

A DIFFERENT VOICE



June Stepansky

*Poetry, opinion and the
exploration of happier lifestyle*

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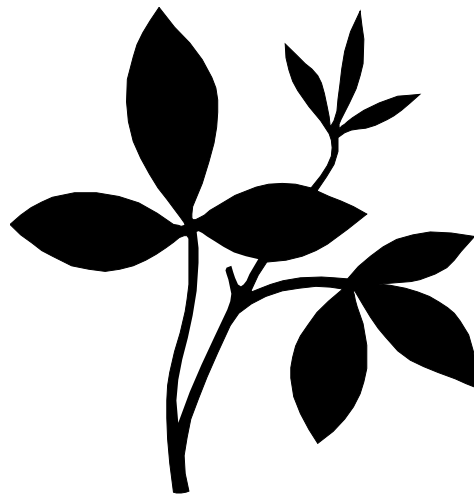
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To everyone
who has ever tried to make their lives
more meaningful and more joyful,
I dedicate this book.

*Happiness is like those palaces in fairy tales
whose gates are guarded by dragons:
we must fight in order to conquer it.*

Alexander Dumas



—Contents—

Insight-- Viewpoints
Balance----Planning
Loving----Dependency
Running--Confronting Problems
Circling the Wagons--Re-evaluation
Green Things----Nature
Monday---Responsibility
Thoughts----Directions
Change---Inner Strength
Quest----Truth Seekers
Colors----Enthusiasm
At Risk---Vulnerability
Sea Change--Acceptance
Confrontation--Communication
Wisdom----Our World
Karma----Appreciation
February--Signs and Symbols
Identity----Self-esteem
Etude----Loss
Heritage----Consequences
Innate Knowledge----Choice
Calla Lily----Uniqueness
Spring----Growth
Aging--On Growing Older
Odyssey----Happiness
Calamity----Possibilities
Contradiction----Courage
Work of Art---Artist's Vision
Phonetics----Simple Pleasures
Acceptable Risks----Decisions

Dialogue----Inner Voices
Retreat From Fantasy--A Dangerous World
New Shoes----Comfort Level
Imprinting----Childhood Influences
Operation----Critical Moments
Winter Thoughts----Looking Forward
Words----Inflicting Pain
Independence--Reclaiming Your Power
Song----Letting Go of the Past
Compulsion----Narcotics of Choice
Equation----Managing Anger
What's It All About----Complexity
Creativity----Being Creative
I Want What I Want----Goals
A Single Voice----Being Alone
Hemingway and Sylvia Plath--The Ability to Enjoy
Childhood Lessons----Memories
Expectations----Roles
The Disappeared----Preciousness of Days
Murphy's Law----Unpredictability
My Mind----Discipline
Reasons----Unconscious Influences
Internal Signals----The Outside World
A Significant Word----Tolerance
About Love----Giving
Pain----Inevitability
Deception----Protection
Counting Pleasures----Enjoyment
Mind and Body----Reconciliation
An Infinite Voice----A Larger View



Insight

I will dip into the
depths of my self
Am I not marvelous?
I am one with the grass
and the crustacean.
Are they not marvelous?
I know that in me
Is that which I do not know,
and can only guess,
but I marvel that I am the key
and the gate.

Viewpoints

There is a search today for more meaningful lives. A meaningful life may mean a different thing to each person who seeks it. What it must ultimately mean is that each person follows his own honesty, as long as he harms no other person. So the first step must be to look at our lives and see what we want to change, what is possible to change, and how we can start to make these changes.

Part of this search, and one of the reasons for it is that happier people make better wives, husbands, companions, and parents. Our responsibility, then, is to be more in touch with ourselves, to make a better environment for ourselves, our families and our communities.



One must know oneself. If this does not serve to discover truth,
it at least serves as a rule of life, and there is nothing better.

Blaise Pascal

Getting in touch with your true self must be your first priority.

Tom Hopkins

=====

Balance

A juggler knows
the importance of
balance.

A tight-rope walker
understands
the necessity of
balance.

I, too, try to
balance the days
the weeks, the years,
into a kind of
symmetry.

Planning

A life that has balance can be a happier life, because we can plan into it all the elements that we need to make our lives uniquely our own. The important word is planning. In order to have balance, we need to develop the skills of self-understanding, choice, and planning.

We need, therefore, to look at each day, each week, each year, and put into them the elements of balance, rest, recreation, work, growth, and then re-evaluate what is no longer working for us and make the changes needed that might make our lives better.



Whatever failures I have known, whatever errors I have committed,
whatever follies I have witnessed in private and public life
have been the consequence of action without thought.

Bernard M. Baruch

It's not the plan that's important, it's the planning.

Graeme Edwards

Loving

They will love me,
if I speak
what they want to hear.
They will love me,
if I become
their vision of me.
They will love me
if they can be my Pygmalion,
and I their Galatea.
They don't think
they demand much.
They only ask
that I give up
myself.

Dependency

We all want and need love in our lives, but how much of ourselves are we willing to sacrifice to meet this need. Our dependency for someone to love us comes from childhood, when we couldn't take care of ourselves, and actually needed others to help us survive.

As adults, it is nice to have someone in our lives who cares, but we have or can develop the skills we need to survive and even flourish by ourselves. Many relationships are based on fear and neurotic need which can be ultimately destructive. We need to be sure that respect for the individuality of the loved one becomes part of every really loving relationship. This is, however, not an easy process. We must make the effort to learn more about ourselves: to evaluate our temperament, our skills, and our enthusiasms before we are ready to make the necessary decisions that can bring us to the discovery and fulfillment of our own particular destiny. Understanding ourselves is an adventure that is ultimately exciting and Joyful



Resolve to be thyself, and know, that he who finds himself loses his misery

Mathew Arnold

Running

We run in
different directions
to escape from
our inner demons.

We run to travel,
drugs, music, religion.
We run to running.
We even run to poetry.

Inevitably,
our demons outrun us,
and we must confront them
face to face.

Confronting Problems

Problems do not disappear. If we don't confront them, they may hide for a while, but sooner or later they will re-appear. Eventually we will be forced to face them and take some action. Whether that action is in the form of solving the problem or accepting it is not important, but rather that we consciously come to a decision about what we are going to do. It is that decision that gives us the ability to again move forward in our lives with added strength and the possibility of happiness.

This is, however, not an easy process. We must make the effort to learn more about ourselves: to evaluate our temperament, our skills, and our enthusiasms before we are ready to make the necessary decisions that can bring us to the discovery and fulfillment of our own particular destiny. Understanding ourselves is an adventure that is ultimately exciting and Joyful



It is hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head.

Sally Kempton

The best way to escape from a problem is to solve it.

Alan Saperia

Circling the Wagons

It is time
to circle the wagons
for a while.

I have been too long
in hostile lands,
pushed by
menacing winds.

Like a child
in its mother's arms,
I need to feel again
the illusion
of safety.

Rest and Re-evaluation

There are times in our lives when we need to pull back from our day to day responsibilities to get a larger view of our present situation.

