes. It will be as if your head is a blender filled with liquid gold and you've switched it on high...without the top on.
- This is why I've used the Victoire de Samothrace statue: it has no head! Don't get your eyes involved. Keep the energy of happiness in your body. Compact it into your spine and the marrow of your bones.
- As the music continues, keep compacting that relentless determination to be happy. Let it fill up the clavicle, the sternum, and all the bones of your ribcage.
- And if it feels almost too full—as if you might "burst with joy," then start creating an imaginary cuirass (torso armor) of compacted joy about an inch out from your torso. You can "shape" the armor with your hands (palms facing your torso). Keep compacting it until it feels as if it's metallic in strength and durability, but weightless, warm and imbued with the hidden glow of joy in purpose.
- ***Use only the performance I've noted below!*** Other performances won't deliver the sturdy (alchemical Earth) delight (alchemical Fire) that you can store inside. I've included a link to it on YouTube (at about 59:37), but you should be able to access it on any good digital music platform.

JS Bach, B minor Mass, Hans Grischkat, conductor;

Schwäbische Kantorei, Orchester des 35. Bache-Festes

Cum sancto spiritu (59:37 – 1:04:05)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3XRgFbvfp0&t=1480s>

Forget the religious connotations of the lyrics. With this exercise, you are uniting your Being with the sacred spirit of your Inner Commander.