

THOMAS L. JACKSON, PH.D

MOMENTS
OF
CLARITY

DISCOVERING OURSELVES
IN THE STORIES, EXPERIENCE,
AND THE WISDOM
OF THE WORLD

FROM THE AUTHOR OF
IN ANY GIVEN MOMENT AND
GO BACK, YOU DIDN'T SAY MAY I

Books by the Author

Go Back, You Didn't Say May I: Thirtieth Anniversary Edition

Moments of Clarity

Moments of Clarity, Volume II

Moments of Clarity, Volume III

In Any Given Moment

Me & Us

Life's Secrets

Life's Secrets, Part II

STOP! Before You Kiss That Frog.... [humor]

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For

Mary Esperance Jackson

who has been
“Mother Mary”
to so many for so long,
whose love of words and people
has created her own
wisdom and clarity
for the rest of us to receive.
With love.

Forward

It was decades ago that I first came across the term “commonplace book,” thanks to an explanation I happened to find in such a volume by W. H. Auden. Like most folks, I suppose, I had always thought that “commonplace” meant simply that: ordinary, unremarkable, and rather forgettable.

Yet Auden taught me something new: that the archaic term “commonplace book” connoted, in fact, just the opposite; it was a book in which one collects or gathers writings, sayings, and memorable matters, so that they will not be lost to the collector.

I decided at that moment that I wanted to offer such a gift to myself, to become a collector of thoughts, wisdom, perceptions, stories, learnings; in other words, some guideposts for my own journey of life.

It has been, I think, one of the better gifts I’ve ever offered myself...and now, I hope, I get to offer that same gift to you, partly in the desire to encourage other pilgrims to gain their own delight, to make their own commitment to forming a cache of treasure for their own life’s journey.

Beyond that cornerstone reason of maintaining in one place those things which others have to teach me, I would suggest that there are collateral possibilities for the use of this collection, and I mention only a few:

- if one is of a certain mood or emotion--especially in a state of confusion or depression or frustration--I believe that the reading of a mere three or four pages, taken anywhere herein, could quickly set some matters straight, enthuse the heart, enliven the passions, and perhaps even offer some practical or spiritual responses to life’s odd moments and questions;
- as a daily menu, such a collection--taken in limited bites--could offer a wondrous possibility for contemplation, meditation, reflection, spiritual direction, or simply a helpful relaxation amid the speed and demands of this outrageous world;
- in this day of illusion--in which we are often told to believe that there really are so-called “self-made” men and women--perhaps the words of our ancestors and of our peers will at least gently remind us that we live and grow in the continuum of a universal quest for meaning and understanding;
- perhaps it’s not too outrageous a possibility that adolescents (of whatever age!) might wish to peruse the reflections of pilgrims who have struggled with life, love, sex, identity, discipline, failure, success, relationships, and uncertainty in a myriad of ways and responses;
- in this era of diminishing language, we are given an opportunity to relish words, to consider them again in their real meanings, or even to use that trusty dictionary to find from what roots they came, and therefore how language has evolved or devolved;
- we may, in fact, be so caught by the specific words and thoughts of a certain writer that we will gift ourselves further by seeking out the fuller work of that author...which, likely, will lead us to even others;
- on a very practical level, I believe that any three to five pages, taken arbitrarily, could offer the novelist that elusive combination of outline and characters...a preacher, the certain basis for sound homiletics...the storyteller, a gold mine of lore...the businessperson, a means of motivation and sound ethics...the psychiatrist (or patient!), a reminder of life’s holistic makeup...a dramatist, the essence of

soliloquy...and the rest of us, the delicious epiphany that our lives do matter, for our hopes and dreams are rehearsed by others in the endless chorus.

And so the gift is passed on to you, to expand and build upon in your own way.

I offer, finally, a few of *suggestions* for this reading and digesting:

- do not seek “categories” of wisdom or discovery in these pages (or in life!), for there is no “order” to the arrival of clarity; neither seek my own bias or agreement with various entries, but rather find your own mind and heart in each author’s offering;
- although we may commiserate about the lack of gender inclusivity in previous times, please do not fret over the absence of such sophistication in writers of earlier eras, for I do believe that period writers or speakers often meant to include and/or address both sexes;
- regrettably, such a collection can be used--as some continue to use various scripture--as a hammer with which to beat others over the head, to make a point, to gather momentum for a certain bias, or to inflict the wound of one-upmanship, rather than for personal or communal discovery;
- in any such collection, especially one gained over such a period of time, there may be an occasion of incorrect or absent attributions, or the wrongly transcribed words of the original author; any of these herein are truly innocent, and I know that you will be kind enough to let me know of any needed corrections for future editions.

Blessings,

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A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience.
Oliver Wendell Holmes

One way to open your eyes to unnoticed beauty is to ask yourself: What if I had never seen this before? What if I would never see it again?
Rachel Carson

All great truths begin as blasphemies.
George Bernard Shaw

Sometime in your life, pray that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. Hope that you might have baked it or bought it or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you will be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little even...
Daniel Berrigan

Everything begins in mysticism and ends in politics.
Charles Peguy

Beware of all enterprises requiring new clothes.
Henry David Thoreau

You shall judge of a man by his foes as well as his friends.
Joseph Conrad

How lovely it is to look through the broken window and discover the Milky Way.
Issa

From compromise and things half done,
Keep me with stern and stubborn pride.
And when at last the fight is won,
God, keep me still unsatisfied.
Louis Untermeyer

Don't refuse to go on an occasional wild-geese chase; that is what wild geese are made for.
Henry S. Haskins

Noncooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good.
Mohandas K. Gandhi

If we'd had the right technology back then, you would have seen Eva Braun on The Donahue Show and Adolf Hitler on Meet the Press.
Ted Turner

Fire is the first and final mask of God.

Nikos Kazantzakis

The average man votes below himself; he votes with half a mind or a hundredth part of one. A man ought to vote with the whole of himself, as he worships or gets married. A man ought to vote with his head and heart, his soul and stomach, his eye for faces and his ear for music; also (when sufficiently provoked) with his hands and feet. If he has ever seen a fine sunset, the crimson color of it should creep into his vote.... The question is not so much whether only a minority of the electorate votes. The point is that only a minority of the voter votes.

G. K. Chesterton

Choosing the lesser of two evils is still choosing evil.

Jerry Garcia

C. S. Lewis said people who are in love are always willing to give up power, while people who are afraid are always trying to amass power.

T Bone Burnett

We assume that politicians are without honor. We read their statements, trying to crack the code. The scandal of their politics . . . [is] not so much that men in high places lie, only that they do so with such indifference, so endlessly, still expecting to be believed.

Adrienne Rich

When the ax comes into the forest, the trees, seeing the handle, say to each other, "He is one of us."

Hassidic proverb

His demeanor proclaimed a relaxed confidence that all men dreamed of and precious few obtained. His wit was obvious, his attention to others sincere, and his sense of humor legendary. I found myself disliking the son of a bitch at once.

Dan Simmons

As long as civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions. Our riches will leave us sick; there will be bitterness in our laughter, and our wine will burn our mouth. Only that good profits which we can taste with all doors open, and which serves all men.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

John Adams

If you want to identify me ask not where I live, or what I like to eat, or how I comb my hair, but ask me what I am living for, in detail, and ask me what I think is keeping me from living fully for the thing I want to live for. Between these two answers you can determine the identity of any person.

Thomas Merton

Do not fear confrontation. Even when the planets collide, out of chaos comes the birth of a star.

Charlie Chaplin

Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

Mark Twain

There is no failure except in no longer trying. There is no defeat except from within, no really insurmountable barrier save our own inherent weakness of purpose.

Elbert Hubbard

Any marriage, happy or unhappy, is infinitely more interesting and significant than any romance, however passionate.

W. H. Auden

It is no longer the time of day for making plans, but for having them.

Greek proverb

Jesus did not get crucified for being obedient; he was crucified for continuously violating boundaries.

Frank Romanowicz

Government is actually the worst failure of civilized man. There has never been a really good one, and even those that are most tolerable are arbitrary, cruel, grasping, and unintelligent.

H. L. Mencken

Nothing will change until we demolish the "we-they" mentality. We are human, and therefore all human concerns are ours. And those concerns are personal.

Sam Hamill

I don't have general views about anything, except social injustice.

Marguerite Duras

Liberals feel unworthy of their possessions. Conservatives feel they deserve everything they've stolen.

Mort Sahl

Hope arouses, as nothing else can arouse, a passion for the possible.

William Sloan Coffin, Jr.

One-fifth of the people are against everything all the time.

Robert F. Kennedy

I began the revolution with eighty-two men. If I had it to do again, I'd do it with ten or fifteen and absolute faith. It does not matter how small you are if you have faith and a plan of action.

Fidel Castro

The changes in our life must come from the impossibility to live otherwise than according to the demands of our conscience . . . not from our mental resolution to try a new form of life.

Leo Tolstoy

There is a marvelous story of a man who once stood before God, his heart breaking from the pain and injustice in the world. "Dear God," he cried out, "look at all the suffering, the anguish and distress in the world. Why don't you send help?" God responded, "I did send help. I sent you."

David J. Wolpe

In some towns, before Passover, Jews would raise funds discreetly: One by one, they would enter a room in the community house. There they would find a dish filled with money. Those who had money left some; those who needed money took some. No one knew how much was given or how much was taken. Thus, the needy were cared for with dignity.

Elie Wiesel

How is it that you do not know how to interpret these times?

Luke 12

I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what Light I have.

Abraham Lincoln

I have suffered from being misunderstood, but I would have suffered a hell of a lot more if I had been understood.

Clarence Darrow

The true value of a human being is determined primarily by the measure and the sense in which he has attained liberation from the self.

Albert Einstein

To feed men and not to love them is to treat them as if they were barnyard cattle. To love them and not to respect them is to treat them as if they were household pets.

Mencius

If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

John F. Kennedy

For years, we've heard that the Sunday morning worship hour is the most segregated

hour in the US. That may be. But the real problem is that what is said and done during this hour often functions to sanction the racial and economic segregation that is lived out during the rest of the week.

Jack Johnson-Hill

America has the best-dressed poverty the world has ever known.... It is much easier in the United States to be decently dressed than it is to be decently housed, fed, or doctored.

Michael Harrington

We have grown literally afraid to be poor. We despise anyone who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life.

William James

I define love thus: The will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth.

M. Scott Peck

For those who have lived on the edge of poverty all their lives, the semblance of poverty affected by the affluent is both incomprehensible and insulting.

Lillian Breslow Rubin

The tragedy of love is indifference.

W. Somerset Maugham

When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.

Ethiopian proverb

Nature never makes any blunders; when she makes a fool, she means it.

Josh Billings

I want always to love, always to suffer, always to die, without death daring to offer me his refuge.

Pierre Corneille

So whether we're climbing a high mountain or traveling a long and difficult road or working through the grieving/loss process, our bodies and souls try to remind us that there is a need for resting, replenishing, rejuvenating. If that plateau or rest-stop arrives in the form of laughter or joy or celebration, we would do well to acknowledge it, allow it, enjoy it!

Thomas L. Jackson

It is the dull man who is always sure, and the sure man who is always dull.

H. L. Mencken

Snobbery is pride in status without pride in function.

Lionel Trilling

I used to think I was poor. Then they told me I wasn't poor, I was needy. Then they told me it was self-serving to think of myself as needy, I was deprived. Then they told me deprived was a bad image, I was underprivileged. Then they told me underprivileged was overused, I was disadvantaged. I still don't have a dime. But I sure have a great vocabulary.

Jules Feiffer

Sometimes a person hits upon a place to which they mysteriously feel that they belong. Here is the home they sought, and they will settle amid scenes that they have never seen before, among people they have never known, as though they were familiar to them from birth. Here at last they find rest.

W. Somerset Maugham

When society does step in to help out a poor woman attempting to raise children on her own, all that it customarily has to offer is some government-surplus cheese, a monthly allowance so small it would barely keep a yuppie male in running shoes, and the contemptuous epithet "welfare cheat."

Barbara Ehrenreich

Rich folks always talks hard times.

Lillian Smith

The four sons of my friend heard me say, and repeat: "This box of chocolates is for the four of you. One, two, three, four. Have you heard?" When I gave the box to the youngest, saying once again that it was for all, the little one opened it, and, pressing it to his chest, exclaimed, "It's mine, it's mine!" I felt as if I had just witnessed a meeting of the powerful of the earth.

Dom Helder Camara

All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

Edgar Allan Poe

There is no throne high enough
For the teachers,
Nurses, and Caregivers.
Why, then,
Do we throw pennies
At Queens and Kings?

Jane Evershed

People say that what we're all seeking is meaning for life. I don't think that's what we're really seeking. I think what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experience on the purely physical plane will have some resonance within our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive.

Joseph Campbell

I begin to suspect that a man's bewilderment is the measure of his wisdom.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

One hour of life crowded to the full with glorious action, and filled with noble risks, is worth whole years of those mean observances of paltry decorum.

Sir Walter Scott

Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can.

John Wesley

The relationship between our motives and our quality of mind is very subtle. Can we give truly without any expectation of getting something back, just for the joy of giving?

Becoming very honest with ourselves is part of our training in morality.

Joseph Goldstein

Men feel that cruelty to the poor is a kind of cruelty to animals. They never feel that it is injustice to equals; nay, it is treachery to comrades.

G. K. Chesterton

Christmas reminds us that it is not enough to bring God into our hearts. When God comes, God never comes alone. Jesus asks us to take in his strange friends, his dispossessed and uprooted children, his unpopular causes and projects.

Doris Donnelly

No matter how many Christmas presents you give your child, there's always that terrible moment when he's opened the very last one. That's when he expects you to say, "Oh yes, I almost forgot," and take him out and show him the pony.

Mignon McLaughlin

I was in love with the whole world and all that lived in its rainy arms.

Louise Erdrich

Most people resemble great deserted palaces. The owner occupies only a few rooms and has closed off wings where he or she never ventures.

Francois Mauriac

The most important word in any known language is the word used to denote that which is the single noncontingent reality of life---that word is love. Life, by definition, is the reciprocity of Divine Love. Jesus, the Christ, knew this, as did the Buddha, and this knowing was their religion. Unfortunately, much of Christianity and much of Buddhism are today not the religions of the Christ or of the Buddha, but instead, religions about the Christ and about the Buddha.

John Groff

Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out.
James B. Conant

No one can confidently say that he will still be living tomorrow.
Euripides

It is only irritating to think one would like to be somewhere else. Here we are now.
John Cage

There is nothing heavier than compassion. Not even one's pain weighs so heavy as the pain one feels with someone, for someone, a pain intensified by the imagination and prolonged by a hundred echoes.
Milan Kundera

Concern should drive us into action and not into a depression.
Karen Horney

Dorotheos of Gaza, a sixth-century teacher, once preached a sermon for the monks in his monastery who were grumbling that they were unable to love God properly because they had to put up with one another's ordinary, irritating presence. No, Dorotheos told them, they were wrong. He asked them to visualize the world as a great circle whose center is God, and upon whose circumference lie human lives. "Imagine now," he asked them, "that there are straight lines connecting from the outside of the circle all human lives to God at the center. Can't you see that there is no way to move toward God without drawing closer to other people, and no way to approach other people without coming near to God?"
Martin E. Marty

I would never betray a friend to serve a cause. Never reject a friend to help an institution. Great nations may fall in ruin before I would sell a friend to save them.
Edward Abbey

If they can get you asking the wrong questions, they don't have to worry about the answers.
Thomas Pynchon

When I speak of darkness, I am referring to a lack of knowing. It is a lack of knowing that includes everything you do not know or else that you have forgotten, whatever is altogether dark for you because you do not see it with your spiritual eye. And for this reason it is not called a cloud of the air, but rather a cloud of unknowing that is between you and your God.
"The Cloud of Unknowing"

He who wishes to teach us a truth should not tell it to us, but simply suggest it with a brief gesture, a gesture which starts an ideal trajectory in the air along which we glide until we find ourselves at the feet of the new truth.

Jose Ortega y Gasset

God, the sky is blue, and the air is shot with gold. A moment ago, we passed a farmyard where a girl about twelve, wearing a blue-and-white dress, stood waving, dwarfed by a lilac bush whose blossoms were already rusted. She seemed to beckon, but of course she was just waving at the world--us--passing by. She would have been alarmed if we'd stopped. But the impression remains that she was inviting us in.

Patricia Hampl and Steven Sorman

There are three great things that happen to a man in his lifetime. Buying a house...a car...and a new color TV. That is what America is all about.

Archie Bunker

To prevent the next war, we have to practice peace today.
If we establish peace in our hearts and in our ways of looking at things, war will not come. If we wait until another war is imminent to begin to practice it, it will be too late.
Thich Nhat Hanh

Simplicity of living means meeting life face to face. It means confronting life clearly, without unnecessary distractions, without trying to soften the awesomeness of our existence or mask the deeper magnificence of life with pretentious, distracting, and unnecessary accumulations.

Duane Elgin

I hate American simplicity. I glory in the piling up of complications of every sort. If I could pronounce the name James in any different or more elaborate way I should be in favor of doing it.

Henry James

He prayed as he breathed, forming no words and making no specific requests, only holding in his heart, like broken birds in cupped hands, all those people who were in stress or grief.

Ellis Peters

The love of our neighbor in all its fullness simply means being able to say to him, "What are you going through?"

Simone Weil

The stereotype that a gay man is womanish or that a lesbian woman is mannish may be inaccurate as a universal construct. Yet it unwittingly suggests that we hold together the attributes of male and female in our personalities, just as the Bible holds them together in the personality of God. The best retort to the charge of being a "sissy" may be, "Thank you, but I'm not really that divine." Genesis 1 reminds me that I am not universal in myself. God's image holds me together with every other human being.

John Linscheid

Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays.
Soren Kierkegaard

If you talk to God, you are praying; if God talks to you, you have schizophrenia.
Thomas Szasz

A good marriage is that in which each appoints the other guardian of his solitude.
Ranier Maria Rilke

The situation of the soul in contemplation is something like the situation of Adam and Eve in paradise. Everything is yours, but on one infinitely important condition: that it is all given. There is nothing that you can claim, nothing that you can demand, nothing that you can take. And as soon as you try to take something as if it were your own--you lose your Eden.
Thomas Merton

Do not use a hatchet to remove a fly from your friend's forehead.
Chinese proverb

When your work speaks for itself, don't interrupt.
Henry J. Kaiser

A conservative is a man with two perfectly good legs who, however, has never learned to walk.
Franklin Delano Roosevelt

And the stars come down so close, and sadness and pleasure so close together, really the same thing. Like to stay drunk all the time. Who says it's bad? Who dares to say it's bad? Preachers--but they got their own kinda drunkenness. Thin, barren women, but they're too miserable to know. Reformers--but they don't bite deep enough into living to know. No--the stars are close and dear and I have joined the brotherhood of the worlds. And everything's holy--everything, even me.
John Steinbeck

It appears that even the different parts of the same person do not converse among themselves, do not succeed in learning from each other what are their desires and their intentions.
Rebecca West

Every decision you make is a mistake.
Edward Dahlberg

Most of us live like stand-up comedians on a vaudeville stage...by our humble wits, messing up, swallowing an aspirin, knowing Hollywood won't call, thinking no one we love will die today, just another day of sunshine and rain.
Edward Hoagland

Political language . . . is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.

George Orwell

Even a stopped clock is right twice every day. After some years, it can boast of a long series of successes.

Marie Von Ebner-Eschenbach

There can be no love in one who does not love himself, and one can only love himself if he has the compassion that grows out of the terrifying confrontation with one's own self.

William Irwin Thompson

I see politicians...as intelligent people who would like to do good, but who are still trapped in the world of power. We can't assume that just because they are young and say good things it means that they are deeply connected to inner levels of being. It's up to us to create an environment which can resonate with a deeper wisdom in them, and support them in acting from that wisdom.

Ram Dass

We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.

Omar Bradley

Tonight I will sleep beneath your feet, O Lord of the mountains and valleys, ruler of the trees and vines. I will rest in your love, with you protecting me as a father protects his children, with you watching over me as a mother watches over her children. Then tomorrow the sun will rise and I will not know where I am; but I know that you will guide my footsteps.

Sioux prayer

At midnight I abruptly awakened. At first my mind was foggy.... Then all at once I was struck as though by lightning, and the next instant heaven and earth crumbled and disappeared. Instantaneously, like surging waves, a tremendous delight welled up in me, a veritable hurricane of delight, as I laughed loudly and wildly, "There's no reasoning here, no reasoning at all! Ha! Ha! Ha!" The empty sky split in two, then opened its enormous mouth and began to laugh uproariously: "Ha! Ha! Ha!"

Koun Yamada

It often happens that I wake at night and begin to think about a serious problem and decide I must tell the pope about it. Then I wake up completely and remember that I am the pope.

John XXIII

Sorrow is a good medicine for the soul. Those who do not drink from the cup of sorrow will never understand the significance of our lives. Through sorrow one can come to understand the importance of being kind to others. Through sorrow one can come to

know truths which one would never learn through academic study or by common sense.
And through sorrow one can gain the power and courage to overcome adversity and
understand others who are in adverse situations. Susumu Ishitani

It's very possible that your life in art--your successful life in art--might be a struggle from
start to finish.
Sally Warner

If you don't live it, it won't come out your horn.
Charlie Parker

The poor have been rebels but they never have been anarchists; they have more interest
than anyone else in there being some decent government; the poor person really has a
stake in the country. The rich person hasn't; they can go away to New Guinea in a
yacht. The poor have sometimes objected to being governed badly; the rich have always
objected to being governed at all.
G. K. Chesterton

Artists don't talk about art. Artists talk about work. If I have anything to say to young
writers, it's stop thinking of writing as art. Think of it as work.
Paddy Chayevsky

Point me the way to any one particular beautiful star.
John Keats

To be nobody-but-yourself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you
everybody else, means to fight the hardest battle any human being can fight; and never
stop fighting.
e e cummings

I learned long ago never to wrestle with a pig. You get dirty, and besides, the pig likes it.
Cyrus Ching

Nonviolent resistance does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his
friendship and understanding... The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the
beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

Is life not a hundred times too short to bore ourselves?
Friedrich Nietzsche

I have asked a lot of my emotions--120 stories. The price was high . . . because there was
one little drop of something, not blood, not a tear, not my seed, but me more intimately
than these, in every story; it was the extra I had.
F. Scott Fitzgerald

May those that love us, love us; and those that don't love us, may God turn their hearts; and if he doesn't turn their hearts, may he turn their ankles so we'll know them by their limping.

Irish Prayer

Do not think of your faults, still less of others' faults; look for what is good and strong, and try to imitate it. Your faults will drop off, like dead leaves, when their time comes.

John Ruskin

Creative minds always have been known to survive any kind of bad training.

Anna Freud

There is no such thing as Art. There are only artists.

E. H. Gombrich

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

Thomas Edison

If you wish to be a writer, write.

Epictetus

Could Hamlet have been written by a committee, or the Mona Lisa painted by a club? Could the New Testament have been composed as a conference report? Creative ideas do not spring from groups. They spring from individuals. The divine spark leaps from the finger of God to the finger of Adam, whether it takes ultimate shape in a law of physics or a law of the land, a poem or a policy, a sonata or a mechanical composition.

A. Whitney Griswold

No one has ever written, painted, sculpted, modeled, built, or invented except literally to get out of hell.

Antonin Artaud

The great thing and the hard thing is to stick to things when you have outlived the first interest, and not yet got the second, which comes with a sort of mastery.

Janet Erskine Stuart

Nothing will ever be attempted if all possible objections must first be overcome.

Samuel Johnson

Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of a man at twice his natural size.

Virginia Woolf

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or find it not.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

When we are made aware that all around us changes, and that those we cherish must pass away, the human spirit yearns for the constant and the lasting. Then, more than ever, we need to find a relation to something reliable and enduring as a refuge from all that is not.
James Luther Mays

Love must be learned and learned again and again; there is no end to it. Hate needs no instruction, but waits only to be provided.
Katherine Anne Porter

The question becomes: what is the appropriate behavior for a man or a woman in the midst of this world, where each person is clinging to his piece of debris? What is the proper salutation between people as they pass each other in this flood?
Leonard Cohen

What never vary are the necessities of being in the world, of having to labor and to die there.
Jean-Paul Sartre

I do believe it is possible to create, even without ever writing a word or painting a picture, by simply molding one's inner life. And that, too, is a deed.
Etty Hillesum

To fall in love is easy, even to remain in it is not difficult; our human loneliness is cause enough. But it is a hard quest worth making to find a comrade through whose steady presence one becomes steadily the person one desires to be.
Anna Louise Strong

A happy marriage is a long conversation which always seems too short.
Andre Maurois

These many beautiful days
cannot be lived again
but they are compounded in
my own spirit
and I take them in full measure
toward whatever lies ahead
Daniel Berrigan

At the funeral of a great Hasidic master, a disciple was asked what was most important to his teacher. He responded, "Whatever he happened to be doing at the moment."
An Hasidic tale

If your everyday practice is to open to all your emotions, to all the people you meet, to all the situations you encounter, without closing down, trusting that you can do that--then

that will take you as far as you can go. And then you'll understand all the teachings that anyone has ever taught.

Pema Chodron

Freedom is a very great reality. But it means, above all, freedom from lies.

D.H. Lawrence

A group of political activists were attempting to show the master how their ideology would change the world. The master listened carefully. The following day he said, "An ideology is as good or bad as the people who make use of it. If a million wolves were to organize for justice would they cease to be a million wolves?"