Rest and re-evaluation give us some breathing space, and provide us with a way to view our lives from a different perspective.

When we feel that our lives are becoming too hectic, it is perhaps wise to pause for a while to review and re-evaluate our circumstances, and to make those changes which might help us to cope better with the present and plan more effectively for the future.



The idea is to make decisions and act on them.
To decide what is important to accomplish,
to decide how something can next be accomplished,
to find time to work at it and to get it done.

Karen Kakascik



Green Things

There were always
green things in my life.
Small wild flowers,
Lilac bushes,
arboretums
where lovers walked
and children came to play,
forests edging round a lake
where we would go on Sundays.

And loving so these wild things,
I planted in my yard a forest too,
which now, full grown,
repays me
with its healing.

Nature

Observing and participating in nature helps us in many ways. We are thrilled by its beauty, awed by its power, and humbled by its tranquility. It provides us with a closeness to eternal values and a better understanding of our human place in the universe. It has inspired poets, writers and artists to produce works which have enriched all our lives.

When life's problems become too difficult, we can be grateful that it is always possible to escape to nature and benefit from its comfort and its healing.

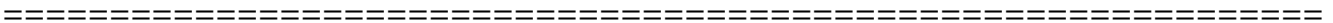


See one promontory, one mountain, one sea, one river and see all.

Socrates

Nature has been for me, for as long as I can remember,
a source of solace, inspiration, adventure and delight:
a home, a teacher, a companion.

Lorraine Anderson



Monday

On Monday
I begin again.
The dreams of Sunday
disappear,
enveloped in the fog
of Monday's realities.

My hands, my feet,
and one small part
of my brain
move through Monday,
savoring Tuesday.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities are part of everyone's life. How we handle them makes the difference between feeling overwhelmed or feeling a sense of accomplishment. We need to be able to organize our thoughts to deal with a manageable amount of problems at one time, and to put the others aside for the future.

Learning to use our organizational skills makes life more manageable and ultimately more productive and rewarding, and gives us the confidence that we will always be able to cope with our responsibilities.



Responsibility walks hand in hand with capacity and power.

Josiah Gilbert Holland

Nothing strengthens the judgement and quickens
the conscience like individual responsibility.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Thoughts

My thoughts
move me
in a multiplicity
of directions.

I think I shall.
I thought I should.
I won't. I will.

My thoughts,
the harbingers
of my future,
propel me
somewhere.

Directions

Our thoughts and decisions determine our lives. It is empowering to realize that if we are not content with the direction of our lives, we can change that direction by changing our thoughts. The decision making process is difficult and requires examination because so many outside forces affect those decisions: our families, our communities, the prevailing thinking of the day. All these put pressure on our ability to make wise decisions.

Because of this, it is important that we understand ourselves well and learn to examine our thinking and our decisions carefully so that they reflect the life that we really want for ourselves.



The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings
can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.

William James

Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you
as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you
as by the way your mind looks at what happens.

John Homer Miller

Change

Everything will
in time
change.

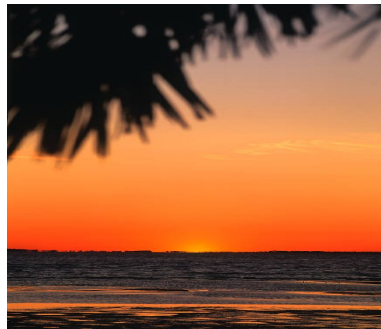
You will change
and I will change.
Friends may disappoint.
Children will grow up
and move away.

Everything will
in time
change,
except oceans
and mountains
and the solace
of sunsets.

Inner Strength

Change is inevitable. It may not come this year or next, but it will come, and our reaction to it can make the difference between happiness and disappointment in our lives.

To focus on what is still available to us, rather than on what is past, helps us to look for new possibilities, and to understand that each phase of life requires inner strength, new creative adjustments and the desire and determination to find that contentment that is still possible for us to discover and enjoy



Everything changes, nothing remains without change.

Buddha

Change is difficult, but often essential to survival.

Les Brown

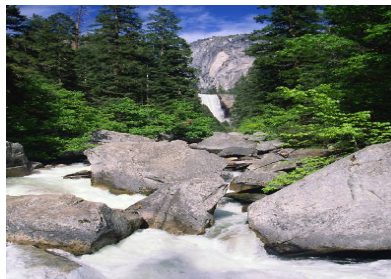
Quest

Belief is not truth.
Everyone believed
that the earth was flat
until Columbus
discovered
the new world.
Millions believed
in Zeus and Hera
until a new belief
replaced the old.

The search for truth
can itself be
a kind of faith,
powerful and
liberating

Truth

Through the ages, there have always been a few individuals who have looked for the truth. Because of their vision, our lives have been enriched. Galileo, who discovered that the earth moved around the sun, was arrested for his discovery. Louis Pasteur and Sigmund Freud fought not only the powers in control but their own colleagues as well, until they were finally able to prove their theories. Because of the contributions of these men and others like them, we have a better understanding of our planet. We have a more complete knowledge of science and of the nature of physical and mental illness. We are fortunate that there have always been a few courageous truth-seekers to expand our knowledge, and hopefully there will be others in the future who will continue to try to unlock the still unknown secrets of our universe.



What we need is not the will to believe, but the wish to find out.

Bertrand Russell

The pursuit of truth will set you free; even if you don't catch up with it.

Clarence Darrow

Colors

When I was young,
I loved my crayons:
first the boxes of five,
bright primary colors.
Later the jumbo boxes
opening me up
to the wonderful
world of color:
pinks and yellows
the colors of pretty dresses,
greens and yellow-greens,
the colors of grass and plants.

Now when I see a hillside
covered with wildflowers,
I think of the crayons
which invaded my youthful soul
with the captivating colors
of life.

Enthusiasm

Children view the world with a sense of wonder and discovery. As we grow older, it is important for us to try to maintain some of the same excitement and enthusiasm in the world around us that comes so naturally to children. It is that childhood vision of the world that gives to us a special kind of happiness and makes each day of our lives a continuing adventure.



The worst bankruptcy in the world is a person who has lost his enthusiasm.

H. W. Arnold

At Risk

We are all at risk
all the time.
Children, too, are at risk,
but they are protected
by their teddy bears
and their blankets.

We grown-ups
also need our blankets
and our teddy bears.
How else could we
live our lives
at risk?

Vulnerability

We all need something to help us cope with the unpredictability of living. For some of us, it can be religion. For others, it might be a supportive family structure or a loving connection with all human beings who share our mutual vulnerability, or it may even be our own unique system.

Whatever it is, it's vital to have some coping system that gives our lives the necessary stability and strength to deal with the difficulties of daily living.



No vision and you perish. No ideal, and you're lost.
Your heart must ever cherish some faith at any cost.

Harriet Du Autermont

A faith to live by, a self to live with, and a purpose to live for.

