

Name: The Alchemist

Author: Paulo Coelho

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Comment:

What are your dreams? Most of you would probably dream of one day becoming a billionaire or you would have other special and lofty dreams. However, as time passes, a mysterious force begins to convince you that it will be impossible to achieve those dreams and persuades you to give up. However, Santiago proves that this force can be overcome and everything is possible. In *The Alchemist*, Santiago, who is an Andalusian shepherd boy, dreams of travelling to Egypt in search of a treasure. From his home in Spain he journeys to the exotic markets of Tangiers and then into the Egyptian desert. During his journey, he meets an old king, a thief, a crystal merchant, an Englishman, Fatima and an alchemist, from whom he learns a lot of things about life and realizes his destiny which helps him to overcome the difficulties and obstacles he meets during the journey. Finally, he finds the treasure and also his destiny.

'Go and try' is what I have learnt from this book. We should grasp our destiny and it is possible for us to achieve our dream. Our future is controlled by us, not by fate, if only we try to make the impossible become possible. Some people think that they are fated to be a loser and therefore they give up their dreams and let fate control their future. It is wrong! At first, Santiago's father wants Santiago to be a priest but Santiago summons up the courage to tell his father that he wants to travel and wants to be a shepherd. Finally, his father respects his decision. When he thinks that he will spend his life with his flock of sheep and be an ordinary shepherd for the rest of his life, a strange dream changes his destiny. The encounter with the old king helps him to recognize his destiny, encourages him to strive for his dream and find the treasure in Egypt. Finally, Santiago finds his treasure. This shows we should identify our path of life, and strive to fulfil our dreams. Then we may find some unexpected results.

The crystal merchant also dream of visiting the holy city of Mecca but he never tries to fulfil this dream because he thinks that it is the thought of Mecca that keeps him alive. He is afraid that if his dream is realized, he will have no reason to go on living. Although different people have different destinies, I think the crystal merchant should try to make his dream come true. I agree that our dream motivates us to work hard, and the happiness of fulfilling a dream is also a force for our next dream. When one dream is achieved, we can always have another dream.

Some people refuse to recognize their dreams. They think their dreams are too imaginary and impossible to fulfil. The fear of failure makes a dream impossible to

achieve and they give up. I utterly disagree with this kind of thinking. In ancient times, people had never thought that their descendants could invent computers, televisions, and mobile phones. These products are invented because the inventors have their dreams. If they had given up their dreams whenever they met obstacles, our society would have been very backward today. Therefore, we should not scorn our dreams and other people's dreams. If a person is living out his destiny, he knows everything he needs to know and how to overcome the obstacles.

'Listen to your heart' is also an important element to achieve your dreams. Although our hearts may keep telling us the sadness, the negative side of pursuing our dream, we should still listen to our heart. Since we will never be able to keep it quiet, even if we pretend not to have heard what it tells us, it will always be there inside us, repeating what we are thinking about life and around the world. 'No heart has ever suffered when it goes in search of its dreams, because every second of the search is a second's encounter with God and with eternity,' said the Alchemist. Therefore, the search of dream is in fact interesting and happy, although we may meet some obstacles and our hearts will also irritate us, we should be persistent and tell our heart to have confidence. Gradually, you will have the courage to try things that seem impossible for a common person to achieve.

Different people have different dreams. Some people's dreams may be very lofty like maintaining world peace; they may also be very simple like being a successful office lady. We should respect one's dream. Those people who laugh at people's dreams can never fulfil their dreams. Like the leader of the attackers, the refugee from the tribal wars, who has a recurrent dream that he will find a hidden treasure. However, he doesn't believe it and he laughs at Santiago who is also looking for his treasure. Therefore the attacker is not able to find the treasure while Santiago is. Sometime, our rationality stops us from pursuing our dreams. It makes us think that the reality is cruel and when it is a battle between fantasy and reality, we'd better do our present job and stop dreaming. This thinking will stop a person from achieving his dream. In fact, everything is possible if we are willing to try and persevere.

My favorite character is Santiago, who is a persistent and observant boy. During the journey to Egypt, his persistence contributes to his success in finding his treasure and his destiny. His persistence also keeps him trying and blocks out any thought of giving up. His persistence of pursuing his dream is strong although the journey is difficult and arduous. This spirit is the keystone of his success. While most of us take a fickle attitude towards our future and our destiny, Santiago is very persistent. At the same time, Santiago is very observant to his surroundings and learns from them. For example, he learns from his sheep, his experience, the desert and the wind. I think we should learn from him and pay attention to everything surrounding us, which it always

tells us something about life. However, people living in the world today only care about money and neglect the importance of nature. They do not have the patience to stop for a while and listen to the sound of nature and listen to their hearts, which become a stumbling block in their path of life and prevent them from achieving their dreams.

All in all, this book is a philosophical book which tells us about dream and destiny through the experience of Santiago. It tells us to follow our dream, and listen to our heart. Learning to be persistent and observant is also the keystone in achieving our dreams. After reading this book, you will be encouraged to find your dream and destiny. However, we should not be scared by the minor mistakes. They are actually there to help us to achieve our dream and enrich our life.

Sham Wing Yin