Anthony de Mello

Those who want to do good are not selfish, they are not in a hurry, they know that to impregnate people with good requires a long time.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

And this is the simple truth--that to live is to feel oneself lost. He who accepts it has already begun to find himself to be on firm ground.

Jose Ortega y Gasset

When one is young one doesn't feel a part of it yet, the human condition. One does things, but they are not for good, everything is a rehearsal . . . to be put right when the curtain goes up in earnest. One day you know that the curtain was up all the time. That was the performance.

Sybille Bedford

He said not

thou shalt not be troubled

thou shalt not be tempted

thou shalt not be distressed

But he said

thou shalt not be overcome

Julian of Norwich

For Christ sake write and don't worry about what the boys will say nor whether it will be a masterpiece nor what. I write one page of masterpiece to ninety-one pages of shit.

Ernest Hemingway

A Japanese artist was commissioned by an American to do a painting. The completed work had, in a lower corner, the branch of a cherry tree with a few blossoms and a bird perched upon it. The entire upper half of the painting was white. Unhappy, the American asked the artist to put something else in the painting because it looked, well, so bare. The Japanese refused the request. When pressed for an explanation, the artist said that if he did fill up the painting, there would be no space for the bird to fly.

Robert A. Rosenstone

"You Europeans think it disgraceful to expose your bodies," a Japanese once told me, "but you shamelessly expose your minds. Everybody knows how men and women are made, so we see no shame in uncovering our bodies. We think it improper to uncover our thoughts."

William Plover

Oscar Wilde, on his deathbed, was drifting in and out of consciousness. Once, when he opened his eyes, he was heard to murmur, "This wallpaper is killing me; one of us has got to go."

Unknown

Seven characteristics distinguish the wise: he does not speak in the presence of one wiser than himself, does not interrupt, is not hasty to answer, asks and answers the point, talks about first things first and last things last, admits when he does not know, and acknowledges the truth.

Talmud

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please does, in fact, please you.

Thomas Merton

Economics and politics are the governing powers of life today, and that's why everything is screwy.

Joseph Campbell

But you're gonna have to serve somebody, yes indeed,
You're gonna have to serve somebody.
Well it may be the devil, or it may be the Lord,
But you're gonna have to serve somebody.

Bob Dylan

If someone tells you he's going to make a "realistic decision," you immediately understand that he's resolved to do something bad.

Mary McCarthy

The superior man understands what is right; the inferior understands what will sell.
Confucius

The present age is demented. It is possessed by a sense of dislocation, a loss of personal identity, an alternating sentimentality and rage which, in an individual patient, could be characterized as dementia.

Walker Percy

We have two American flags always: one for the rich and one for the poor. When the rich fly it, it means that things are under control; when the poor fly it, it means danger, revolution, anarchy.

Henry Miller

In certain trying circumstances, urgent circumstances, desperate circumstances, profanity furnishes a relief denied even to prayer.

Mark Twain

Chance furnishes me what I need. I am like a man who stumbles along; my foot strikes something. I bend over and it is exactly what I want.

James Joyce

I slept and dreamed that life was happiness. I awoke and saw that life was service. I served, and I discovered that in service, one finds happiness.

Unknown

What the world expects of Christians is that Christians should speak out loud and clear...That they should get away from abstraction and confront the bloodstained face history has taken on today. The grouping we need is a grouping of people resolved to speak out clearly and to pay up personally.

Albert Camus

She tended to be impatient with that sort of intellectual who, for all his brilliance, has never been able to arrive at the simple conclusion that to be reasonably happy you have to be reasonably good.

Carolyn Kizer

Think about it: it is easy to see God's beauty in a glorious sunset or in ocean waves crashing on a beach. But can you find the holiness in a struggle for life?

Harold Kushner

Beginning today, treat everyone you meet as if he or she were going to be dead by midnight. Extend to them all the care, kindness, and understanding you can muster, and do so with no thought of any reward. Your life will never be the same again.

Og Mandino

There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning.

Thornton Wilder

Work as if you were to live 100 years. Pray as if you were to die tomorrow.

Ben Franklin

Life does not consist mainly--or even largely--of facts and happenings. It consists mainly of the storm of thoughts that is forever blowing through one's head.

Mark Twain

It is an escape for persons to cry, when this question of the equality of people is raised . . ., "Ah, but the situation is not so simple." . . . No great stride forward is ever made for the individual or for the human race unless the complex situation is reduced to one simple question and its simple answer.

Pearl S. Buck

Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
At all the times you can
To all the people you can
As long as you ever can
John Wesley

A group of people gathered on the edge of a flooding stream want to go to the far shore but are afraid. They don't know what to do until one wise person comes along, assesses the situation, takes a running leap, and jumps to the other side. Seeing the example of that person, the others say, "Yes, it can be done." Then they also jump. In this story the near shore is our usual confused condition, and the far shore is the awakened mind. Inspired by witnessing another, we say, "Yes, it can be done." That is one level of faith. After we have jumped ourselves, when we say, "Yes, it can be done," that is quite another level of faith.

Sharon Salzberg

I never get lost because I don't know where I'm going.
Zen master Ikkyu

"If I were the Creator," Nathan said, "most of all, I'd want my creatures to live every minute of their life, not be so afraid of doing something wrong that they failed to savor the feast I'd prepared for them. I'd want my people to plant, and swim, and taste and see, and play. As the sunsets' and the rainbows' creator, I'd love these purple and acid-greens you've painted this room, and I would be glad you risked loving."
Grant Spradling

Writing and travel broaden your ass if not your mind and I like to write standing up.
Ernest Hemingway

We do not understand the earth in terms either of what it offers us or of what it requires of us, and I think it is the rule that people inevitably destroy what they do not understand.... Our model citizen is a sophisticate who before puberty understands how to produce a baby, but at the age of thirty will not know how to produce a potato.
Wendell Berry

Jesus is not a blue-eyed right-winger. Jesus is the one who entered the world among the dispossessed and the outcasts to announce an entirely new way of thinking and living. The way of Jesus and the prophets . . . moves us beyond the familiar options of abandoning the poor, controlling the poor, or even "helping" the poor from places of isolation and comfort. Instead, it leads us to a new relationship with one another, a deep reconnection, a restoration of the shattered covenant.

Jim Wallis

The journey to happiness involves finding the courage to go down into ourselves and take responsibility for what's there. All of it.

Richard Rohr

I wonder whether you realize a deep, great fact. That souls, all human souls, are interconnected . . . that we can not only pray for each other but suffer for each other. Nothing is more real than this interconnection--this precious power put by God into the very heart of our infirmities.

Baron von Hugel

In orbiting the sun, the earth departs from a straight line by one-ninth of an inch every eighteen miles--a very straight line in human terms. If the orbit changed by one-tenth of an inch every eighteen miles, our orbit would be vastly larger and we would all freeze to death. One-eighth of an inch? We would all be incinerated.

Science Digest

Whenever I prepare for a journey, I prepare as though for death. Should I never return, all is in order. This is what life has taught me.

Katherine Mansfield

For the wonderful thing about saints is that they were human. They lost their tempers, got hungry, scolded God, were egotistical or testy or impatient in their turns, made mistakes and regretted them. Still they went on doggedly blundering toward heaven.

Phyllis McGinley

Do not, on a rainy day, ask your child what he feels like doing, because I assure you that what he feels like doing, you won't feel like watching.

Fran Lebowitz

What is always speaking silently is the body.

Norman O. Brown

There are only two industries which refer to their customers as "users"--drugs and computers.

Edward R. Tufte

If stories come to you, care for them. And learn to give them away where they are needed. Sometimes a person needs a story more than food to stay alive. That is why we

put these stories in each other's memory. This is how people care for themselves.
Barry Lopez

A sense of mortality should make us smarter. Life is short, so you do your work. You spend more time attending to music and art and literature, less time arguing politics. You plant trees. You cook spaghetti sauce. You talk to children. You don't let your life be eaten by salesmen and evangelists and the circuses of the media.
Garrison Keillor

I was raised by . . . people who regard telling one story when two would do as a sign someone is not really trying.
Linda Ellerbee

What was once called the objective world is a sort of Rorschach ink blot, into which each culture, each system of science and religion, each type of personality, reads a meaning only remotely derived from the shape and color of the blot itself.
Lewis Mumford

The Religious Right has co-opted the word "Christian." Those of us who try to follow Christ and have other values must come up with an effective response. We can't allow them to go on representing us to society and, even worse, representing Christ, because they're producing a completely twisted picture.
T Bone Burnett

Old places and old persons in their turn, when spirit dwells in them, have an intrinsic vitality of which youth is incapable; precisely the balance and wisdom that comes from long perspectives and broad foundations.
George Santayana

If there is one thing I have observed over the years that will bring a consistent and continuing return of pain, sadness, self-defeat, and despair, it is our practice--often habitually and chronically--to return to that "empty well," that behavior, that attitude, that person from which we receive virtually nothing except the cold, defeating comfort of a so-called familiar place.
Thomas L. Jackson

You can't judge Hollywood by superficial impressions. After you get past the artificial tinsel you get down to the real tinsel.
Samuel Goldwyn

Television, despite its enormous presence, turns out to have added pitifully few lines to the communal memory.
Justin Kaplan

The heroic hours of life do not announce their presence by drum and trumpet, challenging us to be true to ourselves....Some little, unassuming, unobtrusive choice presents itself

before us slyly and craftily, glib and insinuating, in the modest garb of innocence. To yield to its blandishments is so easy.

Benjamin Cardozo

Love and compassion predominate in the world. And this is why unpleasant events are "news"; compassionate activities are so much a part of daily life that they are taken for granted and, therefore, largely ignored.

The Dalai Lama

The sky is not less blue because the blind man does not see it.

Danish proverb

I use devotional objects to foster patience, just as the beads of a rosary are devotional tools to foster mindfulness. My tools to cultivate patience are fossils that friends have given me. I have a small trilobite, an ancient marine mammal, and another that may be an early form of the nautilus, and recently I received a tiny fish that's six hundred million years old. I look at those and handle them, and that's helpful to me.

David Steindl-Rast

We can only act within a world we can see. Vision is the necessary prerequisite for ethics.

Stanley Hauerwas/William H. Willimon

We are all prisoners, but some of us are in cells with windows and some without.

Kahlil Gibran

In situations of oppression, the church has always understood clearly that it's going to have to suffer persecution and deal with that persecution from the perspective of faith. The church in North America has been comfortable in its relationship with empire. We cannot continue to follow this path and remain the church. We need to understand that our conversion is going to require some blood, sweat, and tears.

John Fife

To love is to suffer. To avoid suffering one must not love. But then one suffers from not loving. Therefore, to love is to suffer. Not to love is to suffer. To suffer is to suffer. To be happy is to love. To be happy, then, is to suffer. But suffering makes one unhappy. Therefore, to be unhappy one must love, or love to suffer, or suffer from too much happiness. I hope you're getting this down.

Woody Allen

There are things that make us a community: attachment to place, attachment to local arts traditions, the ability to read literature, the ability to look at paintings, the sense of connectedness to the land, the sense of community that comes from people taking care of their own. The market doesn't make communities. Markets make networks of self-interested individuals, and they work as long as there's more than enough to go around.

Robert Hass

He [novelist Sinclair Lewis] doted on names; he believed people became their names. He had a stack of telephone books from all over the world, so he could find an odd but apt name for a character.... When he had to name a new character, he would make a list of a dozen possibilities and . . . day after day he would pick up the list and cross off a name or two, until he had made his final choice by elimination. I would sometimes hear him at his desk calling out names, as if summoning lost souls.

John Hersey

Ideologies . . . have no heart of their own. They're the whores and angels of our striving selves.

John Le Carre

We were just sitting there talking and people moved in on us. Let those who can take it, take it. Some moved out, and that made room for more. And somehow the walls expanded. We were just sitting there talking and someone said, "Let's all go and live on a farm." It was as casual as all that, I often think. It just came about. It just happened... It all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on.

Dorothy Day

Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present.

Albert Camus

If you make people think they're thinking, they'll love you; but if you really make them think, they'll hate you.

Don Marquis

Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.

Victor Hugo

Your will is free, upright and whole, and it would be a pity not to do as it says.

Dante

"Realistic" people who pursue "practical" aims are rarely as realistic or practical in the long run of life as the dreamers who pursue their dreams.

Hans Selye

When your dreams tire, they go underground / and out of kindness that's where they stay.

Libby Houston

Every daring attempt to make a great change in existing conditions, every lofty vision of new possibilities for the human race, has been labeled utopian.

Emma Goldman

No nation, no social institution, ever acquired coherence without some sort of fight. Out

of the fight come its myths and its heroes.
Thurman Arnold

The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative on the day after the revolution.
Hannah Arendt

This life therefore is not righteousness but growth in righteousness, not health but healing, not being but becoming. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it; the process is not finished, but it is going on; this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified.
Martin Luther

The dragon we must slay is no more than the monster of everyday expectations.
Sheldon Kopp

If you cry, "Forward!" you must be sure to make clear the direction in which to go. Don't you see that if you fail to do that and simply call out the word to a monk and a revolutionary, they will go in precisely opposite directions?
Anton Chekhov

The only thing certain is the experience of grace.
Frank Romanowicz

There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire. The other is to get it.
George Bernard Shaw

There is a time for departure even when there's no certain place to go.
Tennessee Williams

Many of the commonest assumptions, it seems to me, are arbitrary ones: that the new is better than the old, the untried superior to the tried, the complex more advantageous than the simple, the fast quicker than the slow, the big greater than the small, and the world as remodeled by Man the Architect functionally sounder and more agreeable than the world as it was before he changed everything to suit his vogues and his conniptions.
E. B. White

Sometimes small things are the ones one is grateful for all through life. At a faculty reception . . . a British lady taught me how to tie my shoes with a double knot so that they keep tied more securely and still come apart in a jiffy. Kneeling on the floor in the midst of the chattering sherry-sippers she tied my shoes. I remember her twice a day ever since.
Rudolf Arnheim

There is a bird in a poem by T.S. Eliot who says that mankind cannot bear very much reality; but the bird is mistaken. A man can endure the entire weight of the universe for eighty years. It is unreality that he cannot bear.

Ursula Le Guin

I was regretting the past and fearing the future

When suddenly my Lord was speaking

MY NAME IS I AM

He paused, I waited. He continued:

When you live in the past,

with its mistakes and regrets, it is hard.

I am not there.

My name is not I WAS.

When you live in the future,

with its problems and fears, it is also hard.

I am not there.

My name is not I WILL BE.

But when you live in this moment, it is not hard.

I am here.

My name is I AM.

Unknown

We always affirm with conditions. I affirm the world on condition that it gets to be the way Santa Claus told me it ought to be. But affirming it the way it is--that's the hard thing.

Joseph Campbell

If I were alone in the desert and feeling afraid, I would want a child to be with me. For then my fear would disappear and I would be made strong. This is what life in itself can do because it is so noble. so full of pleasure and so powerful.

Meister Eckhart

Don't pray when it rains if you don't pray when the sun shines.

Satchel Paige

We have all known the long loneliness, and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community.

Dorothy Day

The eight grades of charity:

1. to give reluctantly
2. to give cheerfully but not adequately
3. to give cheerfully and adequately, but only after being asked
4. to give cheerfully, adequately, and of your own free will, but to put it in the recipient's hand in such a way as to make him feel lesser
5. to let the recipient know who the donor is, but not the reverse
6. to know who is receiving your charity but to remain anonymous to him
7. to have neither the donor nor the recipient be aware of the other's identity
8. to dispense with charity altogether, by enabling your fellow humans to have the

wherewithal to earn their own living
Moses Maimonides

Fear tastes like a rusty knife and do not let her into your house.
John Cheever

I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger, and, as heat conserved is transmitted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmitted into a power which can move the world.
Mohandas K. Gandhi

Two disciples of an old rabbi were arguing about the true path to God. One said that the path was built on effort and energy. "You must give yourself totally and fully with all your effort to follow the way of the Law." The second disciple disagreed. "It's not effort at all. That is only based on ego. It is pure surrender. 'Not my will but thine.'" As they could not agree on who was right they went to see the master. He listened as the first disciple praised the path of wholehearted effort, and when asked by this disciple, "Is this the true path?" the master said, "You're right." The second disciple was quite upset and responded by eloquently explaining the path of surrender and letting go. When he had finished, he said, "Is this not the true path?" and the master replied, "You're right." A third student who was sitting there said, "But master, they can't both be right," and the master smiled and said, "You're right, too!"
An Hasidic tale

Life is better than death, I believe, if only because it is less boring, and because it has fresh peaches in it.
Alice Walker

We imagine that our mind is mirror, that it is more or less accurately reflecting what is happening outside us. On the contrary, our mind itself is the principal element of creation.
Rabindrarlath Tagore

Most of the time, we go along clouded by the suspicion, often justified, that we're alone in the world. Then, once in a while, miraculously, we're proved wrong. Friends appear at the front door prepared to gather round and save us. The reversal of feeling is as blindsiding as it is moving...Suddenly, it's a wonderful life.
Roger Rosenblatt

Fear and doubt are the things that limit us.
Rainer Maria Rilke

A man went into the forest and asked the trees to provide him a handle for his axe. The trees consented and gave him a young ash. No sooner had the man fitted a new handle to his axe, than he began to use it, and quickly felled the noblest giants of the forest. An old oak, lamenting too late the destruction of his companions, said to the neighboring cedar,

“The first step has lost us all. If we had not given up the rights of the ash, we might have retained our own privileges and have stood for the ages.”

Aesop

As soon as you have made a thought, laugh at it.

Lao Tzu

Why can we remember the tiniest detail that has happened to us and not remember how many times we have told it to the same person?

Francois, Duc La Rochefoucauld

Never apologize for showing feeling. Remember that when you do so you apologize for truth.

Benjamin Disraeli

I played with the idea of becoming a writer and later of becoming a painter, but my father discouraged the idea of either writing or painting as a career. "Do not treat the muses as cows to be milked," he said.

Fritz Heider

The day in the woods I took a compass was the day I got lost for sure.

John Cage

Although it takes us many years and many tears to discover it, life is only another name for death; they cannot exist independently.

Kathleen Norris

One said of suicide, "As long as one has brains one should not blow them out." And another answered, "But when one has ceased to have them, too often one cannot."

F. H. Bradley

Life is like Sanskrit read to a pony.

Lou Reed

The birth of a man is the birth of his sorrow. The longer he lives, the more stupid he becomes, because his anxiety to avoid unavoidable death becomes more and more acute. What bitterness! He lives for what is always out of reach! His thirst for survival in the future makes him incapable of living in the present.

Chuang Tzu

You cannot step twice into the same river.

Heraclitus

As a child I was told that grandfather spent an hour every morning and evening listening to God. So when I came suddenly upon my grandfather one day seated motionless in his armchair with closed eyes, I knew he was not asleep. He was talking with God. I

stopped short where I was and stood very still. Perhaps if I listened intently enough, I might hear God's voice speaking to my grandfather.

Helen Flexner

Have you found a wisdom greater than kindness?

Jean Jacques Rousseau

In the depths [of our soul] are the violence and terror of which psychology has warned us. But if you ride these monsters deeper down, if you drop with them farther over the world's rim, you find...our complex and inexplicable caring for each other, and for our life together here. This is given. It is not learned.

Annie Dillard

In a lot of organizations, if you fail at what you are doing, you'll find a pink slip in your box. The best organizations and leaders, I think, are asking people to take action that may sometimes lead to failure, to understand that from failure we learn. The spiritual gift on the inner journey is the knowledge that death is natural and that death is not the final word. The spiritual gift is to know that allowing something to die is also allowing new life to emerge.

Parker Palmer

It may be infinitely less evil to murder a man than to refuse to forgive him.

George MacDonald

After the defense attorney carefully explained to his seven-year-old son why and how the defendant was going to be executed, the boy asked, "Well, who is going to kill them for killing him?"

Unknown

I've stopped thinking all the time of what happened yesterday. And stopped asking myself what's going to happen tomorrow. What's happening today, this minute, is what I care about. I say: What are you doing at this moment, Zorba? . . . I'm kissing a woman. Well, kiss her well, Zorba. And forget all the rest while you're doing it; there's nothing else on earth, only you and her!

Nikos Kazantzakis

A primary cause of suffering is delusion: our inability . . . to see things the way they truly are.... The world is in fact a seamless and dynamic unity: a single living organism that is constantly undergoing change. Our minds, however, chop it up into separate, static bits and pieces, which we then try mentally and physically to manipulate. One of the mind's most dear creations is the idea of the person and, closest to home, of a very special person which each one of us calls "I": a separate, enduring ego or self. In a moment, then, the seamless universe is cut in two. There is "I"--and there is all the rest.

John Snelling

Country people do not behave as if they think life is short; they live on the principle that

life is long, and savor variations of the kind best appreciated if most days are the same.
Edward Hoagland

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
Reinhold Niebuhr

All shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.
Julian of Norwich

In American culture there is an overemphasis on autonomy and liberty. The focus is always upon the imperial self's rights and requirements for instant gratification and fulfillment:.. Glorified self-centeredness creates a primary obligation to the self that crowds out other obligations. While other people remain important, they can be seen to function mostly to fulfill the self's need for satisfying 'relationships.'
Sidney Callahan

If logic tells you that life is a meaningless accident, don't give up on life. Give up on logic.
Shira Milgrom

I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.
Helen Keller

The human soul is virtually indestructible, and its ability to rise from the ashes remains as long as the body draws breath.
Alice Miller

Everybody's a pacifist between wars. It's like being a vegetarian between meals.
Colman McCarthy

You've been somebody long enough. You spent the first half of your life becoming somebody. Now you can work on becoming nobody, which is really somebody. For when you become nobody there is no tension, no pretense, no one trying to be anyone or anything. The natural state of the mind shines through unobstructed-and the natural state of the mind is pure love.
Ram Dass

Where the spirit does not work with the hand there is no art.
Leonardo da Vinci

I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do.
Edward Everett Hale

One day a man walked by me in the street playing a guitar. He put my fingers on the strings and I played, not as if I were learning but as if I were remembering.

Andes Segovia

Almost anything you do will seem insignificant, but it is very important that you do it.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

God considers our misshapen countenance...How impossibly unprepared to be touched, kissed, held, loved by God...And then God rearranges the holy mouth, contorts it into a shape unbecoming of God, and kisses us full on the mouth, does God, this incarnation...

C. Blayney

A healthy adult male bore consumes each year one and a half times his own weight in other people's patience.

John Updike

Where does discontent start? You are warm enough, but you shiver. You are fed, yet hunger gnaws at you. You have been loved, but your yearning wanders in new fields. And to prod all these there's time, the Bastard Time.

John Steinbeck

Anyone who can handle a needle convincingly can make us see a thread which is not there.

E.H. Gombrich

The face of a lover is an unknown, precisely because it is invested with so much of oneself. It is a mystery, containing, like all mysteries, the possibility of torment.

James Baldwin

The Eskimos are a gentle people. I like gentle people, because there are so many in the world who are not gentle. Sometimes in a big city I just sit all day in my room, with my head down, afraid to go out and talk to tough people. I expect Eskimos have spells like that too.

Ernie Pyle

What soap is for the body, tears are for the soul.

Jewish proverb

There is only one big thing--desire. And before it, when it is big, all is little.

Willa Cather

I don't think there's any difference between a crush and profound love. I think the experience is that you dissolve your sentries and your battalions for a moment and you really do see that there is this unfixed, free-flowing energy of emotion and thought between people. It's tangible and you can almost ride on it into another person's breast. Your heart opens and of course you're completely panicked because you're used to guarding this organ with your life.... I think all the spiritual training is just to allow you to

be able to experience this from a slightly different perspective--one that's a little more stabilized.

Leonard Cohen

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Is not one of our problems today that we have separated ourselves from the poor and the wounded and the suffering? We have too much time to discuss and theorize and have lost the yearning for God which comes when we are faced with the sufferings of people.

Jean Vanier

There are confessable agonies, sufferings of which one can positively be proud. Of bereavement, of parting, of the sense of sin and the fear of death the poets have eloquently spoken. They command the world's sympathy. But there are also discreditable anguishes, no less excruciating than the others, but of which the sufferer dare not, cannot speak. The anguish of thwarted desire, for example.

Aldous Huxley

That best portion of a good man's life,
His little nameless unremembered acts
Of kindness and love.

William Wordsworth

I don't know anyone who's not suffering. In prison, it's more honest. Life is basic. We're all doing time. The highest compliment in prison is, "He knows how to do his own time." How few of us do.

Bo Lozoff

Fortunately, psychoanalysis is not the only way to resolve inner conflicts. Life itself remains a very effective therapist.

Karen Horney

All other knowledge is harmful in someone who does not know generosity.

Montaigne

Suddenly I wanted my loneliness back. Not the old loneliness where I wondered who or what the hell on this planet I could possibly be connected to, but a new loneliness, one in which I accepted the inevitable separateness of being that all of us must endure, the one where it was all right to be alone because there was no other alternative in the world--just yourself and the fair fact of who you were and then the rubbing against others who themselves knew their loneliness.