Bob Harrington

Sea Change

I am allergic to Scallops.
Therapy will not help me,
medication will not ameliorate it.
Many people can enjoy Scallops,
but I am not one of them.
It is hard for me to accept
that there are things about myself
which I will never be able to change.
I know that one day
I must acknowledge
my particular uniqueness,
like my allergy to Scallops,
and be ready to change
to Shrimp

Acceptance

I have always admired the AA slogan, “Accept what you cannot change.” Being able to accept difficult things in our lives is one important sign of maturity.

When we can accept what is impossible to change, such as physical problems, aging, loss, and other painful realities, we can then release the energy we need to move on to discover other possible pleasures that are still available for us to value and enjoy.



Once we accept our limits, we go beyond them.

Brendan Francis

The first step toward change is awareness.

The second step is acceptance.

Nathaniel Branden

Confrontation

I talk.
You don't listen.
You talk.
I don't hear.
We both talk.
We both misunderstand.

You shout.
I cry.
I shout.
You become angrier.
We both shout.
We both cry.

You leave
and I retreat
to a neutral
corner.

Communication

No two individuals can view the world in a similar way, which makes it important that each of us learns to listen well, and to communicate to others our personal viewpoint.

Since we all view the world differently, the obvious next step is to learn to value the skills of compromise, both in personal relationships, and in the negotiations between nations.

To listen, communicate, and compromise effectively is what makes all relationships truly valuable and human.



If we cannot end our differences, at least we can make the world safe for diversity.

John F. Kennedy

Wisdom

Candide, in his wisdom, said,
“Let us cultivate our garden.”
no small endeavor,
which, in the aggregate,
can ultimately
change
the world.

Our World

We are a world bound together by common natural laws and intertwined destinies. The oceans, winds, pollution, wars, affect everyone on the planet. We must, therefore, look to the complete picture of the world, because we cannot escape the consequences of irrational actions in an interdependent cosmos. These are some goals for an interdependent world-

1. A world in balance ecologically so the our environment can sustain us in the future.
2. Enough food and adequate shelter.
3. Educational opportunities.
4. A distribution of psychological knowledge, so we may relate better in inter-personal and intercultural relationships.
5. A more adequate understanding of causes and cures for criminal and anti-social behavior.
6. Encouragement of meaningful activities, and activities with growth potential, according to the needs and the capabilities of all people.
7. Education for personal responsibility in one's personal life.
8. A more definitive understanding of people's common and individual needs and how they interrelate, as applied to diverse cultural groups and diverse ages and sexes within these groups.
9. All people's right to self-determination and redress in government.



The world is my country.
All mankind are my brethren.
To do good is my religion.

Thomas Paine

Karma

It was sunny
just a moment before,
then clouds, thunder,
flashes of lightening
through the rain.

Just before
the sun reappeared,
a young man,
leaving his office,
was struck by
lightening

Appreciation

We don't always pay attention to the vulnerability of our lives as we move from day to day taking care of our responsibilities, until something happens to disrupt the usual pattern. Then, because of the disruption, we can be made aware of the details of our lives that we haven't noticed before; the people around us that we love; all those seemingly small things that happen each day to make our lives worthwhile.

We all want to improve the quality of our lives and make our futures better, but we also need to appreciate what we already have in the present that gives each day its value and importance.



We tend to forget that happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have,
but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have.

Frederick Koenig

In between goals is a thing called life, that has to be lived and enjoyed.

Sid Ceasar

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February

Near where I live
on both sides of the street
as far as I can see,
a line of trees is planted.
All through the year
bent, nondescript
with dry and listless leaves
they wait
until the month of February
when they explode
with massive white bouquets
and sing a joyous heralding
of spring.

Signs and Symbols

Even on the darkest days there are signs and symbols which forecast brighter times ahead. Crocuses and Tulips push up through the snow. Flowering trees bloom in the middle of winter, lifting spirits.

These many signs of renewal can give us courage that even the most difficult periods in our lives can respond to healing , and help us to look forward again with hope.



Hope is itself a species of happiness, and
the chief happiness which this life affords.

Samuel Johnson

My hopes are not always realized, but I always hope

Ovid

Identity

Cocoon-like
I am an entity
complete and secure,
but what is my identity,
I cannot be sure
unless I am compared.
To a tree I am small.
To a snail I am tall.
To water I am solid.
To a rock, I am fluid
with motion.
I am
and yet what am I,
unless I am compared?

Self-esteem

We are not one identity, but rather many. We are husbands or wives, sons or daughters, parents, grandparents, professional people, individuals, friends. One person assumes many different roles in his lifetime. This is really a source of strength. If one of our identities fails us through accident or loss, we still have all the other facets of our nature to give us wholeness.

Our excellence is not determined by one part of our nature, but rather by the sum of all of our diverse selves.



A person's worth is contingent upon who he is, not upon what he does, or how much he has.
The worth of a person, or thing, or an idea, is in being, not in doing, not in having .

Alice Mary Hilton

I want, by understanding my self to understand others.
I want to be all that I am capable of becoming.

Kathryn Mansfield

Etude

Light shimmers
through louvers.
The empty bed, rumped,
is an open wound.
A yellowing newspaper
lies on the floor
its date blurred.
Outside, gardenia winds
rustle the leaves
whispering,
“Come back.
Come back”

Loss

Every human being will experience some form of loss in their lives. It might be from a failure, separation, a divorce or a death, but all of us will be faced with trying to come to terms with the most painful of life's experiences.

While each person deals with loss differently, the stages of pain, grief, adjustment and healing are common to us all ,and the very universality of this experience can help us in our struggle to survive and adjust to this most difficult of all of life's challenges.



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

Elbert Hubbard

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

Confucius

Heritage

He loved her
for the curve
of her breast,
her pretty smile.
Her chemistry responded
to his wanting her.
They did not expect
that their merging
would forge, link by link
an indestructible melding.

They had not expected
that the children,
grandchildren,
great-grandchildren,
that sprang from their mating,
would carry forever
the seeds of their fantasies,
their angers.

Consequences

For many of us taking care of our responsibilities demands all the energy that we have. We are often so busy that we are not always aware of the ripple effect our actions have on others around us especially our children both in the present and in their future. It is important to realize that while we must take care of our own needs we should also be aware of how our actions and the emotional climate of the environment we create can affect in future years our children, our grandchildren, and even their children.



What a man sows, that shall he and his family reap.
Clarissa Graves.

Innate Knowledge

Children always tell the truth
If they don't like you,
they tell you.

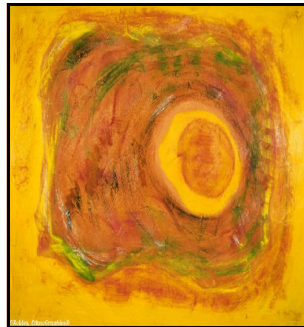
They might like yellow,
but not purple.
They might like broccoli,
but not string beans.

Grown-ups may have to spend
ten years on a therapist's couch
to find out what they like,
but children know what they like
as soon as they are born.

Choice

What happens to the ability we have as children to understand ourselves and know what we want. Some of that ability gets lost in the expectations that our families and our society demand of us. At some point in our lives we may want to re-evaluate our choices to be certain that our decisions reflect the honesty of our desires rather than the expectations of others.

