

# personal english

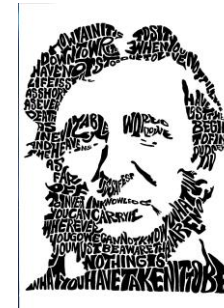


## Book #15

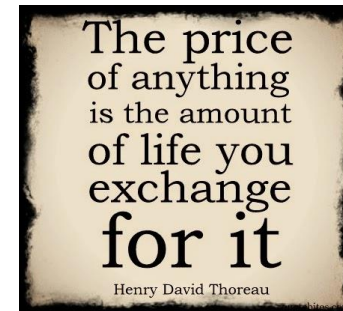
### Henry David Thoreau **On the Duty of Civil Disobedience**

Persuaded that 'sucking out the marrow of life' meant living one's own existence in the most natural and self-possessed way as possible, Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) spent **2 years, 2 months and 2 days** in a self-built isolated cabin in the woods at **Walden Pond** (Massachusetts) and narrated this experience in one of the most norm-breaking essays ever, **Walden, or Life in the Woods (1854)**.

Upon coming back to society after this experience, Thoreau ran across the local **tax collector**, who asked him to pay six years of delinquent poll taxes. Thoreau refused on account of his opposition to slavery as well as to the Mexican-American war – in other words, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the government's choices by refusing to financially support that very government through the payment of taxes. This protest resulted in a short detention in **jail** – an experience that got Thoreau to come up with the concept of civil disobedience in the essay **On the Duty of Civil Disobedience (1849)**, which would influence such later thinkers and politicians as **Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr,** and **Martin Buber**.



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