Charlie Smith

Ring out the old,
Ring in the new,

Ring out the false,
Ring in the true,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold:
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.
Alfred Tennyson

Be ablaze with enthusiasm. Let us be an alive, burning offering before the altar of God!
Hildegarde of Bingen

Be of love a little more careful than of everything.
e e cummings

From a professional standpoint, I have determined that I can no longer compromise my integrity and informed conscience by publicly representing a church that often excludes rather than includes people of various viewpoints and lifestyles and practices. By this I mean the injustice that is sometimes given to homosexuals, women, divorced/remarried. We all come to a point in our lives where our integrity is challenged. We can either compromise our integrity and lose ourselves, or we can stand up for what we believe. Thus I've come to this point. Jesus took a stand with those marginalized in his society--- tax collectors, Pharisees, sinners, and so forth. He was a nondiscriminating person. Can you imagine Jesus at the Last Supper saying, everyone can eat but you, you, you...I think not.

Jim Rolewicz

If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments.
Earl Wilson

He threw everything over for a flawed and impossible passion, only to see the object of it turn against him, proving there is no reward for love except the experience of loving, and nothing to be learned by it except humility.
John Le Carre

I think it is incumbent upon us who have been given the gift of life to give something back. Something that costs us, something that involves real sacrifice. It is in sacrifice that we lose ourselves, our pain, our problems. It is in the sacrifice of self, for something bigger, that life gains meaning.
Sara Harrison

Last night, as I slept,
I dreamt--marvelous error!--
that it was God I had
here inside my heart.
Antonio Machado

Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which

took its symmetry for granted when it was whole.
Derek Walcott

This grand show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor is ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls.

John Muir

We stand in the midst of an almost infinite network of relationships: to other people, to things, to the universe. And yet, at three o'clock in the morning, when we are alone with ourselves, we are aware that the most intimate and powerful of all our relationships---and the one we can never escape---is the one we have with ourselves. No significant aspect of our thinking, motivation, feelings, or behavior is unaffected by our self-evaluation.

Nathaniel Brandon

Injustice is relatively easy to bear; what stings is justice.

H. L. Mencken

Here are two cardinal sins from which all others spring: impatience and laziness.

Franz Kafka

It seems to me we can never give up longing and wishing while we are thoroughly alive. There are certain things we feel to be beautiful and good, and we must hunger after them.

George Eliot

If you marry, you will regret it. If you don't marry, you will regret it.

Soren Kierkegaard

The saints are what they are, not because their sanctity makes them admirable to others, but because the gift of sainthood makes it possible for them to admire everybody else.

Thomas Merton

Love is or it ain't. Thin love ain't love at all.

Toni Morrison

There is something that happens between men and women in the dark that seems to make everything else unimportant.

Tennessee Williams

A man falls in love through his eyes, a woman through her ears.

Woodrow Wyatt

Monogamous heterosexual love is probably one of the most difficult, complex, and demanding of human relationships.

Margaret Mead

The idea that nations should love one another, or that business concerns or marketing boards should love one another, or that a man in Portugal should love a man in Peru of whom he has never heard--it is absurd, unreal, dangerous.... The fact is we can only love what we know personally. And we cannot know much.

E. M. Forster

People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. When you figure out which it is, you know exactly what to do.

Michelle Vestur

We still don't know how to put morality ahead of politics, science, and economics. We are still incapable of understanding that the only genuine backbone of all our actions--if they are to be moral--is responsibility. Responsibility to something higher than my country, my firm, my success. Responsibility to the Order of Being, where all our actions are recorded and where, and only where, they will be properly judged...

Vaclav Havel

Visiting someone in a hospital recently, I watched an elderly couple. The man was in a wheelchair, the wife sitting next to him in the visitors' room. For the half-hour that I watched they never exchanged a word, just held hands and looked at each other, and once or twice the man patted his wife's face. The feeling of love was so thick in that room that I felt I was sharing in their communion and was shaken all day by their pain, their love, something sad and also joyful: the fullness of a human relationship.

Eda LeShan

He listened with the intense interest one feels in a stranger's life, the interest the young mistake for love.

Graham Greene

You have to strive every minute to get rid of the life that you have planned in order to have the life that's waiting to be yours. Move. Move. Move into the transcendent. That's the whole sense of adventure.

Joseph Campbell

In the end, words---especially those used to further the folly of attempting to define That which defines us---are but fingers pointing at the moon. We can choose to focus our attention on the finger or on the moon.

John Groff

Strangers become friends, friends become lovers, lovers become husbands and wives, and ex-husbands and ex-wives become strangers.

Brendan Gill

The poor remain vividly in our "shadow," receiving our shame for being "unsuccessful," receiving our fear that we will be likewise.

Thomas L. Jackson

A simple enough pleasure, surely, to have breakfast alone with one's husband, but how seldom married people in the midst of life achieve it.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

You know what getting married is? It's agreeing to taking this person who right now is at the top of his form, full of hopes and ideas, feeling good, looking good, wildly interested in you because you're the same way, and sticking by him while he slowly disintegrates. And he does the same for you. You're his responsibility now and he's yours. If no one else will take care of him, you will. If everyone else rejects you, he won't. What do you think love is? Going to bed all the time?

Jane Smiley

There are as many nights as days, and the one is just as long as the other in the year's course. Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word "happy" would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness.

Carl Jung

Let us remember that sorrow alone is the creator of great things.

Ernest Renan

Today we went to say goodbye to Swami. He was in good spirits. He talked with scorn about some new regulations that have been proposed. One of them was that every candidate for brahmacharya must have a recommendation from his guru, stating that the candidate is devoted to God. "What nonsense," Swami exclaimed. "As if one can say that anyone is devoted to God! It is only when you feel that you are not devoted that you are devoted!"

Christopher Isherwood

Do you know what makes the prison of loneliness and suspicion disappear? Every deep, genuine affection. Being friends, being brothers, loving, that is what opens the prison, with supreme power, by some magic force. Without these one stays dead. But wherever affection is revived, there life revives.

Vincent van Gogh

We are learning to know precisely the location of our genes, but significant numbers of us don't know the whereabouts of our children.

Wendell Berry

Only our concept of Time makes it possible for us to speak of the Day of Judgment by that name; in reality it is a summary court in perpetual session.

Franz Kafka

You can't do anything with anybody's body to make it dirty to me. Six people, eight people, one person--you can only do one thing to make it dirty: kill it. Hiroshima was

dirty.
Lenny Bruce

Hatred is human; indifference is the final degradation of humanity.
Harvey Goldberg

The sorrows of humanity are no one's sorrows.... A thousand people drowned in floods in China is news; a solitary child drowned in a pond is tragedy.
Josephine Tey

The best way out is always through.
Robert Frost

One imagines an anthropologist of the future puzzling over the cash registers, the credit cards, the malls---all the totems of a strange cult that once a year, in bizarre fashion, celebrated a barefoot teacher of simplicity. One imagines the teacher shaking his head. Fortunately, his greatest teaching was forgiveness...
Sy Safransky

Evil is easy, its forms are infinite; good is almost always unique.
Blaise Pascal

Will I get up or stay in bed? What will I wear? What will I eat? What will I do? Where will I go? How do I feel? These choices we make each day. These decisions affect the quality of our lives.
When we take charge of our lives, we have to make a choice.
We can focus on our problems...or the solutions. We can choose to be a victim...or warrior. We can choose to react...or act. We can choose to complain...or construct. We can choose to feel down/depressed...or up and positive. We can stay in old, habitual patterns...or break free.
Richard Appling

Existence is a strange bargain. Life owes us little; we owe it everything. The only true happiness comes from squandering ourselves for a purpose.
John Mason Brown

Think that you are not yet begotten, that you are in the womb, that you are young, that you are old, that you have died, that you are in the world beyond the grave; grasp in your thoughts all this at once, all times and places, all substances and qualities and magnitudes together; then you can apprehend God.
Hermes Trismegistus

If triangles made a god, they would give him three sides.
Charles de Montesquieu

I've known rivers:

Ancient, dusky rivers.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
Langston Hughes

Forgive your enemies, but never forget their names.
John F. Kennedy

I think one should forgive and remember.... If you forgive and forget in the usual sense, you're just driving what you remember into the subconscious; it stays there and festers. But to look, even regularly, upon what you remember and know you've forgiven is achievement.
Faith Baldwin

The amazing process . . . begins with the decision not to fight against our vices, not to run away from them nor conceal them, but to bring them into the light. If the desire to be honest is greater than the desire to be good or bad, then the terrific power of our vices will become manifest, and behind the vice the old forgotten fear will turn up (the fear of being excluded from life), and behind the fear the pain (the pain of not being loved), and behind this pain of loneliness the deepest and most powerful and most hidden of all human desires: the desire to love, to give oneself, and to be part of the living stream that we call brotherhood.
Fritz Kunkel

There is poetry as soon as we realize that we possess nothing.
John Cage

There is a Reality, but you do not know this.
You are that Reality and when you awaken to that Reality, you will see that you are nothing.
Being nothing, you are everything.
Kalu Rinpoche

A cold coming we had of it.
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey...
Were we led all this way for Birth or Death?...
I had seen birth and death.
But had thought they were different.
T.S. Eliot

Beware of the man whose God is in the skies.
George Bernard Shaw

If you're going to care about the fall of the sparrow, you can't pick and choose who's going to be the sparrow. It's everybody.
Madeleine L'Engle

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.
To reach for another is to risk involvement.
To expose your feelings is to risk exposing your true self.
To place your ideas, your dreams before a crowd is to risk their loss.
To love is to risk not being loved in return.
To live is to risk dying.
To believe is to risk despair.
To try is to risk failure.
But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing...
Only a person who risks is free.
A Chicago teacher

One may understand the cosmos, but never the ego; the self is more distant than any star.
G. K. Chesterton

No matter how convinced a Buddhist is that the world is an illusion, she invariably leaves a room by walking through a doorway rather than through a wall.
Bruce Gregory

All the information I have about myself is from forged documents.
Vladimir Nabokov

Human beings are so made that the ones who do the crushing feel nothing; it is the person crushed who feels what is happening. Unless one has placed oneself on the side of the oppressed, to feel with them, one cannot understand.
Simone Weil

But it is not really difference the oppressor fears so much as similarity.
Cherrie Moraga

You know, it's not the world that was my oppressor, because what the world does to you long enough and effectively enough, you begin to do to yourself.
James Baldwin

Sins become more subtle as you grow older: you commit sins of despair rather than of lust.
Piers Paul Read

Real events don't have endings, only the stories about them do.
James Galvin

Compassion has nothing to do with achievement at all. It is spacious, and very generous. When a person develops compassion, he is uncertain whether he is being generous to others or to himself, because compassion is environmental generosity...We could say

compassion is the ultimate attitude of wealth: an antipoverty attitude, a war on want.
Chogyam Trungpa

When those closest to us respond to events differently than we do, when they seem to see the same scene as part of a different play, when they say things that we could not imagine saying in the same circumstances, the ground on which we stand seems to tremble and our footing is suddenly unsure.

Deborah Tannen

The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now.... It is not a matter of faith; it is a matter of practice.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Nothing in life is trivial. Life is whole wherever and whenever we touch it, and one moment or event is not less sacred than another.

Vimala Thakar

Esalen's Law: (1) You always teach others what you most need to learn yourself. (2) You are your own worst student.

Richard Price

Who can say more than this rich praise, that you alone are you?

William Shakespeare

The happiness of life is made up of minute fractions--the little, soon forgotten charities of a kiss or smile, a kind look, a heartfelt compliment, and the countless infinitesimals of pleasurable and genial feeling.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Those who prize freedom only for the material benefits it offers have never kept it for long.

Alexis de Tocqueville

Ants are as much like human beings as to be an embarrassment. They farm fungi, raise aphids as livestock, launch armies into war, use chemical sprays to alarm and confuse enemies, capture slaves, engage in child labor, exchange information ceaselessly. They do everything but watch television.

Lewis Thomas

IQ tests are a poor way to judge people's abilities, failing as they do to account for magic, which has its own importance, both by itself and as a complement to logic.

Robert G. Waller

No cause is left but the most ancient of all, the one, in fact, that from the beginning of our history has determined the very existence of politics: the cause of freedom versus

tyranny.

Hannah Arendt

Solidarity is not discovered by reflection but created. It is created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and humiliation of other, unfamiliar sorts of people. Such increased sensitivity makes it more difficult to marginalize people different from ourselves by thinking "They do not feel as we would," or "There must always be suffering, so why not let them suffer?"

Richard Rorty

Happiness must be cultivated. It is like character. It is not a thing to be safely let alone for a moment, or it will run to weeds.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

The labor of a human being is not a commodity or an article of commerce. You can't weigh the soul of a man with a bar of pig iron.

Samuel Gompers

There is a tribe in East Africa in which the art of true identity is fostered even before birth. In this tribe, the birth date of a child is not counted from the day of its physical birth nor even the day of conception, as in other village cultures. For this tribe, the birth date comes the first time the child is a thought in its mother's mind. Aware of her intention to conceive a child with a particular father, the mother then goes off to sit alone under a tree. There she sits and listens until she can hear the song of the child that she hopes to conceive. Once she has heard it, she returns to her village and teaches it to the father so that they can sing it together as they make love, inviting the child to join them. After the child is conceived, she sings it to the baby in her womb. Then she teaches it to the old women and midwives of the village, so that throughout the labor and at the miraculous moment of birth itself, the child is greeted with its song. After the birth, all the villagers learn the song of their new member and sing it to the child when it falls or hurts itself. It is sung in times of triumph, or in rituals and initiations. This song becomes a part of the marriage ceremony when the child is grown, and, at the end of life, his or her loved ones will gather around the deathbed and sing this song for the last time...

Jack Kornfield

Risk! Risk anything! Care no more for the opinion of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth.

Katherine Mansfield

People today often make a nervous joke of holiness, and imply in various ways that they are not quite comfortable with the concept, perhaps because they equate holiness with severity, and are afraid that the holy person will see through them and lash out in judgment.

True holiness is just the opposite. It is loving and tolerant and hopeful about people, no matter how far they fall in their weakness. In other words, it imitates God. This was the way the Desert generation understood holiness. As they said of Abba Ammonas, "He

advanced to the point where his goodness was so great, he took no notice of wickedness.”
Abbot Jerome Kodell

Men are afraid to rock the boat in which they hope to drift safely through life's currents, when, actually, the boat is stuck on a sandbar. They would be better off to rock the boat and try to shake it loose, or, better still, jump in the water and swim for the shore.
Thomas Szasz

If you bungle raising your children, I don't think whatever else you do well matters very much.
Jacqueline Kennedy

A shepherd is needed only when there are no fences. He is someone who stays with his sheep at all cost---guiding, protecting, and walking with them through the fields. He's not just a person who raises sheep... Though our bishops consider themselves 'tenders of the flock,' most are nothing more than mutton farmers. They build fence after fence, keeping the flock within sight so they don't have to dirty their feet plodding through the open fields. After all, the landowner frowns on dirty feet.
Lena Wolterin

Now that I am in my forties, she tells me I'm beautiful; now that I am in my forties, she sends me presents and we have the long, personal, and even remarkably honest phone calls I always wanted so intensely I forbade myself to imagine them. How strange. Perhaps Shaw was correct and if we lived to be several hundred years old, we would finally work it all out. I am deeply grateful. With my poems, I finally won even my mother. The longest wooing of my life.
Marge Piercy

The world is not to be put in order, the world is order incarnate. It is for us to put ourselves in unison with this order.
Henry Miller

There are essential and inessential insanities...Inessential insanities are a brittle amalgamation of ambition, aggression, and pre-adolescent anxiety--garbage that should have been dumped long ago. Essential insanities are those impulses one instinctively senses are virtuous and correct, even though peers may regard them as cuckoo. Inessential insanities get one in trouble with oneself. Essential insanities get one in trouble with others. It's always preferable to be in trouble with others. In fact, it may be essential.
Tom Robbins

The life of faith is the untiring pursuit of God through all that disguises and disfigures him, and, as it were, destroys and annihilates him.
Jean-Pierre Caussade

Life's most persistent question is this: What are you doing for others?

Martin Luther King, Jr.

I don't like coming home. It keeps me from being nostalgic.

Stewart O'Nan

The "kingdom of heaven" is a condition of the heart- not something that comes "upon the earth" or "after death."

Friedrich Nietzsche

My mother phones daily to ask, "Did you just try to reach me?" When I reply, "No," she adds, "So, if you're not too busy, call me while I'm still alive," and hangs up.

Erma Bombeck

We must become alone, so utterly alone, that we withdraw into our innermost self. It is a way of bitter suffering. But then our solitude is overcome and we are no longer alone, for we find that our innermost self is the spirit, that it is God, the indivisible. And suddenly we find ourselves in the midst of the world, yet undisturbed by its multiplicity, for in our innermost soul we know ourselves to be one with all being.

Hermann Hesse

Reacting against the selfishness and materialism that are sanctified by the competitive market---and that undermine our ability to sustain loving relationships---people hunger for communities of meaning that provide ethical and spiritual purpose. They are offered instead a myriad of nationalistic, religious, or racial pseudocommunities that never challenge the "look out for No. 1" mentality of the market. So people soon find that their daily lives at work or in family life are just as empty as ever.

Michael Lerner

My battles are fought out inside, with my own demons.

Etty Hillesum

One of the oddest features of Western Christianized culture is its ready acceptance of the myth of the stable family and the happy marriage. We have been taught to accept the myth not as a heroic ideal, something good, brave, and nearly impossible to fulfill, but as the very fiber of normal life. Given most families and most marriages, the belief seems admirable but foolhardy.

Jonathan Raban

Blaming mother is just a negative way of clinging to her still.

Nancy Friday

Excellence is willing to be wrong

Perfection is insistence on being right

Excellence is risk

Perfection is fear

Excellence is powerful

Perfection is anger and frustration
Excellence is spontaneous
Perfection is control
Excellence is accepting
Perfection is judgment
Excellence is giving
Perfection is taking
Excellence is confidence
Perfection is doubt
Excellence is flowing
Perfection is pressure
Excellence is a journey
Perfection is a destination
Unknown

Do everything right all the time and the child will prosper. It is as simple as that, except for: fate, luck, heredity, chance, the astrological sign he was born under, his order of birth, his first encounter with evil, the girl who jilts him in spite of his excellent qualities, the war being fought when he is a young man, the drugs he may try one too many times, the friends he makes, how he scores on tests, how well he endures kidding about his shortcomings, how ambitious he becomes, how far he falls behind, circumstantial evidence, danger when it is least expected, difficulty in triumphing over circumstances, people with hidden agendas, and animals with rabies.

Ann Beattie

Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive.

C.S. Lewis

He who upsets a thing should know how to rearrange it.

Unknown

Nobody complains about all the fog. I know why, now: as bad as it is, you can slip back in it and feel safe. That's what McMurphy can't understand. Us wanting to be safe. He keeps trying to drag us out of the fog, out in the open where we'd be easy to get at.

Ken Kesey

It is impossible to persuade a man who does not disagree, but smiles.

Muriel Spark

Given a child falling into a river, an old person in a burning building, and a woman fainting in the street, a band of convicts would risk their lives to give aid as quickly at least as a band of millionaires.

Clarence Darrow

If only we'd stop trying to be happy, we could have a pretty good time.

Edith Wharton

The Uruguayan political prisoners may not talk without permission or whistle, smile, sing, walk fast, or greet other prisoners; nor may they make or receive drawings of pregnant women, couples, butterflies, stars, or birds.

One Sunday, Didako Perez, school teacher, tortured and jailed "for having ideological ideas," is visited by his daughter Milay, age five. She brings him a drawing of birds. The guards destroy it at the entrance of the jail.

On the following Sunday, Milay brings him a drawing of trees. Trees are not forbidden, and the drawing gets through. Didako praises her work and asks about the colored circles scattered in the treetops, many small circles half-hidden among the branches: "Are they oranges? What fruit is it?" The child puts her finger to her mouth: "Shh."

And she whispers in his ear: "Silly, don't you see they're eyes? They're the eyes of the birds that I've smuggled in for you."

Eduardo Galeano

I have never for an instant seen clearly within myself; how would you have me judge the deeds of others?

Maurice Maeterlinck

If you express grief too much, it can well redouble.

Moliere

Fear less, hope more; eat less, chew more; whine less, breathe more; hate less, love more; and all good things are yours.

Swedish proverb

Do not avoid contact with suffering or close your eyes before suffering. Do not lose awareness of the existence of suffering in the life of the world. Find ways to be with those who are suffering by all means, including personal contact and visits, images, sound. By such means, awaken yourself and others to the reality of suffering in the world.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Love is God's essence; Power but his attribute;
therefore is his love greater than his power.

Richard Garnett

You can go only halfway into the darkest forest; then you are coming out the other side.

Chinese proverb

During Mary's absence, I have taken over the duty of watering the plants in the apartment, and I find that the dislike I had for one of them because it depressed me with its ailing appearance is changing to affection. I move it to a location favorable to its need for shade, I water it carefully and trim off the dead leaves, and I am reminded of my lifelong conviction that a powerful means of arousing love for someone or something is to do things for that person or object.... I would even be willing to believe that self love is so strong because the self is the person for whom one does the most.

Rudolf Arnheim

That which you worship is the first thought that comes to your mind when you are suffering anxiety.

Ibn 'Abbad of Ronda

I was a neurotic for years. I was anxious and depressed and selfish. Everyone kept telling me to change. I resisted them, and I agreed with them, and I wanted to change, but simply couldn't, no matter how hard I tried. What hurt the most was that, like the others, my best friend kept insisting that I change. So I felt powerless and trapped. Then, one day, he said to me, "Don't change. I love you just as you are."

Anthony de Mello

Love is tremendously passionate and therefore it acts immediately. It has no time interval between the seeing and the doing. And when you have that love you can put away all your sacred books, all your gods.

J. Krishnamurti

Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Else, we may find ourselves treading on the dreams of others. More serious still, we may forget that God was there before our arrival.

Unknown

Forgiveness is giving up all hope of having had a better past.

Anne Lamont

Every sorrow suggests a thousand songs, and every song recalls a thousand sorrows, and so they are infinite in number, and all the same.

Marilynne Robinson

Our horizons should broaden from the narrow circle of those known to us to include all those in need or suffering, whole nations as well as individuals. When I quiet my words and let myself simply be open, I find myself praying for the people who are dying right now, the babies who are being born right now, the frail old woman lying sleepless in a nursing home right now, the prisoners who are being tortured right now.

Margaret Guenther

Think of the worst experience you've ever had with a clerk in some government-service job--motor vehicles, hospital, whatever--and add the life-threatening condition of impending starvation or homelessness to the waiting line, multiply the anxiety by an exponent of ten, and you have some idea of what it's like in a welfare center.

Theresa Funicello

All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.

Martin Luther King Jr.

I tried for years to live according to everyone else's morality. I tried to live like everyone else, to be like everyone else. I said the right things even when I felt and thought quite differently. And the result is a catastrophe.

Albert Camus

Live as if every moment were your first and every day were your last.

Mother Ann Less

Things do not change; we do.

Henry David Thoreau

But it does not matter much, because no despair of ours can alter the reality of things, or stain the joy of the cosmic dance which is always there.

Thomas Merton

I found the answer [to how and what to paint] when I joined a school of painters in Paris after the war who called themselves neomeditationists.... They believed an artist had to wait for inspiration, very quietly, and they did most of their waiting at the Cafe du Dome or the Rotonde with brandy. It was then that I realized that all the really good ideas I'd ever had came to me while I was milking a cow. So I went back to Iowa.

Grant Wood

Everyone chases after happiness, not knowing that happiness is at their heels.

Bertolt Brecht

In The Screwtape Letters, there's a guy sitting in a museum, and Screwtape says to Wormwood something like, "Get him out of that museum. Make him think about his bus schedule. Get him back into reality. Don't let him start thinking about any higher thoughts. He might become inspired if he looks at that painting much longer." Today, we've got a worse problem. We've got this incredibly degenerated painting, the television, to keep us totally glued into the system.

T Bone Burnett

Everything begins in loneliness.

John Erskine

If it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

If you bring forth that which is within you,
that which is within you will save you.

If you do not bring forth that which is within you,
what you do not bring forth will kill you.
The Gospel of Thomas, Saying 70

The real 1960s began on the afternoon of November 22, 1963.... It came to seem that Kennedy's murder opened some malign trapdoor in American culture, and the wild bats flapped out.
Lance Morrow

The most significant thing about the Catholic Worker is poverty, some say. The most significant thing is community, others say. We are not alone anymore. But the final word is love. At times it has been, in the words of Father Zossima, a harsh and dreadful thing, and our very faith in love has been tried through fire.
Dorothy Day

It is vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquility; they must have action, and they will make it if they cannot find it.
Charlotte Bronte

He'll bring
Smiles for the crier
Tears for the witty
Love for the whore
And hope for the unfree
Smiles for the crier
Tears for the laughing
Love for the whore
And hope for the unfree
Gerard McHugh

I am doomed to an eternity of compulsive work. No set goal achieved satisfies. Success only breeds a new goal. The golden apple devoured has seeds. It is endless.
Bette Davis

It is moral hypocrisy for our nation to slash income, health, and nutrition assistance for poor children, while leaving untouched hundreds of billions in corporate welfare, giving new tax breaks of over \$200 billion to non-needy citizens, and giving the Pentagon [billions] it did not request...What in the world has happened to us, that we've become so numb, so spiritually dead?
Marian Wright Edelman

A young man's ambition [is] to get along in the world and make a place for himself. Half your life goes that way, till you're forty-five or fifty. Then, if you're lucky, you make terms with life, you get released.
Robert Penn Warren

The air is blue and sweet, the few first stars are white. Oh, let me like the birds sing before the night.