Because our choices determine the direction of our lives, it is vital to our ultimate happiness that they be the choices that are in harmony with our true nature.



You don't have to buy from anyone. You don't have to work at any particular job.
You don't have to participate in any given relationship. You can choose.

Harry Browne

It is how we win, how we lose, how we live or die, finally, how we choose.

R. H. Blythe

Calla Lily

In one far corner of a corner
exuding messages you stand.

Prim, waxen white
bell-shaped, yellow-tongued,
long green throat
singing in the wind.

You sing, but not for me.

You in your own
sweet destiny are wrapped

So it should be.

Let each sweet growing thing
be so enamored with itself
that all infinity
shall bloom with selfishness.

Uniqueness

Whether it is calla Lilies or yellow lilies or human beings, each living thing is a special and unique entity. It is in discovering and developing that uniqueness that we can realize our potential. This is, however, not an easy process. We must make the effort to learn more about ourselves: to evaluate our temperament, our skills, and our enthusiasms before we are ready to make the necessary decisions that can bring us to the discovery and fulfillment of our own particular destiny.

Understanding ourselves is an adventure that is ultimately exciting and Joyful



A happy life is one which is in accordance with its own nature.

Seneca

A wonderful realization will be the day you realize
that you are unique in all the world.

Leo Buscaglia

Spring

My winter eyes had forgotten
the spring.
My tear-filled eyes
had forgotten
the wonder
of another
spring.

Growth

The coming of Spring is a signaling to all things in nature to grow, develop and flourish. Everywhere we are surrounded by growth and beauty, and it can awaken in us the desire to focus on our own continued growth.

This sense of renewal can also give us the impetus to try to make our lives more beautiful and more meaningful.



What is the most rigorous law of our being? —growth—
No smallest atom of our moral, mental or physical structure
can stand still a year. It grows—
it must grow. Nothing can prevent it.

Mark Twain

The minute a man ceases to grow,
no matter what his years,
that minute he begins to be old.

William James

Aging

The hour-glass spills
its grains of sand:
one grain less
memory today,
one grain less
strength tomorrow.

The moving sands
change time and being
imperceptibly
grain by grain.

On Growing Older

We are all aging every day whether we go from 29 to 30 or 59 to 60. How we decide to deal with the aging process determines whether we will feel anger and despair or whether we will decide to accept those changes which will inevitably occur as we age.

If we take care of our health, retain our self-esteem, continue to develop our mental capacities and participate in activities which we find enjoyable, then aging will become less of a burden and more of a challenge.



To keep the heart unwrinkled,
to be hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverent
that is to triumph over old age.
Thomas B. Aldrich

To know how to grow old is the master work of wisdom,
and one of the most difficult chapters in the great art of living.
Henri Frederic Amiel

=====

Odyssey

I wanted a small thing really.
I wanted to be happy.

That was my mistake,
and the beginning
of a terrifying,
exhilarating odyssey
into the very core
of being.

Happiness

Why is happiness so difficult to achieve? Before we can be happy, we need to understand ourselves well enough to know what it is that makes us happy. This is a learning process which involves varied life experiences and which all individuals must accomplish for themselves. Because each of us is so different, what makes one person happy will not be successful for someone else.

Discovering our individual path to happiness is one of life's great and challenging adventures.



Happiness is not a possession to be prized.
It is a quality of thought, a state of mind.

Daphne Du Maurier

It is not easy to find happiness in ourselves,
and it is not possible to find it elsewhere.

Agnes Repplier

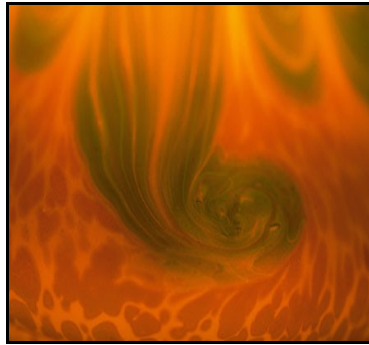
Calamity

If by some ill chance
I found myself in hell,
what would I do?
Would I join the others,
and spend my days
stoking the flames?

I think, rather,
that I would search
the vast and barren width and
breadth and depth of hell
to find a seed,
and then,
I would plant a flower.

Possibilities

At some time in our lives all of us will find ourselves in a sort of hell from which there seems to be no escape. In such a situation, if we try not to despair, often a small glimmer of hope and the possibility of a new direction may present itself to us and we can again start to build toward a better solution to our problems. It is important to be aware that solutions are frequently available to us even if we are not able to recognize them immediately. If we succeed often enough at solving problems, we can begin to look at difficulties as challenges rather than as insurmountable obstacles.



I am neither an optimist nor a pessimist, but a possibilist

Max Lerner

Become a possibilitarian. No matter how dark things seem to be
or actually are, raise your sights and see possibilities—
always see them, for they are always there.

Norman Vincent Peale

=====

Contradiction

I am a coward
in the usual sense.
I believe I could be
injured by a mugger.
I believe I could get
a terminal illness.
I believe my plane
could fall from the sky.

Yet oddly and inexplicably
I am a David to the Goliath
of my most terrifying
inner demons.

Courage

Where do we find the courage to face life's calamities? Whatever kind of courage we seek, physical or emotional, requires that we ultimately face our fears and eventually triumph over them. There can be comfort in the knowledge that we are not alone in our vulnerability and that we share the dangers of living with all other living creatures.

One way of coping is to learn to protect ourselves and to try to cultivate the support of others who might help us through the inevitable times of difficulty so that we can eventually survive our hardships and once again enjoy life's many pleasures.



As for courage and will—we cannot measure how much of each lies within us,
we can only trust there will be sufficient to carry us through the trials which may lie ahead.

Andre Norton

Courage is acting in spite of fear.

Howard W. Hunter

Work of Art

Living
is my palette,
my sonnet, my novel,
which I can change
modify, edit,
hoping that it will,
in time,
reflect an
artist's vision.

Artist's Vision

When artists begin a creative work they must first have some vision of what they intend to achieve. When they have accomplished their work of art, they must then look at it again with a more critical eye to see what needs changing or adjusting in order to fully realize their artistic vision.

This method can also work for all of us. We can decide to review all aspects of our lives with an artist's critical eye to see what needs changing or adjusting so that we too can achieve a more balanced and creatively satisfying life.



Life is raw material. We are artisans.
We can sculpt our existence into something beautiful,
or debase it into ugliness. It's in our hands.

Cathy Better

I don't want life to imitate art. I want life to be art.

Carrie Fischer

Phonetics

This same sun,
this same warm, warm sun
shines down on Cannes
and indiscriminately
on me,
sunning beside the trash can
with closed eyes.
I cannot distinguish between
can and Cannes
enveloped so
warmth and wind.
I only know
that one I can
and the other I can't,
and somehow,
it doesn't really matter.

Simple Pleasures

The ability to enjoy is the ability to see and experience the small wonderful things around us that we might otherwise miss because they are so common and so readily available. We need, therefore, to make an effort to be aware of their beauty and their ability to give pleasure.

