Self-Reliance

# Ralph Waldo Emerson

* Every time in someone’s life, that person realizes that “envy is ignorance”- (we want others’ lives, but we don’t actually know what is really happening in their lives)
* He says “imitation is suicide”- (copying what others do, or trying to be like everyone else will lead to one’s downfall)
* Accept who you are or you won’t be successful
* “No kernel…to till” You have to take what you’re given and make something of it. You’re not going to have life handed to you.
* Trust yourself. Your heart should be your compass.
* Trust your higher power.
* The men who have been successful have followed this path^
* To be a man- you cannot conform. You must be a nonconformist (doesn’t follow the crowd, does his own thing.)
* Transcendentalism= All about experiences! Emerson felt that you should worry about your experiences, not whether you’re good or evil.
* If you follow your own moral compass, the world will accept you as a good person.
* When Emerson was young, he was taught the ways of the church. He asked his minister why he had to follow traditions if he knew he lived a “good” or holy life. The minister replied, asking how he knew he wasn’t living from the Devil.
* Emerson answered by saying he wasn’t going to conform to the church, and if that made him living from the Devil, then he was. (He wasn’t.)
* I have my own constitution (my own version of right and wrong) that I live by, not other people’s.
* You’ll always have people trying to control you, but if you live for YOU, you’ll learn to follow your own path.
* In a group, it’s easy to conform, in solitude (by yourself) it’s easy to follow your own path, but it takes a strong man to, in a group, not conform.
* A man must know how to identify a bad guy.
* This “bad guy” is directed by society, by the newspapers.
* Another mistake we make is focusing on the past
* Say what you want to say today, then say what you want to say tomorrow, even if it contradicts what you said yesterday. (Don’t focus on the past.)
* “To be great is to be misunderstood.” He’s saying all of the great people of the world (Jesus, Newton, Socrates (philosopher), were misunderstood. They followed their own path, which led to greatness.