Teasdale

The glory of life comes not from the things that we can command but the things that we can reverence.

Goethe

If the sages ask thee why this charm is wasted on the earth and sky, tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing, then beauty is its own excuse for being.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

That shall be my life, to scatter flowers...to miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word, always doing the tiniest things right, and doing it for love.

Theresa of Avilla

Everything that enters into a life is part of that life.

Carl G. Jung

A faithful friend is a sure shelter--whoever finds one has found a rare treasure. A faithful friend is something beyond price. There is no measuring that worth.

Ecclesiasticus

We must BE the change we wish to see.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

When you realize you want to spend the rest of your life with someone, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible.

Nora Ephron

What is a friend? A single soul in two bodies.

Aristotle

We are not humans on a spiritual path. Rather we are spirits on a human path.

Jean Shinoda Bolen

Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart, and try to live the questions themselves, as if they were locked rooms or books in a very foreign tongue... The point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

Rainer Maria Rilke

Having resentments is like taking poison and waiting for the other guy to die.

Malachy McCourt

If something is boring after two minutes, try it for four. If still boring, then eight. Then sixteen. Then thirty-two. Eventually one discovers it is not boring at all.

John Cage

An idea is salvation by imagination.

Frank Lloyd Wright

The choice: love things and use people --- love people and use things.

Unknown

Friendship is a sheltering tree.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The problem with a society that believes in absolute freedom is that they're living in a dream, because there is no such thing as absolute freedom. There has never been a time when people haven't been compelled to follow certain rules. They've forgotten that along with freedom must come responsibility, and liberation is a different word from freedom.

Yusuf Islam (a.k.a. Cat Stevens)

The religion and the environmentalism of the highly developed countries are, at bottom, a sham because they make it their business to fight against something which they do not really wish to destroy--the plunder of nature to support comfortable lifestyles.

Wendell Berry

How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.

Annie Dillard

We are like flies crawling across the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel: we cannot see what angels and gods lie underneath the threshold of our perceptions.

William Irwin Thompson

In heaven, an angel is no one in particular.

George Bernard Shaw

My esteem in this country has gone up substantially. It is very nice now [that] when people wave at me they use all their fingers.

Jimmy Carter

Listen carefully. If this birth has truly taken place within you, then no creature can any longer hinder you. To grasp God in all things--that is the sign of your new birth.

Meister Eckhart

When he was old, I tried to introduce him to the Buddhist doctrine of emptiness; I thought it would ease any anxiety he might be having about the imminence of death. "Ultimately," I began, "you never were." "Maybe not," he said, peering over the rim of

his glasses, “but I made a hell of a splash where I should have been.”
Stephen T. Butterfield

A ship in port is safe, but that's not what ships are for.
Grace Murray Hopper

Ecstasy is what everyone craves--not love or sex, but a hotblooded, soaring intensity, in which being alive is a joy and a thrill. That enravishment doesn't give meaning to life, and yet without it life seems meaningless.
Diane Ackerman

I was thrown out of NYU my freshman year . . . for cheating on my metaphysics final. I looked within the soul of the boy next to me.
Woody Allen

All, everything I understand, I understand because of love.
Leo Tolstoy

Observe the postage stamp! Its usefulness depends upon its ability to stick to one thing until it gets there.
Josh Billings

The lights of an all-night diner were irresistible. I entered the steamy, greasy warmth, felt the meat smell cling to my clothing. I sat down at the counter and picked up a matchbox. On it was printed, ACE 24-HOUR CAFE-WHERE NICE PEOPLE MEET. And tears came to my eyes for the hopefulness, the sweetness, the enduring promise of plain human love.
Mary Gordon

If Christ had been put on television to preach the Sermon on the Mount, viewers would either have switched to another channel, or contented themselves with remarking that the speaker had an interesting face. Christ might have become a television personality, but there would have been no Christianity.
Malcolm Muggeridge

The instinct of nearly all societies is to lock up anybody who is truly free. First, society begins by trying to beat you up. If this fails, they try to poison you. If this fails, too, they finish by loading honors on your head.
Jean Cocteau

I absolutely agree with the Founding Fathers that we should have the right to bear arms...but only the arms they had: muskets.”
Unknown

To blame the poor for subsisting on welfare has no justice unless we are also willing to judge every rich member of society by how productive he or she is. Taken individual by

individual, it is likely that there's more idleness and abuse of government favors among the economically privileged than among the ranks of welfare.

Norman Mailer

Within your own house dwells the treasure of joy; so why do you go begging from door to door?

Sufi saying

Look at everything as though you were seeing it for the first or last time. Then your time on earth will be filled with glory.

Betty Smith

We're in the midst of a flood of biblical proportions. I see everybody holding on in their individual way to an orange crate, to a piece of wood, and we're passing each other in this swollen river that has pretty well taken down all the land marks, and overturned everything we've got. And people insist, under the circumstances, on describing themselves as "liberal" or "conservative." It seems to me completely mad.

Leonard Cohen

The real killer was when you married the wrong person but had the right children.

Ann Beattie

It is as absurd to say that a man can't love one woman all the time as it is to say that a violinist needs several violins to play the same piece of music.

Honore de Balzac

Recently, Harry Belafonte said there is a Rosa Parks out there somewhere, right now, just waiting to happen. The spark that will trigger the real change we need in this country will not come from a nationally recognized leader. It will happen because of one tired soul who will decide that he or she has just had enough, and will do something so simple yet so profound.

Michael Moore

Lead me from death to life,

from falsehood to truth.

Lead me from despair to hope,

from fear to trust.

Lead me from hate to love,

from war to peace.

Let peace fill our hearts,

our world, our universe.

World Peace Prayer

He is where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the pathmaker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and His garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like Him come down on the dusty soil!

Rabindranath Tigore

For someone living an uptight, head-restricted experience, a hot bath can feel extraordinary---but it's not a mystical experience. We live such constricted lives that the slightest triggering of a new vital energy gets labeled "spiritual."

Jacob Needleman

Many divorces are not really the result of irreparable injury but involve . . . a desire on the part of the man or woman to shatter the setup, start out from scratch alone, and make life work for them all over again. They want the risk of disaster, want to touch bottom, to see where bottom is, and, coming up, to breathe the air with relief and relish again.

Edward Hoagland

Would you become a pilgrim on the road of Love? The first condition is that you make yourself humble as dust and ashes.

Ansarit of Herat

A bulging portfolio of spiritual experiences matters little if it does not have the power to sustain us through the inevitable moments of grief, loss, and change. Knowledge and achievements matter little if we do not yet know how to touch the heart of another and be touched.

Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield

The night before their marriage, they held a ritual where they made their "shadow vows." The groom said, "I will give you an identity and make the world see you as an extension of myself." The bride replied, "I will be compliant and sweet, but underneath I will have the real control. If anything goes wrong, I will take your money and your house." They then drank champagne and laughed heartily at their foibles, knowing that in the course of the marriage, these shadow figures would inevitably come out. They were ahead of the game because they had recognized the shadow and unmasked it.

Robert A. Johnson

We are not born all at once, but by bits. The body first, and the spirit later.... Our mothers are racked with the pains of our physical birth; we ourselves suffer the longer pains of our spiritual growth.

Mary Antin

Some people who claim a religious calling have told me that I've been given a good mind because I have this physical disability---as though God distributes his gifts like Santa Claus. The fact is that you are as you are. I can't think of a time when I haven't been fascinated by all that's around me, and whether I would have been that way without the disability, I can't really tell. I would say, however, that if you have been given a fairly keen sensibility, the disability can sharpen that---if you want to use it that way. With it, I've tended to see the world in a more quirky way, with more open eyes. The disability can act on one's mind as a kind of refiner's fire.

Jeffrey Tate

Does God have a set way of prayer, a way that he expects each of us to follow? I doubt it. I believe some people--lots of people--pray through the witness of their lives, through the work they do, the friendships they have, the love they offer people and receive from people. Since when are words the only acceptable form of prayer?

Dorothy Day

The physicist Leo Szilard once announced to his friend Hans Bethe that he was thinking of keeping a diary. "I don't intend to publish it. I am merely going to record the facts for the information of God." "Don't you think God knows the facts?" Bethe asked. "Yes," said Szilard. "He knows the facts, but he does not know this version of the facts."

Richard Kehl

The monuments of wit survive the monuments of power.

Francis Bacon

Jesus' disciples were not theologically educated; they sat and listened to his parables.

Frank Romanowicz

There is nothing new in this world except the history you do not know.

Harry S. Truman

Great ideas, it has been said, come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we can hear, amid the uproar of empires and nations, a faint flutter of wings, the gentle stirring of life and hope. Some will say that this hope lies in a nation; others, in a person. I believe, rather, that it is awakened and nourished by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds and works every day negate frontiers and the crudest implications of history.

Albert Camus

It is also important to remember, when we make promises to God, that we are human. Very human. Indeed, we are most human, I think, when we make promises from that place in each of us where the little child still lives. In the extremities of life, when you make a promise to God from your child's heart, and then find that you have broken it, remember this: don't forget to laugh at yourself. Because I think God knows, and God understands, and, I think, God laughs, too.

Elizabeth Kaeton

The Indians have never accepted human life as ordinary, as something that can be managed in a controlled or painless manner. They realize that life tests the deepest qualities within the human personality, qualities that emerge in heroic combat not merely with others but also with oneself and with the powers of the universe.

Thomas Berry

In Washington, the first thing people tell you is what their job is. In Los Angeles you learn their star sign. In Houston you're told how rich they are. And in New York they tell

you what their rent is.
Simon Hoggart

God is where the action in our lives is, for that is where we make our choices and, in choosing, shape our own and others' becoming. To be faithful to the long conversation of friendship, or to one's ministry, or to one's well-chosen cause, or to one's mate, is to be faithful to the unfolding voice of God. Listening always and responding, one slowly learns the difficult art of loving, and ends a different person than one began.
Thomas Hart

Your life feels different to you, once you greet death and understand your heart's position. You wear your life like a garment from the mission bundle-sale ever after--lightly because you realize you never paid nothing for it, cherishing because you know you won't ever come by such a bargain again.
Louise Erdrich

Rather than earn money, it was Thoreau's idea to reduce his wants so that he would not need to buy anything. As he went around town preaching this ingenious idea, the shopkeepers of Concord hoped he would drop dead.
Richard Armour

It's easier to be wise for others than for ourselves.
LaRoche foucauld

The gospel is not made to dominate the world. It's the grain of sand that upsets the world's machinery.
Jean Sullivan

Money, it turned out, was exactly like sex. You thought of nothing else if you didn't have it, and thought of other things if you did.
James Baldwin

Science has got us doing cartwheels in space. We have reached the moon. Can we reach the face across the breakfast table, or over the back fence, or across the railroad tracks? Have we ever thought of investigating the wilderness in the seat next to us? Or exploring the constellations locked up in our own skulls? We are in orbit, all right, alone, sealed off as no astronaut ever was--out of communication, all our lives calling out, "This is my name! This is my name! Can you hear me? Do you hear my voice? Who are you? Speak!"
Agnes de Mille

Life is short, but it's wide.
Spanish proverb

The final truth is that God does not in the end look us over so much for our medals and badges of success as for the scars we bear that have led us to new life.

William L. Dols

To view your life as blessed does not require you to deny your pain. It simply demands a more complicated vision, one in which a condition or event is not either good or bad but is, rather, both good and bad, not sequentially but simultaneously. In my experience, the more such ambivalences you can hold in your head, the better off you are, intellectually and emotionally.

Nancy Mairs

A mother is not a person to lean on but a person to make leaning unnecessary.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher

What's a man's first duty? The answer's brief: to be himself.

Henrik Ibsen

Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit.

Peter Ustinov

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes: it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For every thing that is given, something else is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The American artist Chester Harding, painting Daniel Boone's portrait, asked the old frontiersman, then in his eighties, if he had ever been lost. Boone replied, "No, I can't say I was ever lost, but I was bewildered once for three days."

Richard Kehl

Eighty years old! No eyes left, no ears, no teeth, no legs, no wind! And when all is said and done, how astonishingly well one does without them!

Paul Claudel

Old age was growing inside me. It kept catching my eye from the depths of the mirror. I was paralyzed sometimes as I saw it making its way toward me so steadily when nothing inside me was ready for it.

Simone de Beauvoir

Life goes on, having nowhere else to go.

Diane Ackerman

Certainly the effort to remain unchanged, young, when the body gives so impressive a signal of change as the menopause, is gallant; but it is a stupid, self-sacrificial gallantry, better befitting a boy of twenty than a woman of forty-five or fifty. Let the athletes die young and laurel-crowned. Let the soldiers earn the Purple Hearts. Let women die old, whitecrowned, with human hearts.

Ursula K. Le Guin

Now that I am sixty, I see why the idea of elder wisdom has passed from currency.

John Updike

Me and you must never part.

Me and you must have one heart.

Ain't no ocean, ain't no sea,

Keep my sister away from me.

Me and you must never part.

Me and you must have one heart.

Alice Walker

We often hear of the beauties of old age, but the only old age that is beautiful is the one the man has been long preparing for by living a beautiful life. Every one of us is right now preparing for old age...There may be a substitute somewhere in the world for Good Nature, but I do not know where it can be found. The secret of salvation is this: keep sweet, be useful, and keep busy.

Elbert Hubbard

People in general in this country have lost the habit of debating questions. TV does it for them. People hold opinions, but the opinions are not derived from either thought or discussion. They are just acquired, a confirmation of the progressive status of the person who holds these opinions---as an ornament, a decoration. It's like those Russian generals, their chests covered with medals. People wear these opinions like medals.

Saul Bellow

We all want to be happy, and we're all going to die.... You might say these are the only two unchallengeably true facts that apply to every human being on this planet.

William Boyd

Here is a test to find whether your mission on earth is finished: if you're alive, it isn't.

Richard Bach

From the rise, he looks out over his place. This is it. This is all there is in the world--it contains everything there is to know or possess, yet everywhere people are knocking their brains out trying to find something different, something better. His kids all scattered, looking for it. Everyone always wants a way out of something like this, but what he has here is the main thing there is--just the way things grow and die, the way the sun comes up and goes down every day. These are the facts of life. They are so simple, they are almost impossible to grasp.

Bobbie Ann Mason

The older woman's love is not love of herself, nor of herself mirrored in a lover's eyes, nor is it corrupted by need. It is a feeling of tenderness so still and deep and warm that it gilds every grass blade and blesses every fly. It includes the ones who have a claim on it,

and a great deal else besides. I wouldn't have missed it for the world.
Germaine Greer

Every spirituality needs to be examined by a critical eye, something that is absent from virtually all contemporary discourse on spirituality. When a particular form of spirituality or religion promotes justice, equity, and compassion in the social arena, and a sense of self and well-being in the personal arena, that form should be held in high esteem. But when any form of religion or spirituality supports or tolerates injustice, domination of one group over another, or a stunted development of the self, such a spirituality should be judged negatively.
Raymond J. Lawrence, Jr.

I would almost say that my country is like a conquered province with foreign rulers, except that they are not foreigners and we are responsible for what they do.
Paul Goodman

Angel: It is passion, Gideon, that carries man to God, and passion is a balky beast...few men ever let it out of the stable. It brooks no bridle...indeed, it bridles you. It rides the rider. Yet it inspires man's sessile soul above his own inadequate world...and makes real such things as beauty, fancy, love, and God...and all those other things that are not quite molecular...but are. Passion is the very fact of God in man...that makes him other than a brute. I must own, Gideon, yours was an old and settled soul, and I huffed and puffed quite a bit before I found the least flame of passion in you...
Gideon: What is it you love in me, my God? These other men were all saints and prophets, but I am an ordinary sort. I am as all men are...
Angel: Well, perhaps that is your special attraction: your ordinariness. I would have plain men love me, not just saints...
Paddy Chayefsky

An association of men who will not quarrel with one another is a thing which has never yet existed, from the greatest confederacy of nations down to a town meeting or a vestry.
Thomas Jefferson

I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions.
Lillian Hellman

The whole worth of a kind deed lies in the love that inspires it.
The Talmud

The politics of welfare reform has little to do with reality...It is driven by a mistaken public impression, fed for a generation by political demagoguery, that we have a budget deficit solely because we are spending huge amounts of money on the poor (who are assumed to be black, though most aren't). The truth is, we don't spend nearly as much on the poor as we do on the elderly or in subsidies to various (often corporate) special interests... And there are few lobbyists who'll bother to fight for the 11-year-old who doesn't know what awaits her in bed tonight. Think about her. Imagine her eyes.

Joe Klein

There is no greater glory than love, nor any greater punishment than jealousy.
Lope de Vega

If there are two courses of action, you should take the third.
Jewish proverb

We must combine the toughness of the serpent and the softness of the dove, a tough mind and a tender heart.
Martin Luther King Jr.

The deeds you do today may be the only sermon some people will hear today.
Francis of Assisi

Eschew the monumental. Shun the epic. All the guys who can paint great big pictures can paint great small ones.
Ernest Hemingway

Let us make haste to live, since every day to a wise man is a new life.
Seneca

Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get eight cats to pull a sled through snow.
Jeff Valdez

Beware that you do not lose the substance by grasping at the shadow.
Aesop

Moralizing and morals are two entirely different things and are always found in entirely different people.
Don Herold

The Dalai Lama says we can best tell if our practice is working by looking at its results after five, ten, or twenty years. Perhaps that is easy for him to say after fourteen lifetimes as the Dalai Lama. In this vein, Mullah Nasrudin told a woman who proudly announced that her son had completed his studies, "No doubt, madam, God will send him some more!" It is in our perseverance and commitment that real spiritual growth takes place.
Jack Kornfield

People seldom see the halting and painful steps by which the most insignificant success is achieved.
Anne Sullivan

There are two great rules in life, the one general and the other particular. The first is that everyone can in the end get what he wants if he only tries. This is the general rule. The particular rule is that every individual is more or less of an exception to the general rule.

Samuel Butler

What a strange machine man is! You fill him with bread, wine, fish, and radishes, and out come sighs, laughter, and dreams.

Nikos Kazantzakis

What used to be called liberal is now called radical, what used to be called radical is now called insane, what used to be called reactionary is now called moderate, and what used to be called insane is now called solid conservative thinking.

Tony Kushner

The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it.

Flannery O'Connor

I've never met an average person.

Clifford L. Jackson

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the magi and the shepherds
have found their way home,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost and lonely one,
To heal the broken soul with love,
To feed the hungry children
with warmth and good food,
To feel the earth below,
the sky above!

Howard Thurman

Start doing the things you think should be done, and start being what you think society should become. Do you believe in free speech? Then speak freely. Do you love the truth? Then tell it. Do you believe in an open society? Then act in the open. Do you believe in a decent and humane society? Then behave decently and humanely.

Adam Michnik

The best way to know God is to love many things.

Vincent van Gogh

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

No society has been able to abolish human sadness; no political system can deliver us from the pain of living, from our fear of death, our thirst for the absolute. It is the human condition that directs the social condition, not vice versa.

Eugene Ionesco

If Rosa Parks had taken a poll before she sat down in the bus in Montgomery, she'd still be standing.

Mary Frances Berry

I am appalled at the way in which “spirituality” is promoted by so many churches as a way of avoiding and evading the demands of justice and peace---as though one could have an authentic spirituality disconnected from the real world of struggle and pain. The revival of privatized religion is a curse of our modern age...

George Regas

During my eighty-seven years I have witnessed a whole succession of technological revolutions. But none of them has done away with the need for character in the individual or the ability to think.

Bernard M. Baruch

The powers that we have released could not possibly be absorbed by the narrow system of individual or national units which the architects of the human Earth have hitherto used. The age of nations has passed. Now, unless we wish to perish, we must shake off our old prejudices and build the Earth.

Teilhard de Chardin

I wonder if you ever change human beings with arguments alone: either by peppering them with sharp facts or by blowing them up with great guns of truth. You scare them, but do you change them? I wonder if you ever make any real difference in human beings without understanding them and loving them. For when you argue with a man (how much more with a woman) you are somehow trying to pull him down and make him less (and yourself more); but when you try to understand him, when you like him, how eager is he then to know the truth you have? . . . There is nothing in the world that people so much thrive upon, grow fine and rosy and robust upon . . . as being loved.

David Grayson

There is incredible value in being of service to others. I think if most of the people in therapy offices were dragged out to put their finger in a dike, take up their place in a working line, they would be relieved of terrible burdens.

Elizabeth Berg

Saintliness is also a temptation.

Jean Anouilh

In the difficult are the friendly forces, the hands that work on us.

Ranier Maria Rilke

I am damned critical--for it's the only thing to be, and all else is damned humbug.

Henry James

Every year I live, I am more convinced that the waste of life lies in the love we have not given, the powers we have not used, the selfish prudence which will risk nothing, and which, shirking pain, misses happiness as well.

Vance Havner

Everything happens to everybody sooner or later if there is enough time.

George Bernard Shaw

What I'm saying is transcendence isn't possible only in [a] counterculture. It happens in funny places. It happens when you're walking down the street and a car goes by. Or it happens in a backyard and some light shines through some leaves in a certain way and, for a minute, you catch a glimpse of something that always was and always will be.

T Bone Burnett

My defenses were so great. The cocky rock-and-roll hero who knew all the answers was actually a terrified guy who didn't know how to cry. Simple.

John Lennon

Maturity consists in no longer being taken in by oneself.

Kajetan von Schlaggenberg

We need to give ourselves permission to act out our dreams and visions, not look for more sensations, more phenomena, but live our strongest dreams--even if it takes a lifetime.

Vijali Hamilton

During his years of poverty, Balzac lived in an unheated and almost unfurnished garret. On one of the bare walls the writer inscribed the words, "Rosewood paneling with commode"; on another, "Gobelin tapestry with Venetian mirror"; and in the place of honor over the empty fireplace, "Picture by Raphael."

E. Fuller

Imagination is the voice of daring. If there is anything godlike about God it is that. He dared to imagine everything.

Henry Miller

Those who try to understand the inner life merely intellectually will meet with failure. The life they are looking for will only vanish.

Sundar Singh

Other times in history

Thought they were it

They were wrong

This is it.

Jean Houston

In side me dwells two million stars
One for each of my ancestors
Nancy Wood

I write when I'm inspired, and I see to it that I'm inspired at nine o'clock every morning.
Peter De Vries

A Zen roshi once impressed me with a distinction between "big-mind" and "little-mind." "Big-mind" meant seeing what is happening to us from the detached perspective of Buddha. It involved taking God's view of creation. "Little-mind" resulted from being blinded by the mud that came our way.
Toby McCarroll

"You seem to be reacting to your boyfriend as if he were your father," your shrink may say stonily (unless she is a strict Freudian, in which case she'll shut up and wait until you think of it yourself, a process that usually takes ten years. This is why strict Freudians have such lovely summer houses.).
Cynthia Heimel

I merely took the energy it takes to pout and wrote some blues.
Duke Ellington

One of the strange laws of the contemplative life is that in it you do not sit down and solve problems: you bear with them until they somehow solve themselves. Or until life itself solves them for you. Usually the solution consists in a discovery that they exist only insofar as they are inseparably connected with your own illusory exterior self. The solution of most such problems comes with the dissolution of this false self.
Thomas Merton

People often say that this or that person has not yet found himself. But the self is not something that one finds. It is something that one creates.
Thomas Szasz

To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved.
George MacDonald

I have simplified my life to just three principles, which I try to practice. I cannot say I have mastered them. I attempt. I fall, I falter, and I attempt... This boat I travel in is called Surrender. I have nothing to achieve. Whatever comes, I enjoy. The two oars that move my boat--one is instant forgiveness. I get angry, I get mad, but as soon as I remind myself to put my oars in action, I forgive. The second oar is tremendous gratitude. I am thankful for the experience of this life, for the opportunity to dance.
Balbir Mathur

No man is useless in this world who lessens the burden of it to anyone else.

Charles Dickens

The great man is he that does not lose his child's heart.

Mencius

Once a Zimbabwe pastor said, "The reason Christians in the United States want to argue about what is more important, evangelism or social action, is that they don't want to do either."

Joseph E. Agne

Quoting the Psalms: "Be angry, but do not sin." Jesus was angry more than fifty percent of the time, and it's very dangerous theology to try to improve on Jesus. The anger needs to be focused, but anger is what maintains your sanity. Anger keeps you from tolerating the intolerable.

The Rev. William Sloan Coffin, Jr.

A clay pot sitting in the sun will always be a clay pot. It has to go through the white heat of the furnace to become porcelain.

Mildred Witte Struven

Probably my destiny, since I was born, was not to understand anything, and if you understand something, I congratulate you.

Anton Chekov

It is not what you have lost, but what you have left that counts.

Harold Russell

If we intend to cleave like stubborn barnacles to our American ethic of every nuclear family for itself, then each of us had better raise and educate offspring enough to give us each day, in our old age, our daily bread.

Barbara Kinsolver

Men reject their prophets and slay them, but they love their martyrs and honor those whom they have slain.

Feodor Dostoevsky

Men get to be a mixture of the charming mannerisms of the women they have known.

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Nothing is more humbling than to look with a strong magnifying glass at an insect so tiny that the naked eye sees only the barest speck and to discover that nevertheless it is sculpted and articulated and striped with the same care and imagination as a zebra.

Apparently it does not occur to nature whether or not a creature is within our range of vision, and the suspicion arises that even the zebra was not designed for our benefit.