While we are waiting and planning for the big events of our lives and the emotional highs they produce, we also need to get the most enjoyment we can from what is already possible in our lives each day, so that every day can become a source of special pleasures.



“Enjoy the journey, enjoy every moment.”

Matt Biondi

Appreciation of life itself, becoming aware of the miracle
of being alive, on this planet, can turn what we call ordinary life into a miracle.

Dan Wakefield

Acceptable Risks

My doctor says
“I think you
should take estrogen
to prevent osteoporosis
and heart attack.”

I buy my prescription,
but before taking it
I read the label.
May cause increased risk
of breast and uterine cancer.
may cause blood clots,
pain, dizziness, nausea.

I pour some pills
into my palm.
I hold them for a while,
and then
I swallow them.

Decisions

If the decisions that we must make were either right or wrong, good or bad, they would be easy to decide. Unfortunately many decisions must be made between alternatives which contain both good and bad elements, so our decisions must usually be between less than perfect alternatives, which may all require compromises. We must then decide which decision carries the least risk and the most benefits.

Once our decisions are made we need to move forward again without guilt or recriminations realizing that our decisions will be neither right nor wrong, just the next necessary step in living our lives.



Your life changes the moment you make a new congruent and committed decision.

Anthony Robbins

A decision without the pressure of consequence is hardly a decision at all.

Eric Langmu

Dialogue

My body and I
sometimes have a dialogue.

“You like this.

You don’t like that.”,
it tells me.

“Everyone else likes that,
so why can’t I.”, I argue.

But my body
has no patience for argument.

If I will not listen,
it punishes me with pain.

Since I have no choice,
I listen to its varied ,
subtle messages,
and then my body,
in its wisdom,
rewards me
with contentment.

Inner Voices

Each of us is a completely unique individual, like no other being on this planet. As such, we are required to understand and value this uniqueness. Ultimately it is through our own special make-up and vision that we must make our decisions and follow our particular destinies. Our feelings and our intellect assist us in this knowledge, but we don’t always pay attention to these signals.

We need to become more aware of how important it is to our happiness to listen and to follow the directions of our inner voices.



Follow your own star!
Dante Alighieri



Retreat From Fantasy

When did I stop feeling safe?
Was it my tonsillectomy
when I almost died?
Was it when I first realized
that planes could
fall from the sky?
Or was it
my first earthquake?

I stopped feeling safe,
I suppose,
when the fantasy
of invincibility
became the reality
of vulnerability.

A Dangerous World

From the day we are born, we become vulnerable to many dangers—cancer, heart disease, fire, earthquake, floods. We don't, however, think much about these problems as we continue to live our daily lives. We now realize that terrorism is one more danger which we may be called upon to face in an already difficult and dangerous world.

Let us therefore live our lives with as much protection and courage as we possibly can, and let us also build into each day all the happiness, wisdom and dignity that will be necessary to sustain us in whatever challenges we may encounter in the future.



The real test of a man is not how well he plays the role he has invented for himself,
but how well he plays the role that destiny has assigned him.

Jan Patočka

As soon as there is life there is danger.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

New Shoes

I hate to buy
new shoes.

Old shoes are
comfortable friends
on whom one
can always depend.

While new shoes,
like new experiences,
are built on that
ephemeral commodity
called hope.

Comfort Level

We have all had times in our lives when everything is going well and we feel so comfortable that we don't want anything to ever change, but eventually just as old comfortable shoes don't last forever, we must inevitably move on to something different, and make the adjustment to whatever new challenges we might encounter.

There is no way we can stop this cycle from old to new. The best we can hope for is to trust that with time and effort and courage we will eventually be able to cope and adjust to the new demands required of us.



Man must prepare for every event of life,
for there is nothing that is durable.

Menander of Athens

It is not the strongest of the species that survive,
nor the most intelligent,
but the one most responsive to change.

Charles Darwin

Imprinting

I once read a book
about a child
who was neglected by his parents,
and who saw from his window,
a crane
working on the building next door.
And interacting with that crane,
he developed crane-like movements
and crane-like language.

So, perhaps, do all of us
through our infant pores
imprint escape, or anxiety, or safety
just below the level of reason
that comforts or plagues us
the rest of our lives

Childhood Influences

Shakespeare understood that “The past is prologue.” Although some of us may try to forget our past, it will always be part of who we are and what we have become. Since we have all been children, none of us can escape our time of vulnerability to whatever influences, both good and bad, we may have experienced. As adults we must try to re-evaluate these childhood experiences, and assess how they may still be affecting our daily life.

If we find that some of these past events are a continuing source of difficulty, we must then make the effort, if possible, to understand and change these influences so that we can minimize their negative impact on our lives.



Every man is his own ancestor, and every man is his own heir.
He devises his own fortune, and he inherits his own past.

Francis Herbert Hedge

To design the future effectively, You must first let go of your past.

Charles J. Givens

Operation

They wheel me to the operating room.
Before the anesthetic overpowers me,
I hear the nurse say,
“I never saw anyone fight so hard.”

I am a quiet fighter,
given to pursuing phantoms,
formidable enemies.

This time I survive
my loss of consciousness,
and go forth, like Don Quixote,
to tilt again
at windmills.

Critical Moments

Although life can often be pleasant, there are also times in our lives which can be very difficult and become almost too overwhelming for us to bear. It is at these critical moments that we must gather all of our resolve and our strength to help get us through these dark periods.

It is especially important to be patient, because with time, patience, strength and renewed effort we will be more easily able to come through these painful challenges and slowly begin again to enjoy the future.



Every morning I wake up saying, I'm still alive: a miracle.
And so I keep on pushing.

Jacques Cousteau

I count life as just the stuff to try the soul's strength on.

Robert Browning

Winter Thoughts

Winter bills
lie in a large heap
on my desk.
The overcast sky
mirrors my winter mood.

Outside the door,
bushes covered with
red camellias
and yellow roses
defy the gloom,
and sing
joyous songs
full of promises.

Looking Forward

There is a time for looking backward and a time for looking forward. The flowers of winter remind us that the normal cycle of life can bring the possibility of future joy if we can just outlast the difficulties and unpredictability of the winters of our lives.

We must therefore cherish the small encouraging signs of renewal, whatever they may be, that can give us hope and help us to weather the dark days of the spirit which are common to us all.



Beauty is the promise of happiness.

Henri B. Stendhal

No winter lasts forever,
No spring skips its turn.

Hal Borland

Words

The days drop like leaves,
and are swept away.
The violent wind
blows words into crevasses
where they fester.

Let the fragrant wind
blow words into crevasses
where they might bloom.
Let the caressing wind
dry my salt tears.

Inflicting Pain

Words are a powerful weapon with which we can sometimes inflict pain.

Unfortunately it is often too easy to release our anger and frustration on the very people whom we love the most.

While it is important to communicate our desires and practice the skills of compromise, we must not allow our words or the words of others to be used with cruelty or to be a source of injury to self-esteem.

It is therefore important that people who love each other must learn to treat each other with love and respect.



What you keep by you, you may change and mend,
but words, once spoken, can never be recalled.

Earl of Roscommon

There are words which sever hearts more than sharp swords.
There are words the point of which sting the heart
through the course of a whole life.

Federika Bremer

Independence

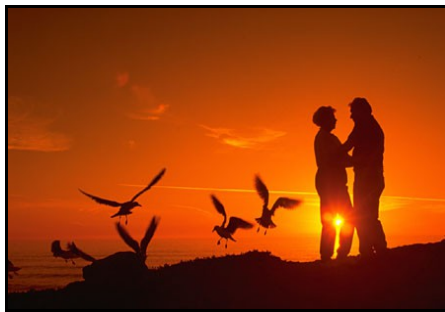
I will not
let you define me
as I once did.
Seeing your love
for me in your eyes,
I believed I was loveable.

I no longer need your eyes
to verify my worth.
My dreams will be
my responsibility.
My sorrows, my joys
My own.

Reclaiming Your Power

It is easier and more comfortable to seek approval from the many people in our lives. Often, however, what others want from us is based on their own values and needs, which don't always coincide with our inner truths and the goals that we may want to set for ourselves and which would be in our own best interest.

While we may want to listen to the input and the suggestions of others, we must ultimately make the final decisions ourselves and we must then have the strength and the courage to either suffer the consequences or reap the rewards of our choices.



When we have begun to take charge of our lives, to own ourselves,
there is no longer any need to ask permission of someone.

George O'Neil

"Everything starts with yourself—with you making up your mind
about what you are going to do with your life."

Tony Dorsett

Song

It is time to move on,
discard the chrysalis,
that necessary spinning
which bound me
to the past.

Now I will be,
not become.
Emerge whole
Soar.

Letting Go Of The Past

It is impossible to achieve our full potential, unless we are able to understand and are willing to let go of our past. The present is really all we have and when we maximize the present, we are better able to ensure for ourselves a brighter future.

Letting go of the past seems to be a simple concept, but in reality it is quite difficult, because it means releasing past pain and even letting go of our past achievements when they are no longer useful. It means looking realistically to the present without undue regret for what is gone and no longer possible for us, so that we may move forward and fully realize our available capabilities.



It is one thing to learn about the past, it is another to wallow in it.

Kenneth Auchincloss.

I cannot sing the old songs, or dream those dreams again.

Charlotte Barnard

Compulsion

A good compulsion
is nevertheless a compulsion.
A workaholic, though valuable,
Is still a compulsive.

The push toward achievement
is a powerful narcotic.
The pursuit of danger
is a dangerous narcotic.

When living and loving
become too difficult,
the need for the solace
of our various narcotics
becomes an overwhelming
compulsion.

Narcotics Of Choice

Although obsessive behavior can be a key ingredient in achieving difficult goals, it can also take from our lives the balance and the fulfillment which we need to enjoy a more well-rounded and more meaningful life.

If obsessive behavior is a short term objective leading to a particular achievement, then it can ultimately be a benefit, but if it becomes the total focus of our lives for long periods of time, it can then lead us into a more narrow and unbalanced life.

Since we all have multiple needs, we must make the effort to meet as many of these needs as possible, and be careful that one obsessive need does not displace all the other important aspects of our existence.



A man must drive his energy not be driven by it.

William Frederick Book

I hold this as a rule of life: Too much of anything is bad.

Terence

Equation

If fathers
can molest their daughters,
if mothers
can abuse their children,
if husbands can stab their wives
and women shoot their lovers,
is it so surprising
that strangers can
annihilate each other
with such
equanimity?

Managing Anger

Anger and violence are not strangers to us. We see them in our homes, in our offices and on our streets. We must begin to investigate, both personally and socially, the causes of our collective anger.

Whether our anger is triggered by our past frustrations, our present inadequacy or our inability to make the good decisions that are necessary to control our lives personally and financially, we all must ultimately bear the responsibility for our actions.

Each of us has a duty to himself and to our world to become an individual of strength and maturity. If we begin to make these changes in our lives, we will, perhaps, begin to also achieve a more rational and a more caring society.



Anger is a momentary madness. So control your passion or it will control you.

Horace

Violence shapes and obsesses our society,
and if we do not stop being violent, we have no future.

Edward Bond

What's It All About

It's about being born and growing .
It's about selfishness and love.
It's about the mysteries of sex.
It's about communication
or lack of it.
It's about uncertainty and fear.
It's about understanding the past,
and looking forward to the future.
It's about accepting
the incredible vastness
of a universe which we may
never fully comprehend.

Complexity

Our earth and our universe are filled with complexities. There are no easy answers to the difficult questions, whether they be political, religious, medical, personal or environmental. The old adjustments will no longer solve our modern complex problems.

It is necessary for our very survival that we begin to understand that the solving of universal problems is going to demand dedication and maturity and compassion. We must educate ourselves and also help others to become more informed, so that the decisions we make will be the ones that will protect and preserve this fragile globe and its even more fragile inhabitants.

We must all strive to make this earth, our only home, a place of beauty and harmony instead of a chaotic sphere on the brink of possible destruction.



I see mysteries and complications wherever I look.

Martha Gellhorn

Off the rack solutions
like bargain basement dresses,
never fit anyone

Francoise Girard

=====

Creativity

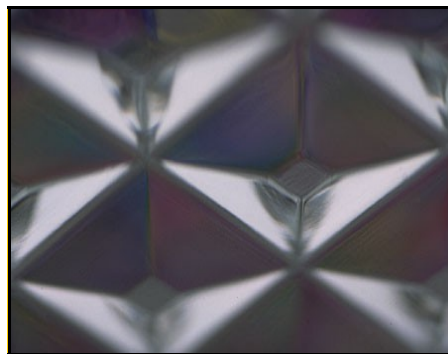
Creativity is like algebra:
a thought from column (A)
plus a thought from column (B)
becomes the new solution (AB),
creating something extraordinary
out of something ordinary.

Creativity is the electricity
that breaks down barriers
and moves mountains.

Being Creative

Being creative is a necessary part of any artistic project, but it can also be very useful to us in daily living. When confronted with a problem, most of us tend to follow current thinking, or follow the advice of friends and family, or perhaps explore options which our past experiences may suggest to us. If these methods solve the problem, we have no need to search further, but if the problem persists, we must then call upon our creative energies.

This requires finding new ways of thinking by trying new combinations and exploring new possibilities until the right solution is achieved. This approach is encouraging because it means that no problem is unsolvable, but must be pursued creatively and continuously until a satisfying solution is discovered.



Creativity involves breaking out of established patterns
in order to look at things in a different way.

Edward De Bono

Creativity can solve almost any problem. The creative act,
the defeat of habit by originality overcomes everything.

George Lois



I Want What I Want

I give the waiter my order.
“You sure know
what you want!”, he says.
I have always understood
that what I want is who I am.
I have been patient,
tenacious, and lucky
in the fulfillment
of my choices.

The waiter brings my order.
I smile at him.
After all, it’s exactly
what I wanted.