Rudolf Arnheim

Rosiness is not a worse windowpane than gloomy gray when viewing the world.
Grace Paley

When things get ambiguous, it means you may be getting near the truth. When it's really clear, you can be sure it's not the truth, but someone fooling themselves. The truth is ambiguous, so when things feel really ambiguous, the chances are you are getting close to the truth--which is ambiguous, which was meant to be ambiguous.
Webster Kitchell

It's a contention of Heat Moon's--believing, as he does, any traveler who misses the journey misses about all he's going to get--that a man becomes his attentions. His observations and curiosity, they make and remake him.
William Least Heat Moon

Good news; but if you ask me what it is, I know not. It is a track of feet in the snow, it is a lantern showing a path, it is a door set open.
G.K. Chesterton

A beautiful woman who is pleasing to men is good only for frightening fish when she falls into the water.
Zen proverb

Never despair. But if you do, work on in despair.
Edmund Burke

There is always another chance...This thing we call failure is not the falling down but the staying down.
Mary Pickford

There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil, to one who is striking at the root.
Henry David Thoreau

After the Master's death, his disciples came together and talked about the things he had done. When it was Rabbi Schneur Zalman's turn, he asked them, "Do you know why our master went to the pond every day at dawn and stayed there for a little while before coming home again?" They did not know why. Rabbi Zalman continued: "He was learning the song with which the frogs praise God. It takes a very long time to learn that song."
Martin Buber

Take your life in your own hands and what happens? A terrible thing: no one to blame.
Erica Jong

It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.
Irish proverb

At best, the family teaches the finest things human beings can learn from one another--- generosity and love. But it is also, all too often, where we learn nasty things like hate and rage and shame...Millions adhere to creeds that are militantly 'pro-family.' But at the same time, millions flock to therapy groups that offer to heal the 'inner child' from damage inflicted by family life... Even healthy families need outside resources of moral guidance to keep the internal tensions from imploding...

Barbara Ehrenreich

To die for an idea; it is unquestionably noble. But how much nobler it would be if men died for ideas that were true.

H. L. Mencken

Many believe that we must be taught to learn. Jesus didn't teach how to live, He lived. He gave us the opportunity to live his way of life. He gave us the perfect example of how to help people help themselves, by example. He didn't conduct a class or give a workshop or write a curriculum on how to live.

John Boston

Only very lowly and late have men come to realize that unless freedom is universal it is only extended privilege.

Christopher Hill

Clearly the most unfortunate people are those who must do the same thing over and over again, every minute, or perhaps twenty to the minute. They deserve the shortest hours and the highest pay.

John Kenneth Galbraith

When eating a fruit, think of the person who planted the tree.

Vietnamese saying

The notion of following your passion is worth indulging. Your passion is your source of power. To lead a really full life, you need to follow where it leads . . . in defiance of all things conventional, perhaps. And of course it is at a price. You have to know that going in. But the price you pay, in my opinion, is not even worth the time of day to think about. It's so important not to knee-pad around the world. You should never bow down to anything but those you love and respect. Ever. For anything.

Doug Peacock

Just as I was thinking that no century could possibly be dumber than the nineteenth, along comes the twentieth. I swear, the entire planet seemed to be staging some kind of stupidity contest.

Martin Amis

Try saying this silently to everyone and everything you see for thirty days. . .: "I wish you happiness now and whatever will bring happiness to you in the future." If we said it to the sky, we would have to stop polluting; if we said it when we see ponds and lakes and

streams, we would have to stop using them as garbage dumps and sewers; if we said it to small children, we would have to stop abusing them, even in the name of training; if we said it to people, we would have to stop stoking the fires of enmity around us. Beauty and human warmth would take root in us like a clear, hot June day. We would change.

Joan Chittister

One sister told me that, years before, my aunt [Sister Josephine] had summoned the young sisters from their morning prayer, led them to the house of a poor family whose mother lay ill. They cleaned, prepared breakfast, got the children off to school. "This is your prayer" was all she said to the sisters. "None of us ever forgot that," the sister said.

Daniel Berrigan

We are here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness.

Thich Nhat Hanh

As for us, we will live this Journey in community, risking to love and be loved, stretching toward forgiveness and mutual respect, growing in courage to be ourselves fully, healing into wisdom and integrity, transforming through hope, recovering by grace. We will listen intently, serve gladly, share openly, trust joyfully, live gratefully, dream purposefully, and celebrate exuberantly!

Thomas L. Jackson [Statement of the Order of Christian Workers]

If Jesus Christ were to come today, people would not even crucify him. They would ask him to dinner, and hear what he had to say, and make fun of it.

Thomas Carlyle

Very early in life, the child began to realize that wisdom was all about everywhere, and that there were many things to know. There was no such thing as emptiness in the world. Even in the sky there were no vacant spaces. Everywhere there was life, visible and invisible, and every object possessed something that would be good for us to have also--even to the very stones. This gave a great interest to life. Even without human companionship, one was never alone.

Chief Standing Bear

An ideal wife is any woman who has an ideal husband.

Booth Tarkington

Shall we then judge a country by the majority, or by the minority?

Ralph Waldo Emerson

I have tried to walk with [Jesus], to learn, little by little, the secrets of the universe, and even more, the secrets of God...I have tried to learn that faith is trust in God, and that faith and trust grow day by day through all that is beautiful as well as through all that is painful, all that reveals our weakness and poverty...

Jean Vanier

I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually.

James Baldwin

I do not love strife, because I have always found that in the end each remains of the same opinion.

Catherine the Great

Meetings are an addictive, highly self-indulgent activity that corporations and other large organizations habitually engage in only because they cannot actually masturbate.

Dave Barry

It was completely fruitless to quarrel with the world, whereas the quarrel with oneself was occasionally fruitful, and always, she had to admit, interesting.

May Sarton

Our enemy is by tradition our savior, in preventing us from superficiality.

Joyce Carol Oates

To die for the revolution is a one-shot deal; to live for the revolution means taking on the more difficult commitment of changing our day-to-day life patterns.

Frances M. Beal

We are the stars, who sing with our light.

We are the nightbirds of fire, who fly across the heavens.

We are the spirits, who make a road for the Great Spirit.

Chant of the Algonquin people

Those of us who have the situation in Lebanon in perspective and know exactly how to plot a gay-rights campaign are usually morons. We snap at our children when they have innocent homework questions. We don't notice when our lover has a deadline. We forget to call our best friend back when she's just had root canal. Homework, root canal, and deadlines are the important things in life, and only when we have these major dramas taken care of can we presume to look at the larger questions.

Cynthia Heimel

Tell me, what is it you plan to do

With your one wild and precious life?

Mary Oliver

To believe in God is to build a bridge between yourself and everything worth being one with.

Corita Kent

This is an idea whose time has come...The world will not survive the 21st century with the ethics of the 20th century.

Oscar Arias

Where is your fire?
You've got to find it
And pass it on.
Sonia Sanchez

Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a soul?
John Keats

The need for change bulldozed a road down the center of my mind.
Maya Angelou

Although all men have a destiny, each individual also has to work out his personal situation for himself... We can help one another find out the meaning of life...But in the last analysis, each is responsible for "finding himself."
Thomas Merton

Even a purely moral act that has no hope of immediate and visible political effect can gradually and indirectly, over time, gain in political significance.
Vaclav Havel

Traveler, there is no road; the way is made by walking.
Antonio Machado

The status quo sits on society like fat on cold chicken soup and it's quite content to be what it is. Unless someone comes along to stir things up there just won't be change.
Abbie Hoffman

In the final analysis, all we really have to share with each other is how we live...

Toby McC

You begin saving the world by saving one man at a time; all else is grandiose romanticism or politics.
Charles Bukowski

When you've parked the second car in the garage, and installed the hot tub, and skied in Colorado, and wind-surfed in the Caribbean, when you've had your first love affair and your second and your third, the question will remain, where does the dream end?
Mario Cuomo

One morning, Thomas Jefferson woke up in a modest Washington rooming house, dressed, and then left the house in order to attend his inauguration as third president. When he got back, duly sworn in, he found no space left for him at the dinner table. Quietly accepting the democratic principle of first come, first served, the president of the United States went up to his room without dinner.

Unknown

There is no such thing as security. There never has been.

Germaine Greer

Buddha's doctrine: man suffers because of his craving to possess and keep forever things which are essentially impermanent. Chief among these things is his own person, for this is his means of isolating himself from the rest of life, his castle into which he can retreat and from which he can assert himself against eternal forces. He believes that his fortified and isolated position is the best means of obtaining happiness; it enables him to fight against change, to strive to keep pleasing things for himself, to shut out suffering and shape circumstance as he wills. In short, it is his means of resisting life. The Buddha taught that all things, including his castle, are essentially impermanent, and as soon as man tries to possess them they slip away; the frustration of the desire to possess is the immediate cause of suffering.

Alan Watts

God Himself, sir, does not propose to judge man until the end of his days.

Samuel Johnson

There are no whole truths; all truths are half-truths. It is in trying to treat them as whole truths that plays the devil.

Alfred Lord Whitehead

Money is only money, beans tonight and steak tomorrow. So long as you can look yourself in the eye.

Meridel Le Sueur

Man is condemned to be free.

Jean-Paul Sartre

“Aren't you going to wish us a Merry Christmas?”

The Master glanced at the calendar, saw it was a Thursday, and said, “I'd much rather wish you a happy Thursday.” This offended the Christians in the monastery, until the Master explained:

“Millions will celebrate not Today, but Christmas---so their joy is short-lived. But for those who have learned to celebrate Today, every day is Christmas.”

Unknown

The only person who is really free is the one who can turn down an invitation to dinner without any excuse.

Jules Renard

There was a rabbi who, upon entering a room in his home, saw his son deep in prayer. In the corner stood a cradle with a crying baby. The rabbi asked his son, "Can't you hear? There's a baby crying in this room." The son said, "Father, I was lost in God." And the

rabbi said, "One who is lost in God can see the very fly crawling up the wall."
Abel Herzberg

What other dungeon is so dark as one's own heart! What jailer so inexorable as one's self!
Nathaniel Hawthorne

Write your name by kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of the thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten.
Thomas Chalmers

We wake, if we ever wake at all, to mystery, rumors of death, beauty, violence.
Annie Dillard

There is really nothing you must be.
And there is nothing you must do.
There is really nothing you must have.
And there is nothing you must know.
There is really nothing you must become.
However, it helps to understand that fire burns,
and when it rains, the earth gets wet.
Japanese proverb

The only people on earth who do not see Christ and his teachings as nonviolent are Christians.
Mohandas K. Gandhi

"For six years now, I have gone around by myself and built up my science. And now I am a master. Son, I can love anything. No longer do I have to think about it even. I see a street full of people and a beautiful light comes on in me. I watch a bird in the sky. Or I meet a traveler on the road. Everything, son. And anybody. All strangers and all loved! Do you realize what a science like mine can mean?"
Carson McCullers

If I had been asked in the first years of my spiritual life endeavor what I wanted people to say in appreciation of me, I would have answered, "Let them say he is a holy man." Years later I would have answered, "Let them say he is a loving man." And now I would like people to say of me, "He is a free man."
Anthony de Mello

God is no white knight who charges into the world to pluck us like distressed damsels from the jaws of dragons, or disease. God chooses to become present to and through us. It is up to us to rescue one another.
Nancy Mairs

Happiness is a way station between too little and too much.

Channing Pollock

I never give 'em hell. I just tell the truth and they think it's hell.

Harry S. Truman

We cannot love God unless we love each other. We know Him in the breaking of bread, and we know each other in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone anymore. Heaven is a banquet, and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship. We have all known the long loneliness, and we have learned that the only solution is love, and that love comes with community.

Dorothy Day

All the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.

James Russell Lowell

You think religion is what's inside a little building filled with pretty lights from stained-glass windows. But it's not. It's wings! Wings!

Dorothy Canfield Fisher

I undertake to refrain from killing and harming living beings.

I undertake to refrain from stealing and taking that which is not mine.

I undertake to refrain from causing harm through sexual misconduct.

I undertake to refrain from false speech, harmful speech, gossip, and slander.

I undertake to refrain from the misuse of intoxicants or substances such as alcohol or drugs that cause carelessness or loss of awareness.

Precepts of Buddhist practice

The compulsion to do good is an innate American trait. Only North Americans seem to believe that they always should, may, and actually can choose somebody with whom to share their blessings. Ultimately this attitude leads to bombing people into the acceptance of gifts.

Ivan Illich

It is a tremendous act of violence to begin anything. I am not able to begin. I simply skip what should be the beginning.

Rainer Maria Rilke

I cannot believe in a God who wants to be praised all the time.

Friedrich Nietzsche

You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him or to him.

Thomas Edison

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the

season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way.

Charles Dickens

hatred bounces.

e e cummings

Lloyd LeBlanc has told me that he would have been content with imprisonment for Patrick Sonnier, [the man who killed his son]. He went to the execution, he said, not for revenge, but hoping for an apology. Patrick Sonnier had not disappointed him . . . and Lloyd LeBlanc had nodded his head, signaling a forgiveness he had already given. He says that when he arrived with sheriff's deputies there in the cane field to identify his son, he had knelt by his body . . . and prayed the Our Father. And when he came to the words "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," he did not halt or equivocate, and he said, "Whoever did this, I forgive them." But he acknowledges that it's a struggle to overcome the feelings of bitterness and revenge that well up, especially as he remembers David's birthday year after year and loses him all over again....

Forgiveness is never going to be easy. Each day it must be prayed for and struggled for and won.

Sister Helen Prejean

Passion has the power to transform a human being from a rather limited, petty, fearful creature to a magnificent figure reaching at times the status of a myth.

Anais Nin

During my seventeen years as Referee of the San Francisco Juvenile Court, I saw hundreds of young people who refused to be buried.

Mary Conway Kohler

One who deceives will always be able to find those who allow themselves to be deceived.

Machiavelli

In the autumn I gathered all my sorrows and buried them in my garden. And when April returned and spring came to wed the earth, there grew in my garden beautiful flowers unlike all other flowers. And my neighbors came to behold them, and they all said to me, "When autumn comes again, at seeding time, will you not give us of the seeds of these flowers that we may have them in our gardens?"

Kahlil Gibran

Life is too short to wear tight shoes.

Unknown

At the next meal-I was head server-tears were pouring down my face as I served . . . and afterwards, when I went out of the zendo, . . . there was a tree there, and looking at the tree, I didn't feel I was the tree; it went deeper than that. I felt the wind on me, I felt the

birds on me, all separation was completely gone.
Bernard Tetsugen Glassman

I hold myself to be incapable of hating any being on earth. By a long course of prayerful discipline, I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know this is a big claim. Nevertheless, I make it in all humility.
Mohandas K. Gandhi

The only way to make a man worthy of love is by loving him.
Thomas Merton

If you can't change your fate, change your attitude.
Amy Tan

What do we know of the inner mechanisms of Mozart the creative genius? Only one thing is certain: depression or psychic suffering does not diminish his productivity, unlike other creative people, but increases it qualitatively and quantitatively.
Wolfgang Hildesheimer

If God made us in his image, we have certainly returned the compliment.
Voltaire

Jesus did not write the Good News down; he sent others out to tell it, and people who heard it remembered it and made it readable.
Frank Romanowicz

In every parting there is an image of death.
George Eliot

The person who had fallen into the well called up to the person standing above: "Many, many thanks for throwing down the rope. It would help me more, though, if you would hold onto one end of it."
Unknown

As a child, I reacted to stress by developing this compulsion: I would draw an ugly house on a piece of paper, and then erase the house line by line and turn it into a beautiful one.
Sylvia Stone

If you don't change your beliefs, your life will be like this forever. Is this good news?
Robert Anthony

I think it is too late for [new] institutions [to change institutions]. Christ was saying that every moment touches eternity, every moment we live in. "Now is the acceptable time of salvation." That's because here, this moment, right now, is an eternal moment. And you can touch it. Institutions are irrelevant at this point. As you come up with another institution, it's sucked into the same vortex, manipulated in another way, turned into just

what it's always been.
T Bone Burnett

Look, we're all the same; a man is a fourteen-room house--in the bedroom he's asleep with his intelligent wife, in the living room he's rolling around with some bare-ass girl, in the library he's paying his taxes, in the yard he's raising tomatoes, and in the cellar he's making a bomb to blow it all up.

Arthur Miller

John F. Kennedy's comment on his reputation as a hero in World War Two: "It was involuntary. They sank my boat."

Unknown

However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me which, as it were, is not a part of me, but a spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it, and that is no more I than it is you. When the play--it may be the tragedy--of life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned.

Henry David Thoreau

Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns. I am thankful that thorns have roses.

Alphonse Karr

Cats seem to go on the principle that it never does any harm to ask for what you want.

Joseph Wood Krutch

Darkness was upon the face of the deep, and God said, "Let there be light." Darkness laps at my sleeping face like a tide, and God says, "Let there be Buechner." Why not? Out of the primeval chaos of sleep he calls me to life again.... He calls me to be this rather than that; he calls me to be here rather than there; he calls me to be now rather than then.

Frederick Buechner

Once an angry man dragged his father along the ground through his own orchard. "Stop!" cried the groaning old man at last. "Stop! I did not drag my father beyond this tree."

Gertrude Stein

We are the protagonists and the authors of our own drama. It is up to us; there is no one left to blame. Neither the "system," nor our leaders, nor our parents. We can't go out and hang the first amoeba.

Rebecca McClen Novick

Every damn thing is your own fault, if you're any good.

Ernest Hemingway

Some people once brought a blind man to Jesus and asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this

man or his parents, that he was born blind?" They all wanted to know why this terrible curse had fallen on this man. And Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the words of God might be manifest in him." He told them not to look for why the suffering came but to listen for what the suffering could teach them. Jesus taught that our pain is not punishment; it is no one's fault. When we seek to blame, we distract ourselves from an exquisite opportunity to pay attention, to see even in this pain a place of grace, a moment of spiritual promise and healing.

Wayne Muller

The way one eats is the way one works.

Czech proverb

And some, like me, are just beginning to guess at the powerful religion of ordinary life, a spirituality of freshly mopped floors and stacked dishes and clothes blowing on the line.

Adair Lara

Cooking is like love. It should be entered into with abandon or not at all.

Harriet Van Horne

There is a famous document of Christian mysticism called Practicing the Presence, in which a monk would experience his union with the Christ in doing very simple things--baking bread, washing dishes, cleaning the floor, and so on. In new-age circles this sometimes gets misinterpreted. The assumption is that the act itself is the practicing of the presence, as in "My practice is baking bread." This can be a good thing to do in a skillful way, but what makes something a practice is not just the ordinary doing of it. It is the sense that in this moment we are giving ourselves, in love, to the universe through this action.... If I am washing this dish, I wash it with the sense that I am caressing the consciousness of a multitude of beings, that I am touching my beloved.

David Spangler

It is often when a community is on the verge of breaking up that people agree to talk to each other and look each other in the eye. This is because they realize that it is a question of life or death, that everything will collapse if they do not do something decisive and radically different. Often we have come to the edge of the precipice before we reach the moment of truth and recognize our own poverty and need of each other, and cry to God for help.

Jean Vanier

All happy families resemble one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

Leo Tolstoy

I feel morally and intellectually obligated simply to concede that the death penalty experiment has failed. From this day forward, I no longer shall tinker with the machinery of death.

Justice Harry Blackmun

Take long walks in stormy weather or through deep snow in the fields and woods, if you would keep your spirits up. Deal with brute nature. Be cold and hungry and weary.

Henry David Thoreau

That's something I've noticed about food: whenever there's a crisis if you can get people to eating normally things get better.

Madeleine L'Engle

The act of putting into your mouth what the earth has grown is perhaps your most direct interaction with the earth.

Frances Moore Lappe

I'm learning that sexual happiness has to do with focusing your attention, like a magnifying glass, on the same piece of paper until it ignites. It has to do with remembering the mystery of who your lover is, not being dulled by a familiar image. It has to do with opening doors, not shutting them, bringing all of yourself, including your lust for other people, as a gift to the one you love. Finally, it has to do with trusting the cycles of desire, not despairing over ebbs and flows, or fulfilling old prophecies of doom and dissatisfaction.

Mark Matousek

Edible. Good to eat and wholesome to digest, as a worm to a toad, a toad to a snake, a snake to a pig, a pig to a man, and a man to a worm.

Ambrose Bierce

If we want to have all our bases covered before we act, nothing exciting will happen. But if we dare to take a few crazy risks because God asks us to do so, many doors, which we didn't even know existed, will open for us.

Henri J. M. Nouwen

Americans can eat garbage, provided you sprinkle it liberally with ketchup, mustard, chili sauce, Tabasco sauce, cayenne pepper, or any other condiment which destroys the original flavor of the dish.

Henry Miller

If sometimes our poor people have had to die of starvation, it is not that God didn't care for them, but because you and I didn't give, were not an instrument in the hands of God, to give them that bread, to give them that clothing; because we did not recognize him, when once more Christ came in distressing disguise, in the hungry man, in the lonely man, in the homeless child, and seeking for shelter.

Mother Teresa

Every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.

James Russell Lowell

The beautiful is as useful as the useful.
Victor Hugo

Let the number of guests not exceed twelve . . . so chosen that their occupations are varied, their tastes similar, the dining room brilliantly lighted, the cloth pure white, the temperature between 60 and 68; the men witty and not pedantic, the women amiable and not too coquettish; the dishes exquisite but few, the wines vintage; the coffee hot; the drawing room large enough to give those who must have it a game of cards while leaving plenty of room for after-dinner talk; the tea not too strong, the toast artistically buttered; the signal to leave not before eleven, and everyone in bed at midnight.

Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

There comes a time in a man's life when to get where he has to go--if there are no doors or windows--he walks through a wall.

Bernard Malamud

Damaged people are dangerous. They know they can survive.

Josephine Hart

Character is what you do when nobody is looking.

Henry Huffman

What has influenced my life more than any other single thing has been my stammer. Had I not stammered I would probably [not have become a novelist but] gone to Cambridge as my brothers did, perhaps have become a don and every now and then published a dreary book about French literature.

W. Somerset Maugham

Hope never consists in thinking 'things will work out.' Hope finds its substance looking reality in the eye; realism finds its possibility in hope. Without a living hope, we can't stand reality; we lie to ourselves with illusions and rationalizations. Hope does not begin to exist except in the harshness of the reality with which we are confronted.

Liz McAlister

He who knows he is infirm, and would climb, does not think of the summit which he believes to be beyond his reach but climbs slowly onwards, taking very short steps, looking below as often as he likes but not above him, never trying his powers, but seldom stopping, and then, sometimes, behold! He is on the top.

Samuel Butler

Shall I admit, then, that the spirit of Christmas often eludes me? That sometimes the holiday seems to celebrate something big and beautiful, and sometimes it leaves me cold? I see people hurrying from store to store, worrying whether they're spending too much or not enough. Sometimes I do it, too, forgetting that what brings joy to another's heart isn't just my gift but my love.

Sy Safransky

Anything can happen to anybody. In the last movie I did, Above Suspicion, I played a paraplegic. I went to a rehab center and I worked with the people there so I could simulate being a paraplegic. And every day I would get in my car and drive away and go, "Thank God, that's not me." I remember the smugness of that, as if I was privileged in a way. And seven months later, I was in this condition. The point is we are all one great big family and any one of us can get hurt at any moment.... We should never walk by somebody who's in a wheelchair and be afraid of them or think of them as a stranger. It could be us--in fact, it is us.

Christopher Reeve

Finding out what we really want, and having the courage to be, do, and have what we desire means facing the obstacles and rejections of the outer world as we move toward what is real, toward what our real self wants. It means going against the wishes of those we love and may admire. It means leaving secure, comfortable ways of doing things to pursue something strange and frightening. It means facing our fears and hesitations, our desires for security, approval, and rest--all natural objectives of the small self which wants guarantees, applause, and to be taken care of.

Marsha Sinetar

We must free ourselves from the career culture's definition of what constitutes praiseworthy human endeavor, for if we continue to be held hostage by our careers, there will be nothing left of our families and our communities, not to speak of our souls. And it is we who must recognize this truth and act on it, for the career culture and the CEOs who drive it cannot and will not change. Susan Wittig Albert

The true individual, anyone who is going to be directly involved with God, will not and cannot avoid the human bite. He will be thoroughly misunderstood. God is no friend of cozy human gathering.

Soren Kierkegaard

Nothing is so strong as gentleness, nothing is so gentle as real strength.

Francis de Sales

It is not love of self, but hatred of self, which is the root of most of the troubles that afflict the world.

Eric Hoffer

In the Dalebura tribe a woman, a cripple from birth, was carried about by the tribespeople, each in turn, until her death at the age of sixty-six.... They never desert the sick.

Unknown

Anyone who regards love as a deal made on the basis of "needs" is in danger of falling into a purely quantitative ethic. If love is a deal, then who is to say that you should not make as many deals as possible?

Thomas Merton

The people you have to lie to, own you. The things you have to lie about, own you. When your children see you owned, then they are not your children anymore, they are the children of what owns you. If money owns you, they are the children of money. If your need for pretense and illusion owns you, they are the children of pretense and illusion. If your fear of loneliness owns you, they are the children of loneliness. If your fear of the truth owns you, they are the children of the fear of truth.

Michael Ventura

The power of a movement lies in the fact that it can indeed change the habits of people. This change is not the result of force but of dedication, of moral persuasion.