Goals

Knowing what we want is an important component of achieving our goals. Often, because we are influenced by what others want for us, we set goals which we haven’t thought through carefully, but which seem at that moment the easiest to follow. At some point it is essential for our future happiness that we reevaluate these goals to be sure that they are what we really want for ourselves.

When we are in charge of the direction of our lives, we have a better chance to achieve our real desires and to ultimately enjoy those rewards that our choices have made possible.



If you don’t know where you are going,
you might wind up someplace else.

Yogi Berra

Your goals are the road maps that guide you
and show you what is possible for your life.

Les Brown

A Single Voice

Being alone is not
necessarily loneliness.
A single voice can also soar.
A duet, a trio or even a chorus
may be desirable
if the right blend
of voices can be found.

If not,
a solo voice,
singing a fine song
is still capable
of making music
that is beautiful.

Being Alone

Many of us will spend some time, even a long time being alone. Learning to make our time alone pleasant and even rewarding takes some special skills which are important for our happiness. We need to develop interests and skills to occupy ourselves when, for whatever reason, we find ourselves unable to have other people in our lives. Those skills can be hobbies like reading, crafts, walking, the arts, cooking, computers or whatever it is that we can truly enjoy by ourselves.

The more we can meet our own needs, the less anger and frustration we will feel when others are not always available to fill our needs for us.



You cannot be lonely if you like the person you are alone with.

Wayne Dyer

I celebrate myself and sing myself.

Walt Whitman

Hemingway And Sylvia Plath

Hemingway failed.
Sylvia Plath failed.
They dug into a rich vein,
and came up empty.
That inward journey
should have led
past terrifying crevasses
toward light.

Somewhere
they took a wrong turn,
followed a path
which led to the brink
and beyond.

The Ability To Enjoy

Fame, wealth, travel, excitement do not always result in happiness. Hemingway and Sylvia Plath, who achieved many of these goals, still could not feel enough happiness to make their lives worth continuing. The ability to enjoy is the very special ability to be able to find joy in small as well as large pleasures, so that when some of our more exciting moments are no longer available to us, we can still take pleasure in those small daily joys that we sometimes take for granted in our rush for more and different experiences.

As we go through whatever fate has planned for us, we can always count on the support of these small available joys—an embrace, a book, a good dinner, child's smile, and the many other small pleasures of life which make our lives more joyful and well worth living.



I've never forgotten for long at a time that living is a struggle.

Thornton Wilder

The extent of your consciousness is limited only by your ability to love
and to embrace with your love the space around you and all it contains.

Ken Carey

Childhood Lessons

Animals don't need lessons
on how to raise their young.
They do it or they don't
according to nature's plan.
Humans, on the other hand,
learn behavior
from their parents or
their schools, or their culture.

There is another way
that children learn.
A secret place within each child
that stores the cruelty and the love
of their individual experience.
A reservoir of knowledge
which knows no boundaries
of time or of place or of culture
and draws all children together
into a secret
universal bonding.

Memories

Not only children, but the child within all of us also stores memories both pleasant and painful. By retrieving these memories, we have an authentic record of those individuals who have been kind to us and those who may have been selfish or cruel. This knowledge gives us a more accurate accounting of the forces that have marked and shaped our lives.

Since we are a mixture of the many influences that have entered our lives, it is important to try to sort out what effect they have had on our feelings and our thinking so that we can discard the negative input and value more those positive influences that have taught us how to love.



“It’s frightening to think that you mark children merely by being yourself.”

Simone de Beauvoir

Expectations

There are men
everywhere
who long for women
of beauty, acquiescence
and very high sexuality.
Somehow
I know it.

There may be men
somewhere
who long for women
of strength, gentleness,
and very high intellectuality,
but somehow
I doubt it.

Roles

Every society defines, rightly or wrongly, its expectations of how men and women should behave toward each other. Each woman and each man's role is delineated without regard as to whether those individuals are comfortable in the particular roles assigned to them. So it is that every relationship already has expectations built into it even before it begins.

For people to be happy in any honest, loving relationship both parties must value and understand their uniqueness as individuals apart from society's expectations and be willing to work to make their partnership their very own so that each person in the relationship can ultimately feel a sense of fulfillment and completeness.



A woman's heart must be of such a size and no larger,
else it must be pressed small, like Chinese feet;
her happiness is to be made as cakes are, by a fixed recipe.

George Eliot

Man is not the enemy here, but the fellow victim.

Betty Friedan

The Disappeared

The high school beauties
are gone.
Gone too
the presidents and the kings,
the movie stars , the athletes
the billionaires and the scholars.
All have disappeared
in an endless cycle
of growth and destruction,
reminding us
of the ephemeral
preciousness
of days.

Preciousness Of Days

Time will eventually run out for us all. Our hopes, our dreams and our problems will ultimately depart. Before this depleting of the sands of time occurs, we still have available to us our chain of days to value, appreciate and to use wisely.

If we can heighten our awareness of the preciousness of our days and use each day with care and with wisdom, then whatever happen to us in the future, we can always retain within us a reservoir of loving memories and the solace of knowing that we did the best that was possible with our precious days.



Neither can the wave that has passed by be recalled
nor the hour which has past return again.

Ovid

“It is how we spend our time here and now, that really matters.”

Wieder Marcia

Murphy's Law

Even in the best of lives
there will be times,
now and again, when
“everything that
can go wrong
will.”

Such troublesome times
must be endured
with dignity, with courage,
and with the understanding that
(as Scarlet, so aptly
and so hopefully declared),
“Tomorrow is another day.”

Unpredictability

If our lives, at present, are productive and pleasant, it is unrealistic to think that they will always remain that way and that we will never run into difficulties. Although Murphy's Law may sound cynical, it is actually a very hopeful philosophy which subtly urges us to be prepared and to protect ourselves as much as possible (both financially and emotionally) for whatever difficult times might be ahead for us.

Understanding and accepting the unpredictability of living gives us the added strength we may need to cope with those unexpected events which might occur in the future.



Prevention is better than cure.

Desiderus Erasmus

“So much of life, it seems to me,
is determined by pure randomness.”

Sidney Poitier

My Mind

My mind
is under my jurisdiction.

I will not allow it
to willfully wander,
like an errant child,
wherever it chooses.

I will guard it in the night
from straying into
frightening corners.

I will protect it in the day
from harmful input.

It is, after all,
my very own mind
to watch over and to love,
so that it will always continue
to grow and to prosper.

Discipline

There are really two minds living inside us, one that makes our decisions and the other that hopefully acts on those decisions. Unfortunately these two separate minds don't always work together and when that happens, our decisions don't always become our actions.

Reconciling these two diverse minds and helping them to work together is a very difficult task, because it takes both decision-making and discipline to reach our goals. Making control and discipline an important objective of our efforts helps us to make our lives happier and more productive.



Self respect is the root of discipline:
the sense of dignity grows with the ability to say no to oneself.

Abraham J. Heschel

Your brain shall be your servant instead of your master.
You will rule it instead of allowing it to rule you.