Steve Biko

When we find ourselves using Genesis to divide one group of humanity from another, we must stop. To divide male from female, African from European, heterosexual from homosexual, betrays the God of Genesis. To use the passage to institute a hierarchy of human value--husband preferred to wife, master better than slave, heterosexuality more acceptable [to God] than homosexuality---defies this creation story's purpose.

John Linscheid

Character is what emerges from all the little things you were too busy to do yesterday, but did anyway.

Mignon McLaughlin

I've had occasions when I wondered seriously how anyone could feel as bad as this and live. The answer came back that I was still alive, that's all.

William S. Burroughs

The meaning of life must be conceived in terms of the specific meaning of a personal life in a given situation.

Viktor Frankl

The highest condition of the religious sentiment is when. . . the worshiper not only sees God everywhere, but sees nothing which is not full of God.

Harriet Martineau

I remember talking with a friend who has worked for many years at the Catholic Worker, a ministry to the poor in New York City. Daily she tries to respond to waves of human misery that are as ceaseless as surf in that community. Out of my deep not-knowing, I asked her how she could keep doing a work that never showed any results, a work in which the problems keep getting worse instead of better. I will never forget her enigmatic answer: "The thing you don't understand, Parker, is that just because something is impossible doesn't mean you shouldn't do it."

Parker J. Palmer

Most of the mistakes in our lives come from feeling when we ought to think and thinking when we ought to feel.

Unknown

If people knew how hard I have had to work to gain my mastery, it wouldn't seem wonderful at all.

Michelangelo

Tell your story...go into yourself and see how deep the place is from which your life flows; at its source you will know yourself...Then take that destiny upon yourself, and bear it, its burden and its greatness.

Ranier Maria Rilke

Be glad for life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to look up at the stars.

Henry Van Dyke

There are moments in our lives, there are moments in a day, when we seem to see beyond the usual--become clairvoyant. We reach then into reality. Such are the moments of our greatest happiness. Such are the moments of our greatest vision...They are the pinnacles of our experience and it is the desire to express these intimate sensations, this song from within, which motivates the masters of all art.

Robert Henri

I have spent my days stringing and unstringing my instrument while the song I came to sing remains unsung.

Rabindranath Tagore

What does education often do? It makes a straight-cut ditch of a free, meandering brook.

Henry David Thoreau

Prayer gives a man the opportunity of getting to know a gentleman he hardly ever meets. I do not mean his maker, but himself.

Dean Inge

A little boy came home and told his mother he had gotten first prize in an examination. The question had been "How many legs does a horse have?" He had answered, "Three." When his mother asked how he had gotten the first prize, he replied that all the other children had said, "Two."

Richard Kehl

I find no justification for war or killing in any manner in the New Testament. In the first two centuries, the Christians were absolutely pacifist. We need to reclaim this nonviolent tradition and spirit again.

Frank Cordaro

Whatever our point of view or frame of reference, the world is richer and more amazing than we realize. All frames of reference are limited. All points of view can be supplemented by further experience under new and various conditions.

Donald Granger

The most exhausting thing in life is being insincere.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

What your heart thinks great is great. The soul's emphasis is always right.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Both class and race survive education, and neither should. What is education then? If it doesn't help a human being to recognize that humanity is humanity, what is it for? So you can make a bigger salary than other people?

Beah Richards

The decision to feed the world is the real decision.

Adrienne Rich

In the late 1600s the finest instruments originated from three rural families whose workshops were side by side in the Italian village of Cremona. First were the Amatis, and outside their shop hung a sign: "The best violins in all Italy." Not to be outdone, their next-door neighbors, the family Guarnerius, hung a bolder sign proclaiming: "The Best Violins In All The World!" At the end of the street was the workshop of Anton Stradivarius, and on its front door was a simple notice which read: "The best violins on the block."

Freda Bright

The way to get things done is not to mind who gets the credit for doing them.

Benjamin Jowett

If you want your children to be brilliant and imaginative, read them fairy tales.

Albert Einstein

There is a difference between a book of two hundred pages from the very beginning, and a book of two hundred pages which is the result of an original eight hundred pages. The six hundred are there. Only you don't see them.

Elie Wiesel

I asked Ring Lardner the other day how he writes his short stories, and he said he wrote a few widely separated words or phrases on a piece of paper and then went back and filled in the spaces.

Harold Ross

That's the way things come clear. All of a sudden. And then you realize how obvious they've been all along.

Madeleine L'Engle

They will say you are on the wrong road, if it is your own.

Antonio Porchia

There are some things which cannot be learned quickly, and time, which is all we have, must be paid heavily for their acquiring. They are the very simplest things and, because it takes a man's life to know them, the little new that each man gets from life is very costly and the only heritage he has to leave.

Ernest Hemingway

A great deal of talent is lost in this world for want of a little courage.

Sydney Smith

To have what we want is riches; but to be able to do without, is power.

George MacDonald

If we're going to take a good, hard look at the so-called failures of the welfare system over the past thirty years, are we ready, then, to take the same hard look at the capitalist system, which, after 200 years, still leaves at least six percent of the population unemployed and another several million living in constant poverty?

Mario Cuomo

For my part, I believe that the vainglorious and the violent will not inherit the earth.... In pursuance of that faith my friends and I take the hands of the dying in our hands. And some of us travel to the Pentagon, and others live in the Bowery and serve there... It is all one.

Daniel Berrigan

Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead.

John Chrysostom

As a young writer, I was the dandiest, cleverest wit and wise guy--a cinch if one possesses the meager gifts. And then after witnessing enough pain and plain courage in the world, I simply reversed course and started writing about the life before my eyes. Eventually one understands that the world is largely made up of obvious truths, lying in the open, begging to be repeated.

Roger Rosenblatt

Most of us spend too much time on the last twenty-four hours and too little on the last six thousand years.

Will Durant

Today every invention is received with a cry of triumph which soon turns into a cry of fear.

Bertolt Brecht

The unrecorded past is none other than our old friend, the tree in the primeval forest which fell without being heard.

Barbara Tuchman

The notion of progress in a single line without goal or limit seems perhaps the most parochial notion of a very parochial century.

Lewis Mumford

You can't say that civilization don't advance . . . for in every war they kill you a new way.

Will Rogers

Utopias are presented for our inspection as a critique of the human state. If they are to be treated as anything but trivial exercises of the imagination, I suggest there is a simple test we can apply.... We have to say to ourselves, "How would I myself live in this proposed society? How long would it be before I went stark staring mad?"

William Golding

For peace of mind, resign as general manager of the universe.

Larry Eisenberg

We pass the word around; we ponder how the case is put by different people; we read the poetry; we meditate over the literature; we play the music; we change our minds; we reach an understanding. Society evolves this way, not by shouting each other down, but by the unique capacity of unique, individual human beings to comprehend each other

Lewis Thomas

The test of a civilization is in the way that it cares for its helpless members.

Pearl S. Buck

I honor your Gods

I drink from your well

I bring an unprotected heart

to our meeting place

I hold no cherished outcome

I will not negotiate by withholding

I am not subject to disappointment

Druid Vow of Friendship

Ever since I could remember, I'd wished I'd been lucky enough to be alive at a great time--when something big was going on, like a crucifixion. And suddenly I realized I was.

Ben Shahn

Ideology, politics, and journalism, which luxuriate in failure, are impotent in the face of hope and joy.

P. J. O'Rourke

I like not only to be loved, but to be told that I am loved; the realm of silence is large enough beyond the grave.

George Eliot

I love the story about A. J. Muste, who, during the Vietnam War, stood in front of the White House night after night with a candle, sometimes alone. A reporter interviewed him one night as he stood there in the rain. "Mr. Muste, do you really think you are going to change the policies of this country by standing out here alone at night with a candle?" A. J. responded, "Oh, I don't do this to change the country. I do this so the country won't change me."

Andrea Ayvazian

A man's real life is that accorded to him in the thoughts of other men by reason of respect or natural love.

Joseph Conrad

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever.

Ecclesiastes

Saint Teresa of Avila described our life in this world as like a night at a second-class hotel.

Malcolm Muggeridge

Why do you hasten to remove anything which hurts your eye, while if something affects your soul you postpone the cure until next year?

Horace

Self-knowledge and self-improvement are very difficult for most people. It usually needs great courage and long struggle.

Abraham Maslow

It is easy to detect the bullshit in a jingle or an official euphemism for murder, but . . . I must keep my bullshit detector on when I say or write that I'm a good person who only wants peace and justice. Bullshit. I'm also a greedy person who wants a snazzy computer and a place in the country. I'm a demanding person who wants a clean environment, safe streets, and lower taxes. I'm an impossible person who wants instant nirvana, heaven on the cheap, sainthood in ten easy lessons. Perhaps you know people like me.

Mark O'Brien

No man consciously chooses evil because it is evil; he only mistakes it for the happiness that he seeks.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

Once, an old woman at my church said the secret is that God loves us exactly the way we

are and that he loves us too much to let us stay like this--and I'm just trying to trust that.
Anne Lamott

It is better to wear out than to rust out.
Cumberland

Both the ancestry and posterity of grief go further than the ancestry and posterity of joy.
Herman Melville

Why 300,000 varieties of beetles? The great English geneticist J.B.S. Haldane was once cornered by a distinguished theologian who asked him what inferences one could draw, from a study of the created world, as to the nature of its Creator. Haldane answered, "An inordinate fondness for beetles."
David Quammen

Knowledge is one. Its division into subjects is a concession to human weakness.
Sir Halford John Mackinder

Art does not like to lie down on the bed that is made for it; it runs away as soon as one says its name; it loves to be incognito. Its best moments are when it forgets what it is called.
Jean Dubuffet

Do not be a magician, be magic.
Leonard Cohen

In the first centuries of Christianity, the hungry were fed at a personal sacrifice, the naked were clothed at a personal sacrifice, the homeless were sheltered at a personal sacrifice...and the pagans used to say about the Christians, "See how they love each other." In our own day, the poor are no longer fed, clothed, and sheltered at a personal sacrifice, but at the expense of taxpayers. And because of this, the pagans say about the Christians, "See how they pass the buck."
Peter Maurin

I learned long ago that the world could neither deprive me of something nor give me anything, and I now have one ambition and one joy.
Mary Baker Eddy

I knew of a physicist at the University of Chicago who was rather crazy like some scientists, and the idea of the insolidarity, the instability of the physical world, impressed him so much that he used to go around in enormous padded slippers for fear he should fall through the floor.
Alan Watts

Do exactly what you would do if you felt most secure.
Meister Eckhart

Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of our classes--our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking around.

G.K. Chesterton

The only difference between a rut and a grave is their dimensions.

Ellen Glasgow

Healing is a messy process. Which, of course, is why most of us choose to never heal.

Thomas L. Jackson

Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves...grace without discipleship. Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a person must knock...It is costly because it costs a person their life, and it is grace because it gives a person the only true life.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

No man in a hurry is quite civilized.

Will Durant

I had a rough marriage. Well, my wife was an immature woman, that's all I can say. See if this is not immature to you: I would be home in the bathroom taking a bath, and my wife would walk in whenever she felt like it and sink my boats.

Woody Allen

Without self-respect you are a criminal in hiding, living in a prison you have built around yourself, and even if the prison is comfortable and luxurious, it is still a prison.

Maxwell Maltz

The world is not a prison-house but a kind of spiritual kindergarten where millions of bewildered infants are trying to spell God with all the wrong blocks.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

To live several lives, you have to die several deaths.

Francoise Giroud

In the range of my character at any given moment, I have acted in the only way it seemed to me I could have acted. This in no way means that I have done what was right; only what was possible for me. Sometimes I have done what I knew was wrong, and have rationalized. But rationalization is a form of desperation. It takes kindness to forgive oneself for one's life.

Anne Truitt

What happens if, instead of seeing God as existing primarily to take care of our needs, we begin to understand that perhaps creation is a response to God's needs--creation and human existence as it was, is, and is becoming.

Michael Dwinell

A person's life purpose is nothing more than to rediscover,
through the detours of art, or love, or passionate work, those one or two images in the
presence of which that person's heart first opened.

Albert Camus

An ordinary everyday walking in the path of duty, and especially the path of kindness, is
a better foundation for doing good work for God than any great ecstasies of inspiration.

Hannah Whitall Smith

Choose, choose, choose
to fight or run
to sleep or read
to study or play
to be faithful or promiscuous
to obey or rebel
to yield or resist
to create or destroy
to repent or deny
to forgive or resent
to save or spend
to take risks or be cautious
to dream
to trust

Who will I trust? Who will I serve? Who will I please?

The crowd, the fashion, the neighbors?

For what will I sacrifice...?

Choose this day.

Paulo Solari

Even crumbs are bread.

Danish proverb

When I get sick of what men do, I have only to walk a few steps in another direction to
see what spiders do. Or what the weather does. This sustains me very well indeed.

E.B. White

I was going to buy a copy of *The Power Of Positive Thinking*, and then I thought: what
the hell good would that do?

Ronnie Shakes

I noticed in New York, where the traffic is so bad and the air is so bad, everything, and
the food, and the coffee, everything, and the streets are falling to pieces, you get into a
taxi and frequently the poor taxi driver is just beside himself with irritation. And one day
I got into one and the driver began talking a blue streak, accusing absolutely everyone of

being wrong. You know, he was full of irritation about everything, and I simply remained quiet. I did not answer his questions, I did not enter into a conversation, and very shortly the driver began changing his ideas and simply through my being silent he began, before I got out of the car, saying rather nice things about the world around him.

John Cage

Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace, like a clock during a thunderstorm.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Does the mystery of the universe excite you beyond measure, and can you feel the presence of a power greater than yourself in all of your affairs? Then join me on the path of wonder, and I'll meet you in a field of infinite possibilities.

Diane Loomans

The salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human meekness, and in human responsibility. Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being as humans, and the catastrophe toward which this world is headed--be it ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization--will be unavoidable.

Vaclav Havel

The lowest ebb is the turn of the tide.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A man lives by believing something; not by debating and arguing about many things.

Thomas Carlyle

Our alphabet's first sound is but the lengthening of a sigh.

Joseph Brodsky

I've never been very good at feasting on the daily newspaper. It turns bitter in my mouth. And yet, this is my world. This face of suffering I must embrace as a part of my responsibility. Part of the feast is becoming aware of the world that is mine. Part of the feast is owning this broken world as my own brokenness.

Macrina Wiederkehr

We all hope for a . . . recipe; we all believe, however much we know we shouldn't, that maybe somebody's got that recipe and can show us how not to be sick, suffer, and die.

Nan Shin

Nature has no mercy at all. Nature says, "I'm going to snow. If you have on a bikini and no snowshoes, that's tough. I am going to snow anyway."

Maya Angelou

As long as we are afraid of God, we cannot love God. The greatest block in the spiritual life is fear.

Henri J. M. Nouwen

”Don’t cry, mother” he answered as he lay dying. “Life is paradise, and we are all in paradise, but we refuse to see it. If we would, we should have heaven on earth the next day.”

Feodor Dostoevsky

Nowhere has the prophet of a social gospel a more difficult time than in America. The vast wealth of our nation has inclined our people to a complacency and has obscured for a time the inequalities and the inequities which characterize our modern industrial civilization.

Reinhold Niebuhr

If I were a Brazilian without land or money or the means to feed my children, I would be burning the rain forest, too.

Sting

We cannot cheat on DNA. We cannot get round photosynthesis. We cannot say, I am not going to give a damn about phytoplankton. All these tiny mechanisms provide the preconditions of our planetary life. To say we do not care is to say in the most literal sense that we choose death.

Barbara Ward

What we are asked to do at present is not so much to speak of Christ as to let him live in us so that people may find him by feeling how he lives in us.

Thomas Merton

I’ve a strong impression our world is about to go under. Our political systems are deeply compromised and have no further uses. Our social behavior patterns, interior and exterior, have proved a fiasco. The tragic thing is, we neither can nor want, nor have the strength, to alter our course. It’s too late for revolutions, and deep down inside ourselves we no longer even believe in their positive effects. Just around the corner an insect world is waiting--and one day it’s going to roll over our ultra-individualized existence.

Otherwise, I’m a respectable Social Democrat.

Ingmar Bergman

Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle that fits them all.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

We are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people.

John F. Kennedy

Certainly nothing is unnatural that is not physically impossible.
Richard Sheridan

You might as well fall flat on your face as lean over too far backward.
James Thurber

Some people really believe they have the answers, that they have teachings to offer but none to receive. That they know how to run their lives. That's easy to understand with young people. But by the time we reach middle age, most of us have made such a mess of our lives (I had, anyway) that we desperately want answers and don't much care where they come from. If we're really stuck, we may even listen to other people. Brokenness is one of God's great gifts. It may be necessary before we can repent of individualism.
John Alexander

If, every day, I dare to remember that I am here on loan, that this house, this hillside, these minutes, are all leased to me, not given, I will never despair. Despair is for those who expect to live forever. I no longer do.
Erica Jong

The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people.
Ghanaian proverb

No one has the right to sit down and feel hopeless. There's too much work to do.
Dorothy Day

The village had no rain for a long time. All the prayers and processions had been in vain; the skies remained shut tight. In the hour of its greatest need, the village turned to the great rainmaker. He came and asked for a hut on the edge of the village and for a five-day supply of bread and water. Then he sent the people off to their daily work. On the fourth day it rained. The people . . . gathered in front of the rainmaker's hut to congratulate him and ask about the mystery of rainmaking. He answered them, "I can't make it rain." "But it is raining," the people said. The rainmaker explained: "When I came to your village, I saw the inner and outer disorder. I went into the hut and got myself in order. When I was in order, you, too, got in order; and when you were in order, nature got in order; and when nature got in order, it rained."
Willigis Jager

Luther, a former Augustinian friar who married, found the art of lovemaking not only delightful but sacred. In a letter to a friend, Luther is quoted as saying, "As you penetrate your wife, I'll penetrate mine, and we'll be united in Christ." Luther goes on to state that the best place to be at Christ's Second Coming is to be united in the act of making love.
Edward Hays

If anything is sacred, the human body is sacred.
Walt Whitman

Sacredness of human life! The world has never believed it! It has been with life that we have settled our quarrels; won wives, gold, and land; defended ideas; imposed religions. We have held that a death toll was a necessary part of every human achievement, whether sport, war, or industry. A moment's rage over the horror of it, and we have sunk into indifference.

Ida Tarbell

Nobody dies from lack of sex. It's lack of love we die from.

Margaret Atwood

No use fretting over gold, beauty, or fame; nurturing these, how can we calm our fluttering heart? Non-attachment brings deep truth, and a truthful nature brings immortality. Empty your heart. Sit quietly on a mat. In meditation we become one with All; Tao billows like the vapors in a mountain valley, and its supernatural power wafts into our soul.

Loy Ching-Yuen

If the angel deigns to come, it will be because you have convinced her, not by your tears, but by your resolve to make a beginning, to be a beginner.

Rainer Maria Rilke

When one has not had a good father, one must create one.

Friedrich Nietzsche

I think the reason very few people really fall in love with anyone is they're not willing to pay the price. The price is you have to adjust yourself to them.

Katharine Hepburn

Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.

William Jennings Bryan

The worst and the best parts of us are the secrets we never reveal.

Lytton Strachey

Genius is only the power of making continuous efforts. The line between failure and success is so fine that we scarcely know when we cross it: so fine that we are often on the line and do not know it. As the tide goes clear out, so it comes clear in.

Elbert Hubbard

Spirituality is rooted in desire. We long for something we can neither name nor describe, but which is no less real because of our inability to capture it with words.

Mary Jo Weaver

If kissing and being engaged were this inflammatory, marriage must burn clear to the

bone. I wondered how flesh and blood could endure the ecstasy. How did married couples manage to look so calm and unexcited?

Jessamyn West

It takes a long time to be really married. One marries at many levels within a marriage. If you have more marriages than you have divorces within the marriage, you're lucky and you stick it out.

Ruby Dee

Once in my life I kissed a woman on the mouth romantically. The surprising thing about it was that she kissed in the same exact way she held a pencil and walked down the street in sandals and shook salt into a bowl of soup. Her gestures had a coherence that was utterly natural. I had expected a secret to be revealed when I kissed her, but discovered that she expressed her secret constantly, as we all do, day and night.

Bonnie Friedman

My community is all over the world really. We're connected spiritually. We're not connected by proximity at all. I think the thread is that we're willing to accept each other's faults, to be honest about who we are. Truth-telling. We're not able to live like one-eyed jacks without love.

T Bone Burnett

One of the dangers in our world is wanting to do big things, heroic things. We are called to do little things lovingly...

Jean Vanier

Real love is a pilgrimage. It happens when there is no strategy, but it is very rare because most people are strategists.

Anita Brookner

I'd rather learn from one bird how to sing
than to teach ten thousand stars how not to dance.

e e cummings

Henry's [Kissinger's] idea of sex is to slow the car down to thirty miles an hour when he drops you off at the door.

Barbara Howar

If the fire rages uncontrolled in a house, we call it a disastrous conflagration; if it burns in a smelting furnace, we call it a useful industrial force. In other words, our drives and impulses as they live within us are neither good nor bad, right nor wrong.

Sigmund Freud

I am spellbound by the intensity of Jesus' emotions: not a twinge of pity, but heartbroken compassion; not a passing irritation, but terrifying anger; not a silent tear, but groans of anguish; not a weak smile, but ecstatic celebration. Jesus' emotions are like a mountain

river cascading with clear water. My emotions are more like a muddy foam or a feeble trickle.

G. Walter Hansen

Psychologists have demonstrated what Jewish and many other cultures have known for centuries--older people have wisdom. One psychologist offers an excellent definition of "wisdom," based on his studies: "the ability to synthesize, sift through, and analyze information in order to arrive at novel, insightful solutions to problems." Problems we have plenty of; if we will overcome our ageism...and begin seeking their wisdom and advice, we might be able to solve more of our problems.

Stephen Gold

Thoughts are pleasant companions if we choose them as well as we would choose other company.

Channing Pollack

I have done precious little else in thirty years but arm myself against the certainty that people die or grow cold or go away forever one nice evening and the world changes.

Thomas Babe

Love is the final end of the world's history, the amen of the universe.

Novalis

I think religion is the real deep entertainment--real profound and voluptuous and delicious entertainment. The real feast Nothing touches it--except if you're courting. If you're young, the hormonal thrust has its own excitement.

Leonard Cohen

When one goes faithfully on with duty, doing in times of darkness, disappointment, or defeat, what is often the little that can be done in devotion to the Christ, one meets the unexpected. The thing beyond one's power and wit happens.

Halford Luccock

It was an odd quandary for them. He needed sex in order to feel connected to her, and she needed to feel connected to him in order to enjoy sex.

Lisa Alther

What would you attempt to do if you knew you could do it?

Thomas L. Jackson

The seven social sins: politics without principles; wealth without work; commerce without morality; education without character; pleasure without conscience; science without humanity; worship without sacrifice.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

Monkeys are superior to men in this: when a monkey looks into a mirror, he sees a

monkey.

Malcolm de Chazal

Metaphysics is not reality.... Metaphysics is a restaurant where they give you a thirty-thousand-page menu and no food.

Robert Pirsig

The apple tree never asks the beech how he shall grow, nor the lion, the horse, how he shall take his prey.

William Blake

If God didn't want man to hunt, he wouldn't have given us plaid shirts.

Johnny Carson

One must be deeply aware of the impermanence of the world. This realization is not achieved by some temporary method of contemplation. It is not creating something out of nothing and then thinking about it. Impermanence is a fact before our eyes. Do not wait for the teachings from others, the words of the scriptures, and for the principles of enlightenment. We are born in the morning and we die in the evening; the man we saw yesterday is no longer with us today.

Bodhim Kjolhede

This I believe, with all my heart. If we want a free and peaceful world, if we want to make deserts bloom and man grow to greater dignity as a human being, we can do it.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Today is yesterday's pupil.

Thomas Fuller

True courage is so alien to most people that if they recognize it at all, they generally consider it foolishness.

Alexandra Rimband

If we resort to carrying weapons around to defend ourselves, we have given up and admitted that our society is hopelessly beyond redemption. We are telling our children that violence is the means and the solution to handling problems... We must stand for and teach another way.

Stephen Gold

The dead carry with them to the grave in their clutched hands only that which they have given away.

DeWitt Wallace

Here I was, sitting in an AA meeting with a group of "professionals," but people just like me; that part of AA tickles me--that people who are successful in their career life are just like me: a drunk, an alcoholic. It lets me know that no matter how much money or

success we have, we still have situations and problems that come up in life.
Unknown

It is only possible to live happily ever after on a day-to-day basis.
Margaret Bonnano

We speak of amnesia as if it were unusual.
Douglas Anderson

After the last rains left the sky and remained on the ground--clear sky, earth wet and mirrorlike--the greatest clarity of life . . . left a sky of its own in the soul and a freshness of its own in the heart. Like it or not, we are slaves of the hour and its colors and forms, subjects of the sky and the earth. Even that part of us that burrows deepest into itself, disdaining its surroundings, does not burrow along the same paths when it rains as when the sky is clear.
Fernando Pessoa

Sorrows cannot all be explained away. . . In a life truly lived, grief and loss accumulate like possessions.
Stefan Kanfer

Christianity teaches that we should love our enemies, but fails to outline the steps required to evolve that capacity; it forgets that loving our enemies is the end point, not the beginning point, of spiritual practice.
Lauren Artress

The comic comes into being just when society and the individual, freed from the worry of self-preservation, begin to regard themselves as works of art.
Henri Bergson

There are many issues in a person's emotional and spiritual growth that might be identified in one-to-one therapy; but can only be experienced, explored, and experimented within a group. A group offers the energy, the feedback, and the support of all the members; the authentic work of any one member usually deeply touches the lives of all members...Individual therapy is often best at helping a person move from not surviving to surviving; while on the other hand, a group can offer the opportunity to make the difficult transition from surviving to thriving.
Michael Dwinell

I miss Julie-Marie so--her smile, her kindness. She was only 23... During the first few months after the bombing, I was not opposed to the death penalty for Timothy McVeigh. But as time has gone on, I've tried to think this out for myself. Right now I'm trying to deal with forgiving. I can't tell myself or anyone else that I've forgiven Timothy McVeigh, because I have not. But my spiritual being tells me I have to deal with that. And if he is sent to death row, or if he's executed, I won't be able to choose to forgive him. As long as he's alive, I have to deal with my feelings and emotions. I'm afraid that

it's going to be a real struggle. But it's a struggle I need to wage... To me the death penalty is vengeance, and vengeance doesn't really help anyone in the healing process... I think my daughter's position on this would be the same as mine...

Bud Welch

When Ernest Hemingway was asked how much rewriting he did, he said, "It depends. I rewrote the ending to A Farewell to Arms, the last page of it, thirty-nine times before I was satisfied with it." The interviewer asked, "Was there some technical problem there? What was it that stumped you?" Hemingway said, "Getting the words right."

Unknown

Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world.

George Bernard Shaw

Penetrating so many secrets, we cease to believe in the unknowable. But there it sits, nevertheless, calmly licking its chops.

H.L. Mencken

Every morning the New York Times is out on the front step, and I wake up and get my tea and decide whether to meditate first or read the New York Times first. If the New York Times is first, by the time I'm to page four, I am already engaged in the pain and the suffering, the greed and the fear. If I meditate first and come into a kind of spacious awareness, I have a perspective that gives me some leverage so that I don't just keep drowning in it. It doesn't mean nonaction; it means that the action comes from a quieter space inside.

Ram Dass

The detached observer is as much entangled as the active participant.

Theodore Adorno

One of the characteristics of a genuine community, as opposed to a clique or cult, is not merely the appreciation but the actual celebration of interpersonal differences.

M. Scott Peck

Our proffered cures do not address the urgent need for social change, but instead divert our energies toward the treatment of illness on the plane of individual "mental health." In doing so we are merely treating the symptoms; it is the culture at large that is sick.

There's an alternative. There's always a third way, and it's not a combination of the other two ways. It's a different way.

David Carradine

When we are not physically starving, we have the luxury to realize psychic and emotional starvation.

Cherrie Moraga

It does no good to think moralistically about how much time we waste. Wasted time is usually good soul time.

Thomas Moore

My feeling is that there is nothing in life but refraining from hurting others and comforting those who are sad.

Olive Schreiner

Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to.

Mark Twain

If society's attitude toward the poor feeds itself upon the collective projection, then there is---as became apparent in Nazi Germany---no natural boundary to "accepted" societal response. The first attacked are always the most marginal, but if today's target is the "criminal," what will stop it from becoming the "welfare cheat," the panhandler, the unemployed man, the unwed mother, or the people who defend them? There are no boundaries.

Richard Withers

It is unfortunate, considering that enthusiasm moves the world, that so few enthusiasts can be trusted to speak the truth.

A. J. Balfour

Many of the commonest assumptions, it seems to me, are arbitrary ones: that the new is better than the old, the untried superior to the tried, the complex more advantageous than the simple, the fast quicker than the slow, the big greater than the small, and the world as remodeled by Man the Architect functionally sounder and more agreeable than the world as it was before he changed everything to suit his vogues and his conniptions.

E. B. White

Prosecutors must reveal the dirty little secret they too often share only among themselves: the death penalty actually hinders the fight against crime...Promoted by members of both political parties in response to an angry populace, capital punishment is a mirage that distracts society from more fruitful, less facile answers. It exacts a terrible price in dollars, lives, and human decency. Rather than tamping down the flames of violence, it fuels them while draining millions of dollars from more promising efforts to restore safety to our lives.

Robert M. Morgenthau

I laid it down as law to myself, to take no notice of the thousand calumnies issued against me, but to trust my character to my own conduct and the good sense and candor of my fellow citizens.

Thomas Jefferson

The armies of Rome disappeared more than a millennium ago, but the force of the life of

a single human whom Roman soldiers put to death continues to shape the development of our species. Who had the power?

Gary Zukav

I once heard it said--and the saying has haunted me ever since--that if animals believed in the Devil, he would look remarkably like a human being.

Lord Bishop of Manchester

Our roots are in the dark; the earth is our country. Why did we look up for blessing-- instead of around, and down? What hope we have lies here. Not in the sky full of orbiting spy-eyes and weaponry, but in the earth we have looked down upon. Not from above, but from below. Not in the light that binds, but in the dark that nourishes, where human beings grow human souls.

Ursula K. Le Guin

The important thing in acting is to be able to laugh and cry. If I have to laugh, I think of my sex life. If I have to cry, I think of my sex life.

Glenda Jackson

The fact is that domestic violence, ugly as we pretend to find it, seems to becoming part of our national policy. Despite our pious concern for the battered, the message from the welfare reformers is clear and cold: stand by your man, they're saying, even when he's knocked you to the floor. Barbara Ehrenreich

There is often in people to whom "the worst" has happened an almost transcendent freedom, for they have faced "the worst" and survived it.

Carol Pearson

We are not human beings trying to be spiritual. We are spiritual beings trying to be human.

Jacquelyn Small

Spirituality is the sacred center out of which all life comes, including Mondays and Tuesdays and rainy Saturday afternoons in all their mundane and glorious detail.... The spiritual journey is the soul's commingling with ordinary life.

Christina Baldwin

They lied to you, sold you ideas of good and evil, gave you distrust of your body, . . . invented words of disgust for your molecular love, mesmerized you with inattention, bored you with civilization.

Hakim Bey

Who can order the Holy? It is like a rain forest, dripping, lush, fecund, wild. We enter its abundance at our peril, for here we are called to the wholeness for which we long, but which requires all we are and can hope to be.

Marilyn Sewell

If an angel were ever to tell us anything of his philosophy, I believe many propositions would sound like $2 \times 2 = 13$.

G. C. Lichtenberg

In the greatest confusion there is still an open channel to the soul. It may be difficult to find because by midlife it is overgrown, and some of the wildest thickets that surround it grow out of what we describe as our education. But the channel is always there, and it is our business to keep it open, to have access to the deepest part of ourselves.

Saul Bellow

What experience and history teach is this--that people and governments never have learnt anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it.

George Wilhelm Hegel

Much happiness is over-looked because it doesn't cost anything.

Arthur Schopenhauer

Christ and Moses standing in the back of Saint Pat's, looking around. Confused, Christ is, at the grandeur of the interior, the baroque interior, the rococo baroque interior. Because his route took him through Spanish Harlem, and he is wondering what the hell fifty Puerto Ricans were doing living in one room when that stained-glass window is worth ten Gs a square foot.

Lenny Bruce

We are built to make mistakes, coded for error.

Lewis Thomas

The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.

Frederick Buechner

We all carry within us our places of exile, our crimes, and our ravages. But our task is not to unleash them on the world; it is to fight them in ourselves and in others.

Albert Camus

A society that presumes a norm of violence and celebrates aggression, whether in the subway, on the football field, or in the conduct of its business, cannot help making celebrities of the people who would destroy it.

Lewis Lapham

If there be anywhere on earth a lover of God who is always kept safe from falling, I know nothing of it, for it was not shown me. But this was shown: that in falling and rising again we are always kept in the same precious love.

Julian of Norwich

It is not drawn on any map; true places never are.
Herman Melville

Families will not be broken. Curse and expel them, send their children wandering, drown them in floods and fires, and old women will make songs out of all these sorrows and sit on the porches and sing them on mild evenings.
Marilynne Robinson

Revelation of the mercy of God makes the whole problem of worthiness something almost laughable: the discovery that worthiness is of no special consequence (since no one could ever, by himself or herself, be strictly worthy to be loved with such a love) is a true liberation of the spirit. And until this discovery is made, until this liberation has been brought about by the divine mercy, humankind is imprisoned in hate.
Thomas Merton

Happy or unhappy, families are all mysterious. We have only to imagine how differently we would be described--and will be, after our deaths--by each of the family members who believe they know us.
Gloria Steinem

The great tragedy is not that men perish, but that they cease to love.
W. Somerset Maugham

Character is like a tree, and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.
Abraham Lincoln

Men and women cannot be content, any more than children, with the mere facts of a humdrum life--the imagination must adorn and exaggerate life, must give it splendor and grotesqueness, beauty and infinite strength.
W. G. Williams

To treat any single fragment of life as if it were all of life is to turn a single vision of good into a consuming and fanatic disruption of the actual rhythm of life.
Joan Chittister

Everybody's always talking about people breaking into houses . . . but there are more people in the world who want to break out of houses.
Thornton Wilder

Life has no other discipline to impose, if we would but realize it, than to accept life unquestioningly. Everything we shut our eyes to, everything we run away from, everything we deny, denigrate, or despise, serves to defeat us in the end. What seems nasty, painful, evil, can become a source of beauty, joy, and strength, if faced with an open mind. Every moment is a golden one for they who have the vision to recognize it as such.

Henry Miller

In the traditional family structure of Persia . . . one simply cannot discard close relatives just because one does not like them; rather one has to accommodate them, make allowances, and accept them, like misfortune.

Shusha Guppy

I have never known a genuinely religious person who was obsessed with “God’s Law,” or with “moral consensus,” or with how to bring the polity into better tune with his or her convictions. In fact, in the New Testament I was raised on, this fellow Jesus was forever getting into trouble for paying not a scrap of attention to “God’s Law,” for not keeping kosher, for not respecting the rules of the Temple, for dividing people, introducing trouble, and spending as much time as possible with criminals, rejects, fanatics, sinners, thieves, diseased folks, publicans, and whores. This seeming disregard for “God’s Law” was one of the reasons he was put to death.

Vince Passaro

The day the child realizes that all adults are imperfect, he becomes an adolescent; the day he forgives them, he becomes an adult; the day he forgives himself, he becomes wise.

Alden Nowlan

We are born into a family and, at the last, we rejoin its full extension when gathered to the ancestors. Family grave, family altar, family trust, family secrets, family pride.

James Hillman

Family jokes, though rightly cursed by strangers, are the bond that keeps most families alive.

Stella Benson

. . . that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love.

William Wordsworth

The only thing that one really knows about human nature is that it changes. Change is the one quality we can predicate of it. The systems that fail are those that rely on the permanency of human nature, and not on its growth and development. The error of Louis XIV was that he thought human nature would always be the same. The result of his error was the French Revolution. It was an admirable result.

Oscar Wilde

The Pilgrim Fathers landed on the shores of America and fell upon their knees. Then they fell upon the aborigines.

Unknown

We started off trying to set up a small anarchist community, but people wouldn’t obey the rules. Alan Bennett

The supreme happiness of life is the conviction of being loved for yourself, or more correctly, being loved in spite of yourself.

Victor Hugo

I would rather be ashes than dust! I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot. I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet.

Jack London

We are all murderers and prostitutes-no matter to what culture, society, class, or nation one belongs, no matter how normal, moral, or mature one takes oneself to be.

R. D. Laing

To feel the love of people whom we know is a fire that feeds our life. But to feel the affection that comes from those we do not know-that is something still greater and more beautiful because it widens out the boundaries of our being and unites all living things.

Pablo Neruda

Our own pulse beats in every stranger's throat.

Barbara Deming

Whenever people say, "We mustn't be sentimental," you can take it they are about to do something cruel. And if they add, "We must be realistic," they mean they are going to make money from it.

Brigid Brophy

Manners are the happy way of doing things.... If they are superficial, so are the dewdrops which give such depth to the morning meadows.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

A society based on cash and self-interest is not a society at all, but a state of war.

William Morris

The very people who sanctimoniously preach protection for the unborn are often the same ones who desire to abort the opportunities of newborn children of poor immigrant mothers. The same people who defend family values are often the ones who would require hospitals to verify citizenship status of poor and frightened families and notify the authorities.

Fernando Arzola, Jr.

Her smile was not meant to be seen by anyone, but served its whole purpose in being smiled.

Ranier Maria Rilke

Of course heaven forbids certain pleasures, but one finds means of compromise.

Moliere

May it be beautiful before me
May it be beautiful behind me
May it be beautiful below me
May it be beautiful above me
May it be beautiful all around me
In beauty it is finished
In beauty it is finished
Navaho chant

In each human heart are a tiger, a pig, an ass, and a nightingale. Diversity of character is due to their unequal activity.
Ambrose Bierce

Civilization has taught us to eat with a fork, but even now if nobody is around we use our fingers.
Will Rogers

One day she told me the story of her early life. Her first love affair took place when she was around eighteen. The young man was a year or two older and the procedure they adopted was to take off their clothes and, quite naked, climb two adjacent poplar trees. When they were as high as they could get, they would make them sway till their branches touched. They themselves never did.
Gerald Brennan

The perfect hostess will see to it that the works of male and female authors be properly separated on her bookshelves. Their proximity, unless they happen to be married, should not be tolerated.
Lady Gough's Etiquette

The Bible tells us to love our neighbors and also to love our enemies-probably because generally they are the same people.
G. K. Chesterton

I can't decide in my mind if it is wiser to wait death in one spot, making the spot as pleasant as may be, and varying its monotony by such pleasant gleams of life as can be obtained---or to hurry on through constantly new and burningly bright scenes, and then dying all improviso as may happen.
Edward Lear

A society that presumes a norm of violence and celebrates aggression, whether in the subway, on the football field, or in the conduct of its business, cannot help making celebrities of the people who would destroy it.
Lewis Lapham

The best thing about animals is that they don't talk much.
Thornton Wilder

I can't celebrate life by denying suffering and injustice, by burying my head in the sand of an unaware, self-deceptive "spirituality." But I can celebrate the inconceivable love expressed in the smallest acts, in everyday triumphs and tragedies.
Sy Safransky

Kindness is a virtue neither modern nor urban. One almost unlearns it in a city. Towns . . . are not unfriendly; they offer a vast and solacing anonymity or an equally vast and solacing gregariousness. But one needs a neighbor on whom to practice compassion.
Phyllis McGinley

This is what you should do: love the Earth and the Sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to everyone that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown nor to any man nor any number of men, reexamine what you've been told at school or in church or in any book, dismiss what insults your soul, and your very flesh shall be a great poem.
Walt Whitman

I can resist everything but temptation.
Oscar Wilde

Courage is rarely reckless or foolish...courage usually involves a highly realistic estimate of the odds that must be faced.
Margaret Truman

We have discovered from quantum physics that we breath in and out so many atoms---each breath containing so many of our atoms that we barely know how to write a number that large---and all of these atoms go into creation and remain and remain---so that they are in the universe forever, so that we are always breathing the atoms of all of those who have gone before, so that we become part of everyone and everything from all times and places.
Dheepak Chopra

You ask of my companions. Hills, sir, and the sundown, and a dog as large as myself that my father bought me. They are better than human beings because they know, but they do not tell.
Emily Dickinson

The first half of my life, I responded to arrogant people with anger and arrogance. Now I respond to their fragility with delicate care.
Theodore Isaac Rubin

Myth has its perfectly legitimate, and indeed profoundly important, place. The myth is

there to indicate the significance of the events, the divine depth of the history. And we shall be grievously impoverished if our ears cannot tune to the angels' song or if our eyes are blind to the wise men's star.

John A. T. Robinson

Former Postmaster General J. Edward Day revealed in his book an ingenious way to stop long-winded telephone callers. Day suggests you hang up while you are talking. The other party will think you were accidentally cut off, because no one would hang up on his own voice.

Judith Martin (aka Miss Manners)

When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a Communist.

Dom Helder Camara

We must seek God in error and forgetfulness and foolishness.

Meister Eckhart

Ain't no sense worrying about things you got control over, 'cause if you got control over them, ain't no sense worrying. And there ain't no sense worrying about things you got no control over, 'cause if you got no control over them, ain't no sense worrying about them.

Mickey Rivers

Life is not lost by dying; life is lost minute by minute, day by dragging day, in all the thousand small uncaring ways.

Stephen Vincent Benet

When death, the great reconciler, has come, it is never our tenderness we repent of, but our severity. I never knew how to worship until I knew how to love.

Harriet Ward Beecher

Human beings are afraid of dying. They are always running after something: money, honor, pleasure. But if you had to die now, what would you want?

Taisen Deshimaru

May I ask you a highly personal question? It's what life does all the time.

Kurt Vonnegut

The darkest hour of any man's life is when he sits down to plan how to get money without earning it.

Horace Greeley

The divinity that shapes our ends is in ourselves... All that a man achieves or fails to achieve is the direct result of his thoughts.

James Lane Allen

Like all weak men, he laid an exaggerated stress on not changing one's mind.
W. Somerset Maugham

During Einstein's stay in Zurich, Paulette Brupbacher asked the whereabouts of his laboratory. With a smile, he took a fountain pen out of his breast pocket and said, "Here."
Carl Seelig

God is hidden in poverty. The charter of Jesus is the beatitude "Blessed are the poor."
The church has lost that vision over the centuries. Somehow the words of Jesus have been twisted to mean "blessed are those who care for the poor."
Sue Mosteller

Religion has made us meditate constantly on the crucifixion and never on the resurrection.
D. H. Lawrence

Because I see so many weak souls trampled underfoot, I am reluctant to believe in the truth of much that is called progress and education. I do believe in education, but only in the kind that is based on a genuine love of humankind.
Vincent van Gogh

The harder we look at our aches and ailments, the more we will be startled by the painful truths they are trying to convey about our dangerously disembodied way of life.
Marion Woodman

To allow ourselves to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is to succumb to violence.
Thomas Merton

There is this noteworthy difference between savage and civilized: that while a sick, civilized man may be six months convalescing, generally speaking, a sick savage is almost half well again in a day.
Herman Melville

The world of science lives fairly comfortably with paradox. We know that light is a wave, and also that light is a particle. The discoveries made in the infinitely small world of particle physics indicate randomness and chance, and I do not find it any more difficult to live with the paradox of a universe of randomness and chance and a universe of pattern and purpose than I do with light as a wave and light as a particle. Living with contradiction is nothing new to the human being.
Madeleine L'Engle

Priests are no more necessary to religion than politicians to patriotism.
John Haynes Holmes

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.
Helen Keller

In the eyes of youth we see a flame, but in the eyes of the aged we see light.
Victor Hugo

If I had my life over again I should form the habit of nightly composing myself to thoughts of death. I would practice, as it were, the remembrance of death. There is no other practice which so intensifies life. Death, when it approaches, ought not to take one by surprise. It should be part of the full expectancy of life. Without an ever-present sense of death, life is insipid. You might as well live on the whites of eggs.
Muriel Spark

It is hard to have patience with people who say, "There is no death," or, "Death doesn't matter." There is death. And whatever is, matters. And whatever happens has consequences, and it and they are irrevocable and irreversible. You might as well say that birth doesn't matter.
C. S. Lewis

I'm trying to die correctly, but it's very difficult, you know.
Lawrence Durrell

Why would I, a peaceful, usually law-abiding grandmother of four (not even a parking ticket) break the habit of a lifetime and become "the little old lady in tennis shoes" we joked about in the 60's? Blame the pesky moral imperative that transcends law and order: When the law of the land oppresses the most vulnerable of its people, even the most passive citizen must make a fuss. The spirit now gaining ground in the republic is a mean blaming of the poor for their poverty... The unbearable thought that their already overwhelming plight could be made worse by the law helped propel me up the Capitol steps and into the Rotunda. And somewhere I read about speaking truth to power: "If not now, when? If not me, who?"
Ellen Watkins

Everybody's heart is open . . . when they have recently escaped from severe pain, or are recovering the blessing of health.
Jane Austen

I have great respect for theologians. They are trying to make the Christian faith coherent and consistent. Of course, I don't think the Christian faith is coherent and consistent, but that's another issue...
Cornel West

You see I thought love got easier over the years so it didn't hurt so bad when it hurt, or feel so good when it felt good. I thought it smoothed out and old people hardly noticed it. I thought it curled up and died, I guess. Now I saw it rear up like a whip and lash.
Louise Erdrich

The great thing is to last and get your work done and see and hear and learn and understand and write when there is something that you know; and not before; and not too damned much after.

Ernest Hemingway

Life does not accommodate you, it shatters you. It is meant to, and it couldn't do it better. Every seed destroys its container or else there would be no fruition.

Florida Scott-Maxwell

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

Eleanor Roosevelt

My books are the books that I am, the confused man, the negligent man, the reckless man, the lusty, obscene, boisterous, scrupulous, lying, diabolically truthful man that I am.

Henry Miller

The desire, the homesickness, for sanity is the one valid reason for subjecting oneself to any kind of religious discipline.

Christopher Isherwood

The late F. W. H. Meyers used to tell how he asked a man at a dinner table what he thought would happen to him when he died. The man tried to ignore the question, but on being pressed, replied: "Oh well, I suppose I shall inherit eternal bliss, but I wish you wouldn't talk about such unpleasant subjects."

Bertrand Russell

You can become a Christian by going to church just about as easily as you can become an automobile by sleeping in a garage.

Garrison Keillor

Time is the substance from which I am made. Time is a river which carries me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger that devours me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire that consumes me, but I am the fire.

Jorge Luis Borges

Eat chocolate now. After you're dead there isn't any.

Jean Powell

Day after day, O God of my life, shall I stand before You face to face? With folded hands, O God of all worlds, shall I stand before You face to face? Under Your great sky, in solitude and silence, with humble heart, shall I stand before You face to face? In this laborious world of Yours, tumultuous with toil and struggle, among hurrying crowds, shall I stand before You face to face? And when my work shall be done in this world, O God of Gods, alone and speechless, shall I stand before You face to face?

Rabindranath Tagore

How do I work? I grope.
Albert Einstein

I still believe that standing up for the truth of God is the I greatest thing in the world. This is the end of life. The end of life is not to be happy. The end of life is not to achieve pleasure and avoid pain. The end of life is to do the will of God, come what may.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

I think that the dying pray at the last not please but thank you , as a guest thanks his host at the door.
Annie Dillard

As if you could kill time without injuring eternity.
Henry David Thoreau

On his deathbed [Thoreau] had asked, still insatiable, to be lifted up in order that he could catch through the window a glimpse of one more spring.
Loren Eiseley

What a man knows at fifty that he did not know at twenty is for the most part incommunicable.
Adlai E. Stevenson

Nature is not anthropomorphic.
Lao Tzu

It's the action, not the fruit of the action, that's important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that doesn't mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result.
Mohandas K. Gandhi

I often say---and it is not an original idea of mine---that the line between good and evil, intelligence and stupidity, wisdom and folly, runs right down the middle of all of us. If you don't learn to take that in your arms and affirm it, then you are going to be alienated--not only from the rest of the human race, but from yourself... Until you can affirm the wholeness of being human, you will always be disappointed in your own life. It's called forgiveness and grace. It's an old idea that I didn't come up with...someone else did.
Robert Fulghum

To me nature is . . . spiders and bugs, and big fish eating little fish, and plants eating plants, and animals eating animals. . . . It's like an enormous restaurant, that's the way I see it.
Woody Allen

Mankind's true moral test, its fundamental test (which lies deeply buried from view), consists of its attitude toward those who are at its mercy: animals. And in this respect mankind has suffered a fundamental debacle, a debacle so fundamental that all others stem from it.

Milan Kundera

A robin redbreast in a cage
puts all heaven in a rage.

William Blake

A peasant becomes fond of his pig and is glad to salt away its pork. What is significant, and is so difficult for the urban stranger to understand, is that the two statements are connected by an and, and not by a but.

John Berger

The animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours, they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life, fellow prisoners of the splendor and travail of the earth.

Henry Beston

Abu Yazid made his periodic journey to purchase supplies at the bazaar in the city of Hamadhan--a distance of several hundred miles. When he returned home, he discovered a colony of ants in the cardamom seeds. He carefully packed the seeds up again and walked back across the desert to the merchant from whom he had bought them. His intent was not to exchange the seeds but to return the ants to their home.

James P. Carse

Love is the extremely difficult realization that something other than oneself is real.

Iris Murdoch

I don't ask you:

 "Give me a blue star from the sky"

I just ask you:

 "Fill my space with your light"

Ociel Guevara

I have sometimes thought of the final cause of dogs having such short lives and I am quite satisfied it is in compassion to the human race; for if we suffer so much in losing a dog after an acquaintance of ten or twelve years, what would it be if they were to live double that time?

Sir Walter Scott

What each day needs, that thou ask,
Each day will set its proper task.

Goethe

In order to really enjoy a dog, one doesn't merely try to train him to be semihuman. The point of it is to open oneself to the possibility of becoming partly a dog.

Edward Hoagland

And you suddenly know: It was here! You pull yourself together, and there stands an irrevocable year of anguish and vision and prayer.

Ranier Marie Rilke

"But I have come to see the holy man!" said the visitor plaintively.

"You have seen me," he gently replied. "If you look on everyone you meet as a holy person, you will be happy..."

Susan Trott

When an animal has nothing to do, it goes to sleep. When a man has nothing to do, he may ask questions.

Bernard J. F. Lonergan

I used to be a fundamentalist. I took every passage of scripture as literally, historically, factually true. It worked fine as long as I thought of God as small enough to talk about, say, the way we talk about each other. But then I learned God was beyond words, even the divinely inspired words of scripture. Even such words, I learned, can only hint at God, and to do so, they must stretch themselves to the breaking point by using images, symbols, metaphors, and stories.

Unknown

When the visitor arrived he found the holy man in prayer. He sat so still that not even a hair of his head moved. When the holy man had finished his prayer, the visitor asked where he had learned such stillness. He replied, "From my cat. She was watching a mouse hole with even greater concentration than you have seen in me." The holy man's cat was seeking something with all her heart and soul. Such seeking gives power...If we are making little headway on our spiritual quest, perhaps we should ask ourselves if we are seeking our goal with the same passion that a cat seeks a mouse.

Edward Hays

Television knows no night. It is perpetual day. TV embodies our fear of the dark, of night, of the other side of things.

Jean Baudrillard

I secretly understood: the primitive appeal of the hearth. Television is--its irresistible charm--a fire.

John Updike

[TV] is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome.

T. S. Eliot

It is only great pain, that slow protracted pain which takes its time and in which we are, as it were, burned with green wood, that compels us philosophers to descend into our ultimate depths and to put from us all trust, all that is goodhearted, palliative, gentle, average, wherein perhaps our humanity previously reposed. I doubt whether such pain "improves"--but I do know it deepens us.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Educational television should be absolutely forbidden. It can only lead to unreasonable expectations and eventual disappointment when your child discovers that the letters of the alphabet do not leap up out of books and dance around the room with royal blue chickens.

Fran Lebowitz

I hate television. I hate it as much as peanuts. But I can't stop eating peanuts.

Orson Welles

You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

Marianne Williamson

Because systems of mass communications can communicate only officially acceptable levels of reality, no one can know the extent of the secret unconscious life. No one in America can know what will happen. No one is in real control.

Allen Ginsberg

But [computers] are useless. They can only give you answers.

Pablo Picasso

Thinking about profound social change, conservatives always expect disaster, while revolutionaries confidently expect utopia. Both are wrong.

Carolyn Heilbrun

Progress is not an illusion. It happens, but it is slow and invariably disappointing.

George Orwell

The road to hell is paved.

Paul Ramsey

We give thanks for the invention of the handle. Without it, there would be many things we couldn't hold onto. As for the things we can't hold onto anyway, let us gracefully accept their ungraspable nature, and celebrate all things illusive and fleeting and

intangible. They mystify us and make us receptive to truth and beauty. We celebrate and give thanks.

Michael Lennig

I asked [Lewis] once, "Would you like us to have a dishwashing machine so you wouldn't have to dry dishes?" He said, "Certainly not. It makes a hell of a noise. I like to dry the dishes as you wash them. We always have a good time talking."

Sophia Mumford

Thomas Edison lost much of his hearing at an early age. But . . . he and his wife attended stage plays. How did he hear the actor? His wife fingertipped key lines of dialogue in Morse code on his knee. Didn't I tell you he taught her Morse code? Then tapped out his marriage proposal in her hand? She tapped back her acceptance.

Richard Kehl

To be a follower of Jesus is a radical step. It is not to be religious; it is to have a relationship with a person who, in fact, calls into question everything about our lives and turns us around and moves us in directions that go against all that the world thinks is important...

Carol Anderson

Rather than admit the evil inside ourselves, we tend to project it onto other people, and feel like all of our problems are the fault of the blacks or the gays or the Russians or the Third World...The longer we keep doing that, the more dangerous this place is going to be to live in.

T Bone Burnett

A man who sees another man on the street corner with only a stump for an arm will be so shocked the first time he'll give him sixpence. But the second time it'll be only a threepenny bit. And if he sees him a third time, he'll have him coldbloodedly handed over to the police.

Bertolt Brecht

Charity is an ugly trick. It is a virtue grown by the rich on the graves of the poor. Unless it is accompanied by sincere revolt against the present social system, it is cheap moral swagger. In former times it was used as fire insurance by the rich, but now that the fear of Hell has gone . . . it is used either to gild mean lives with nobility or as a political instrument.

Rebecca West

We all feel the numbness of despair. There is nothing that can be done, the culture tells us. We will always have nuclear weapons. We will always have war. We will always have violence. Death is in control. Militarism rules the land and our hearts. Yet the voice of Jesus rings out across the centuries: Take away the stone. Come out of your tombs. Unbind the oppressed and let them go free.

John Dear

Compassion is not at all weak. It is the strength that arises out of seeing the true nature of suffering in the world. Compassion allows us to bear witness to that suffering, whether it is in ourselves or others, without fear; it allows us to name injustice without hesitation, and to act strongly, with all the skill at our disposal. To develop this mind state of compassion . . . is to learn to live, as the Buddha put it, with sympathy for all living beings, without exception.

Sharon Salzberg

Master Shaku Soen liked to take an evening stroll through a nearby village. One day he heard loud lamentations from a house and, on entering quietly, realized that the householder had died, and the family and neighbors were crying. He sat down and cried with them. An old man noticed him and remarked, rather shaken on seeing the famous master crying with them, "I would have thought that you at least were beyond such things." "But it is this which puts me beyond it," replied the master with a sob.

Irmgard Schloegl

You must concentrate upon and consecrate yourself wholly to each day, as though a fire were raging in your hair.

Taisen Deshimaru

A man who possesses a veneration of life will not simply say his prayers. He will throw himself into the battle to preserve life, if for no other reason than that he himself is an extension of life around him.

Albert Schweitzer

God, it turns out, has a very strong penchant for bringing apparently unrelated people together and forming them into a community. We may want to draw lines--of race and culture and sexuality and gender--and defend them, but God keeps wanting to mix us all up together.

William Countryman

Having no idea who my audience was, I tried to sell the magazine on the street, but after five minutes I was so embarrassed I almost gave up. Fortunately, an old acquaintance walked by just then. He threw one arm around my shoulders and, waving with his other arm expansively, encouraged me to persevere. His enthusiasm was a godsend. Here's to you, Henry.

Sy Safranksy

One and the same human being is--at various ages, under various circumstances--a totally different human being. At times he is close to being a devil, at times to sainthood. But his name doesn't change, and to that name we ascribe the whole lot, good and evil.

Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn

It used to be the church where you saw fellow community members. Now it's the mall. Saturday has become the new holy day. The parking lots are full. There's an almost

sacred quality given to the act of consuming.
Michael Kearl

People in the US are greatly given to self-praise, yet the reality is that we have the most miserable cities in the modernized world. If the city is a measure of our citizenship and democracy, then we are the dregs of all comparable nations...We as citizens have made pestholes of our cities.
John McKnight

We had VCRs for a while [in the Anabaptist Bruderhof community] but then we noticed the children weren't singing. They weren't playing and running and making up songs. They wanted to put in a tape and sit in front of the TV. So we locked up the VCRs. Now the children are singing again.
Christoph Arnold

If you are thinking a year ahead, sow a seed. If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree. If you are thinking a hundred years ahead, educate the people.
Kuan-Tsu

This earth is precious to God, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator.
Chief Seattle

The wealthy industrialist was horrified to find the fisherman lying leisurely beside his boat.
"Why aren't you fishing?" asked the industrialist.
"Because I have caught enough fish for the day," said the fisherman.
"Why don't you catch some more?"
"What would I do with it?"
"You could earn more money. With that you could get a motor for your boat, go into deeper waters, catch more fish, then have enough money to buy nylon nets. These would bring more fish and more money. Soon you would have enough money to buy two boats, maybe even a fleet of boats. Then you would be a rich man like me."
"What would I do then?"
"Then you could really enjoy life."
"What do you think I'm doing right now?"
Earl Martin

Let judges secretly despair of justice: their verdicts will be more acute. Let generals secretly despair of triumph: killing will be defamed. Let priests secretly despair of faith: their compassion will be true.
Leonard Cohen

It is freeing to become aware that we do not have to be victims of our past, and can learn new ways of responding. But there is a step beyond this recognition...It is the step of forgiveness. Forgiveness is love practiced among people who love poorly. It sets us free without wanting anything in return.

Henri J. M. Nouwen

In the long run, far more lives are lost to the vicious redlining by the major banks in New York and the greed and selfishness of Wall Street than to drug dealers. While the drug dealers might pick off ten or twenty kids a year in any neighborhood, the powerful who have created this ghetto in the first place--and perpetuate it--the toll they take is in the thousands in that neighborhood.

Jonathan Kozol

Only that day dawns to which we are awake.
Henry David Thoreau

Our children turned out like us after all. But we are not who we thought we'd be.
James S. Kunen

For all of us who are on some romantic spiritual journey--seeking the sense and voice of God in the presence of retreats, spiritual gurus, pastoral weekends, endless courses and self-help books--we might want to consider the very real possibility that God has been awaiting us all along in the presence of the poor, the hungry, the dispossessed, the outcast, the desperate children.
Thomas L. Jackson

Community is a place where people can live truly as human beings, where they can be healed and strengthened in their deepest emotions, and where they can walk towards unity and inner freedom. As fears and prejudices diminish, and trust in God and others grows, a community can radiate and witness to a solution to the troubles of our world.
Jean Vanier

What is hell? It is the pain of not being able to love any more.
Feodor Dostoevsky

Professionalism. That's our greatest problem in the community. I have five sisters getting MD degrees, and far greater numbers getting RN, LPN, and MSW degrees. But a funny thing happens. They come back from their education and they are concerned about titles, offices, and parking privileges. So I take all of that away from them, and I send them to the Hospice of the Dying. There they hold people's hands, pray with them, and feed them. After six months of that, they typically get things straight again, and they remember their vocation is to be a spiritual presence first and a professional presence second.
Mother Teresa

Through our education in the scientific world-view of the Enlightenment, we have become alienated from the earth and have forgotten that the earth is also a heavenly body.
Gloria Feman Orenstein

Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.
William Morris

Many of us have no long-rang vision in much of our struggle. We think only of the moment, this time, this place, this circumstance. But think of the ten generations of children that inherit love, and their children, and theirs... Anyone can count the seeds of an apple. Who can count the apples in a seed?

Stephen Covey

There are 60,000 black children waiting to be adopted in the US, while every week newspapers and magazines across the country are graced with ads by parents who are willing to pay huge bucks for a baby. Unspoken, of course, is their willingness to pay for white babies, which are apparently in short supply. As a black man raised by a white Jewish mother and a black American father, I don't fault these folks for trying to obtain a baby who "looks like them." But I'm glad I'm not that baby.

James McBride

Is the final aim of God to bring into being at the very end a glorious kingdom of spirits alone...while as a precondition for their ecstasy all the other creatures of nature must be left by God to fall away into eternal oblivion?

H. Paul Santmire

How tragic that most people never experience work as holy! A thing once so common, now unheard of. How sad that my woodworking handtools are almost universally dismissed as quaint, that such work doesn't count and has no value in modern society! But these woes don't trouble me for long. They are swept aside with the sawdust and shavings. The ability and the occasion to do "holy work" is its own reward, and is capable of lifting the spirit and overcoming grief. It is life in the midst of a dying culture.

Chuck Trapkus

I was with an African delegate after our general conference. He said, "Is this debate on sex typical of the church in the United States?" And I said, "Oh, that's right; you're from Africa. You probably think the church has more important business than sex. But this is what white affluent people worry a lot about. We don't have to worry about housing or food, so we worry about our sexuality." At moments like this, I think we're getting what we deserve; it's divine judgment on us.

William Willimon

Whether it is global warfare in the Middle East or personal prejudice toward a gay Christian, every act of rejection is an act against God.

Kirby Godsey

When we spend so much time working or trying to accomplish our many tasks, we don't do enough of the activities that sustain us as human beings. The problem with modern culture is that the new definition of efficiency refers to the efficiency of a machine, and this is not nearly sufficient for human beings with thoughts, feelings, wants, and needs.

Loren Pierce Coleman

Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.

Feodor Dostoevsky

According to Jim Sleeper, Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom, Dinesh D'Souza, and many other neoconservative writers on black-white relations, racial prejudice plays a negligible role in contemporary American society. After all, say the Thernstroms, 86% of white Americans say they have a black friend (what the Thernstroms don't tell us is, it's the same black friend--and a very busy fellow he must be).

Katha Pollitt

I am exceedingly pleased with my son's Reading and Social Studies books because they talk about different cultures and religions in a positive, informative, and honest way. I do not think these books will make our children color blind, but rather open their eyes to diversity and its beauty. No more than we would want to see a gray rainbow, should we want to minimize or hide differences among people. The attitude we convey toward these differences [teaching our children to enjoy the rainbow] will determine how fully we rid our society of discrimination and hatred.

Stephen Gold

I'm never clear on whether it's grace that comes and goes, or whether it's my ability to experience it that varies so much.

Martha Manning

There are many ways to victimize people. One way is to convince them that they are victims.

Karen Hwang

Once the scales have fallen from one's eyes, once one has seen and believed that reality is put together in such a fashion that one is profoundly united to and interdependent with all other beings, everything has changed. One has a sense of belonging to the earth, having a place in it along with all other creatures, and loving it more than one ever thought possible.

Sallie McFague

Somehow, in the chaos of technological change, we have lost the distinction between a person and a corporation, inexplicably valuing profit at any cost over basic human needs. In doing so, we have forsaken our farmers, the spiritual descendants of those early Hebrew and Greek farmers and pastoralists who first gave us our understanding of social justice, democracy, and the existence of a power greater than our own. No amount of lip service to the goal of feeding the world's hungry or to the glory of a new technology, and no amount of transient increases in the world's grain production, can hide this terrible truth.

David Ehrenfeld

Mapping genes is this era's race to the moon...but we don't know what we'll do when we get there.

David Shenk

Each of us represents the whole human race; within each of us is the instinct for godhood and the hope for mankind, and within each of us is the original sin of laziness, the ever-present force of entropy pushing us back to childhood, to the womb and to the swamps from which we have evolved.

M. Scott Peck

What do I believe to be my most distinguishing characteristic? Inordinate self-esteem.

What traits of character do I most detest? Vanity, self-esteem, conceitedness.

Oscar Wilde

The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews. For the sleeping God may wake someday and take offense, or the waking God may draw us out to where we can never return.

Annie Dillard

One day after a long explanation about sin and the Ten Commandments, I asked a group of Dene Indians what was really the worst sin of all. After some discussion together, one person said: "We all agree that the worst sin people can make is to lock their door."

Rene Fumoleau

The vast marvel is to be alive...the magnificent here and now of life in the flesh is ours, and ours alone, and ours only for a short time. We ought to dance with the rapture that we should be alive and in the flesh, and part of the living, incarnate universe.

D. H. Lawrence

I think that what I've done in my journals made people realize that doing the day to day things can be made sacred or not, depending on how you look at them and how you do them.

May Sarton

So far today, God, I've done alright. I've kept my mouth shut. I have neither gossiped nor lost my temper. I have not been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. I am really glad about all of that. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm going to need a lot more help. Thank you, God. Amen.

Fr. Fles

Politicians tell us to work like a beaver. Well, beavers only work four or five hours a day, they take a bunch of vacations, and they are doing work that matters--building strong houses for their colony--not making some gizmo that's going to end up in the landfill two months from now, or inputting some useless information that nobody's going to use.

Only when Dad died did I begin to realize what a gift he had with all sorts of people-- what a good listener he was. For so many years, there had been a great silence between us, a silence I interpreted as disapproval, rejection, lack of love. I didn't realize that he was listening. While I was waiting for him to open up to me, he was waiting for me to share my story with him.

Edward C. Sellner

Although all men have a destiny, each individual also has to work out his personal situation for himself... We can help one another find out the meaning of life...But in the last analysis, each is responsible for "finding himself."

Thomas Merton

I spent thirty-five years and more than \$150,000 on "Christian counseling," aversive and "ex-gay" therapies, electric shock, and exorcism, trying to become a heterosexual. Blindly believing their untruth about homosexuality led me to almost four decades of suffering, guilt, loneliness, and despair. Finally, aching for death, I opened my heart and mind to voices who spoke another truth--doctors, psychologists, historians, pastors, biblical scholars, friends, and family. They helped me realize that God had created me gay, that God loved me exactly as I was created, and that I could accept my sexual orientation as one of God's gifts.

The Very Rev. Mel White

The ocean really doesn't care whether I float into the beach face down. The natural world is unyielding, but neither for me nor against me, despite my Judeo-Christian fantasies to the contrary. It will not be as I need it to be. It is as it is. It is neutral.

Therefore I can love it.

George Sciple

It is like a great burden rolled off a man's back when he comes to want to appear nothing that he is not, to take out of life only what is truly his own, and to wait for something strong and deep within him or behind him to work through him.

David Grayson

In our local Mississippi paper, an Ole Miss alumnus recently recalled graduating from the school in its centennial year of 1948 without once seeing the Stars and Bars on campus. It's not the banner of anybody's great-great-granddaddy who, for the usual complex of evil and honorable reasons, died at Shiloh, at least not anymore. Today it's the banner of the thugs who spit on black school children at Little Rock and waged war to keep James Meredith off the Ole Miss campus in 1962. Anybody proud of that needs confession, counseling, or maybe an exorcism.

Danny Duncan Collum

When you wake up in the morning and out of nowhere comes the heartache of alienation and loneliness, could you use that as a golden opportunity? Rather than persecuting yourself or feeling that something terribly wrong is happening, right there in the moment of sadness or longing, could you relax and touch the limitless space of the human heart?

Pema Chodron

I have always known
That at last I would
Take this road,
But yesterday
I did not
Know it would be today.
Unknown

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.
Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Rise free from care before the dawn, and seek adventures. Let noon find thee by other lakes, and the night overtake thee everywhere at home... Through want of enterprise and faith, men are where they are, buying and selling, and spending their lives like serfs.
Henry David Thoreau

Faith waits, remains on guard, picks up signs, knows what to make of the most delicate parables. It listens patiently to the silence, until that silence is filled up with what it takes to be the indisputable word of God.
Jacques Ellul

Unfortunately, there is a very loud, consistent, and powerful message coming to us from our world that leads us to believe that we must prove our belovedness by how we look, by what we have, and by what we can accomplish.
Henri J. M. Nouwen

If you don't change your beliefs, your life will be like this forever. Is this good news?
Robert Anthony

When we truly believe in the sacredness of human personality, we won't exploit people, we won't trample over people with the iron feet of oppression, we won't kill anybody.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

Nobody grasped you by the shoulder while there was still time. Now the clay of which you were shaped has dried and hardened, and naught in you will ever awaken the sleeping musician, the poet, the astronomer that possibly inhabited you in the beginning.
Antoine de Saint Exupery

Do you think that the same power that gave you radiance in the womb would abandon you now? It is you who have turned away and walked alone into the dark.
Kabir

If you don't have any money, the problem is food. When you have money, it's sex. When you have both, it's health. If everything is simply jake, then you're frightened of death.

J. P. Donleavy

Still and all, why bother to continue to write? Here's my answer: Many people need desperately to receive this message: 'I feel and think much as you do, care about many of the things you care about, although most people do not care about them. You are not alone.'

Kurt Vonnegut

Finding yourself is something only you can do. Imagine yourself coming back ten years from today through time, to help you where you must now be.

Jim Cohn

Our most powerful visions of traditional families derive from images that are still delivered to our homes in countless reruns of 1950's television sitcoms.

Stephanie Coontz

The mind can be permanently profaned by the habit of attending to trivial things, so that all our thoughts shall be tinged with triviality.

Henry David Thoreau

The great secret, Eliza, is not having bad manners or good manners or any other particular sort of manners, but having the same manner for all human souls: in short, behaving as if you were in Heaven, where there are no third-class carriages, and one soul is as good as another.

George Bernard Shaw

Every victory for the soul is a defeat of the ego.

Carl Jung

The road to wisdom? Well, it's plain

And simple to express;

Err

And err

And err again

But less

And less

And less.

Piet Hein

The last of the human freedoms: to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances; to choose one's own way.

Viktor Frankl

Just say Yes!
That's all you gotta do.
That's it.
Simply grab that wonderful image in the mirror.
Get its absolute attention. NOW.
Stagger it with an unexpected YES.
Holy cow!
Look what happens: a new image.
Don't pass out: jump for joy.
Yikes!
The earth moves, the heavens shudder: it's YOU.
Transformed by single acclamation!
Just say oui.
Everything changes.
No more: no/perhaps/maybe/I hope.
It's you, affirmed.
All by yourself.
Not a guru or a shaman in sight (yes, you did it SOLO!).
Childhood nightmares vanish.
All that junk about you not-being-good-enough or feelings of less-than.
Poof/zap/kapow! Eliminated. Had to go.
Again: YES YES YES!
Bingo.
No more need to beg and grovel and seduce just to remain on the face of the earth.
Miracles happen. By you, if you choose.
Suddenly you're w-a-y beyond simply okay.
You are an honest-to-God amazin'/bloomin' geyser of gifts and talents.
Look deeper: there are more.
Finally.
And just a simple YES did it!
Hold it..
Is that fading inner-voice doubting your new YESNESS?
Tell it--out loud--to shut up!
You get to do that.
You've YESSED yourself.
It's a done deal (renewable: hourly, daily, weekly...even minutely!).
Hellsapoppin' now.
Decisions are yours to make.
No more permission-seeking for your own life, your own YES.
And shazam: look at all the new brothers and sisters you gained.
You're a proud member of the human family, not the friendly scapegoat.
Now you don't have to pout/stomp/weasel/cajole to sit at the banquet of life.
Just plunk down and enjoy the feast.
Just say si.
Don't have to separate folks into boxes and deadends just to feel better about yourself.

That YES gives you everything you need: connection with all things/all beings/all creatures. Ohhhh,smell those flowers!
You get to talk back, now with an excited serenity, instead of that old proving-something.
That YES'll get you a passport to new lands and vistas.
Gloriosky, you get to have your own thoughts.
And your own possibilities, your own epiphanies, your own mysteries.
"I exist, I give, I receive, I respect, I honor."
"I connect, I relate, I have life, I belong to myself and others."
"Right smack in the middle of me is this eternal, teeming, quivering YES."
"And now I claim it!"
Hallelujah.
Goodness gracious.
It's happened...
Thomas L. Jackson

What have I learned from being a lifelong agitator? That it works. The agitator is the center piece in the washing machine that gets the dirt out, and it's the only thing that has ever got it out.
Jim Hightower

He who would be a great soul in the future, must be a great soul now.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

We shall not cease from exploration and the
end of all our exploring will be
to arrive where we started and know
the place for the first time.
T. S. Eliot

It takes courage to grow up and turn out to be who you really are.
e e cummings

There's a thread you follow. It goes among
things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt
or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you can do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.
William Stafford

About the author

Thomas L. Jackson, M.Div, Ph.D., has been the Abbot of The Order of Christian Workers since 1990, and founded the “mother-house” of the Order—St. Dismas House—in 1993 in Tyler, Texas. A graduate of Culver Military Academy (Indiana), Washington University (St. Louis), the Protestant Episcopal Seminary in Virginia (Alexandria), and the American Institute (California), he has also studied at Ohio University, and completed his clinical training at the University of Michigan Medical Center. He has had the honor of studying with such mentors as Dr. Ian Alger, Dr. M. Scott Peck, Fr. Dan Berrigan, Fr. Richard Rohr, John Lee—as well as thousands of Companions who have offered their wisdom and stories to his life, as both priest and clinical counselor.

Over the past thirty-five years, he has actively worked as a priest in urban, suburban, campus, and specialized ministries; a counselor in private practice, mental health agencies, and diocesan settings; a businessman; a carpenter; a designer; and author.

“Fr. Tom”—as he is known to most of his world—is married to Patricia Jackson, and is the father of Jenny, Peter, and Lisa, as well as the stepfather of Patton; there have been many “foster children” in his life over the past thirty-five years.

For the past many years, he and the St. Dismas Community in Tyler have worked with/lived with people with AIDS, people in recovery, the poor and homeless, as well as immigrants. There are now nine Houses in Tyler, as well as several throughout the United States.

Fr. Tom also convenes “Gatherings” at sites and parishes throughout the United States, in which folks come together for one to three days to share their lives and stories; groups recently have included Congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Unitarian, and Unity gatherings, as well as non-denominational groups; for further information: www.CommunityPilgrimage.org.

Fr. Tom also wrote and designed a six-color poster—*To Follow The Christ*—a thousand of which have already been shipped; information is available at the website: www.OrderOfChristianWorkers.org.

His odyssey in and through his various vocations and avocations has been recorded vividly in at least two books: *Go Back, You Didn't Say May I: The Diary of a Young Priest* and *In Any Given Moment*, both of which reflect the daily actions and the inner pilgrimage of his many callings. Three other books—*Moments of Clarity, Moments of Clarity, Volume II* and *Moments of Clarity, Volume III*—are so-called “commonplace books”: collections of stories and wisdom from throughout the world and history. A work that has been in progress for fifteen years, *Me, You, and Us*—a narrative and a “guide” for those seeking a reflection and consideration of their history, character, beliefs, and possibilities—has recently been published. Fr. Tom is also working on a larger edition of the spiritual book he’s written for use by the Order: *A Book of Prayers, Liturgies, and Learnings*.

Along with his other activities, Fr. Tom will also be traveling between Texas and Indiana, not only maintaining his role as Abbot of the Order in Tyler, but also working as “Chaplain to the Community” at the Culver Academies.