Charles E. Popplestone

Reasons

There are reasons
why he is bold
and she is shy,
why she is strong
and he is weak.

It might be genes,
or family dynamics
or even trauma.

The complexity
of human behavior
is a compelling mystery
worthy of individual
and collective
discovery.

Unconscious Influences

No human being is born good or evil, aggressive or shy. There are always reasons why each of us has developed in a particular way. We may not always be aware of those forces which have propelled us in a certain direction, but if we review our past, we can sometimes become aware of some of the reasons that have been instrumental in influencing our choices.

Knowing those reasons is important so that we may free ourselves from destructive unconscious patterns rooted in the past, and ensure that only the conscious constructive choices which benefit our lives will guide us in the future.

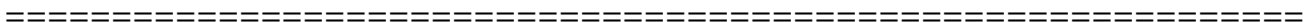


When a man begins to understand himself, he begins to live.
When he begins to live he begins to understand his fellow man.

Norwin Mcgranahan

The noblest pleasure is the joy of understanding.

Leonardo Da Vinci



Internal Signals

Internal signals
help us
understand our needs.

External signals
bombard us continuously,
pushing us to question
the competency of our choices.

Internal signals are more reliable,
growing out of perceptions
we have learned
over time
to trust.

The Outside World

William Wordsworth wisely observed. “The world is too much with us.” The outside world impinges on our consciousness constantly through television, family or the people we know. We get subliminal messages from all these sources of which we are often not even aware.

These messages can create in us desires beyond our actual needs and can sometimes leave us with a vague sense of anxiety which is difficult to identify or understand, and which can undermine our pleasure in the things that we already enjoy.



“Men are created different: they lose their social freedom
and their individual autonomy in seeking
to become like each other.”

David Riesman

If your desires are endless, your cares and fears will be so too.

Thomas Fuller

A Significant Word

A significant word
is tolerance.

We must find in our hearts
our own truth,
and allow the same
freedom of discovery
to others.

Many loving truths
live in diverse hearts.
The only imperative is
to try to find the truth
in one loving heart-
our own.

Tolerance

We cannot and should not try to influence or control the thoughts and feelings of others. There are many truths in the world which lead to the development of loving hearts. Each thinking individual must ultimately find his own path to wholeness.

What we can however seek to accomplish is to try to implement and ensure an open society that will allow the free and easy exchange of all information, and then trust that individuals given open access to all information will make loving choices (whether those choices be political, religious or social) that will ultimately benefit us all.

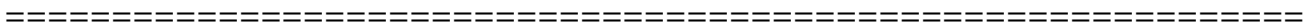


Tolerance and celebration of individual differences
is the fire that fuels lasting love.

Tom Hannah

The highest result of education
is tolerance.

Helen Keller



About Love

The well-kept secret about love
is that it's not about getting,
it's about giving.

We cannot will others to love us,
whether they be our parents,
our partners, our friends
or our children.

But the giving of love to
whatever and whomever we choose,
is an option that is endlessly available,
providing us with a constant flow
of pleasure and of
possibilities.

Giving

When we stop trying to win the love of others and begin giving the warmth and love inside of us freely in any direction we choose, we begin to see some interesting changes occur. First, it gives us the freedom of more choices in our lives and leaves the decisions of love and caring to our own discretion rather than waiting for the whims of others. It also opens up our lives to new possibilities that we have perhaps not previously considered.

The very act of giving love carries within it the seeds of unexpected benefits in the possibility of loving reciprocal reactions from others



The human contribution is the essential ingredient.
It is only in giving of oneself to others that we truly live.

Ethel Percy Andrus

The most satisfying thing in life is to have been able
to give a large part of oneself to others.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Pain

Pain is in embraces
which are destined
to become memories.

Pain is inherent in success
which carries within
the seeds of failure.

Pain is in the march of days
both dark and bright
which vanish beyond recall
leaving only
haunted whispers.

Inevitability

There is no way for any of us to escape the emotional or physical pain of living. With care and philosophy, we may be able to minimize these effects, but the fact that we are human exposes all of us to the unpredictability of life. Because of this, we must try to learn skills to make the difficult times less painful and which will help us to survive those inevitable dark days with our strength still intact.

Understanding that we share with all other human beings a common vulnerability can reassure us that we have not been personally singled out for painful events, but that it is just the universal result of being human.



When there is pain, there are no words. All pain is the same.

Toni Morrison

“The law of emotional choice directs us to acknowledge our feelings,
but also refuse to get stuck in the negative ones”

Greg Anderson

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Deception

“The Emperor’s New Clothes”
is an old story
made new
by successive generations
of thieves and victims
ready to deceive
and to be
deceived.

Protection

Unfortunately there have always been and will always be individuals who will try to take advantage of others. Understanding this means that we must always be aware and constantly strive to protect ourselves from unscrupulous people whether they be in our financial, political or social environments. When we become more realistic about the world around us, we can better protect and guard ourselves from unpleasant consequences.

Understanding that life is not fair or equitable gives us the tools and the added strength we may need to deal with and master the realities of living.



Men were deceivers ever.
William Shakespeare

Victims suggest innocence.
Susan Sontag

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Counting Pleasures

Clothes freshly washed
give pleasure.
A hot dog on the fourth of July,
and pizza anytime,
give pleasure.

A good book, a movie,
a garden in bloom--
how numerous
are the pleasures of our lives,
if we would only stop awhile,
and count them.

Enjoyment

All of us whether we are rich or poor have many pleasures that we can always count on to bring us a smile. Many of us discount these simple pleasures because they are so abundant and so easily accessible. If we stopped to count each daily enjoyment, we would probably be surprised at how many we all experience. Unfortunately, not all of us have the inclination to do this, because many of us move too quickly through our days.

Pausing to enjoy these small daily pleasures is one important way of celebrating life and maximizing our enjoyment in living.



Joy is the feeling of grinning on the inside.

Dr. Melba Colgrove

We French found it and called it
joie de vivre—the joy of living

Renee Repound

Mind And Body

My mind
is the director
of my destiny,
but sometimes,
when I make a decision,
my body rebels.

The process of reconciling
these distinct and
diverse adversaries
takes all the stamina
of a climber of mountains
and all the wisdom
of a King Solomon.

Reconciliation

When the diverse needs of the opposing entities of mind and body are reconciled, we can then be more at peace with ourselves and make wiser decisions which will eventually affect our lives. The final decision as to who is in the ultimate control of our destiny whether our mind or our body must come from our decision-making mechanism. Whether it is going to be the more rational mind or the more emotional body is something we ourselves must decide and then be ready to accept the consequences of those decisions.

What we ultimately hope for is a mind and a body working in harmony for the benefit of our present well-being and our future happiness.



Why don't you want to do what you know you should do?
The reason you don't is that you're in conflict with yourself.

Tom Hopkins

I find, by experience, that the mind and the body
are more than married for they are most intimately united.

Lord Chesterfield

An Infinite Voice

I am more than
a member of a tribe.

I am more than
a member of a sex.

I am more than
a member of a
race, religion
or nationality.

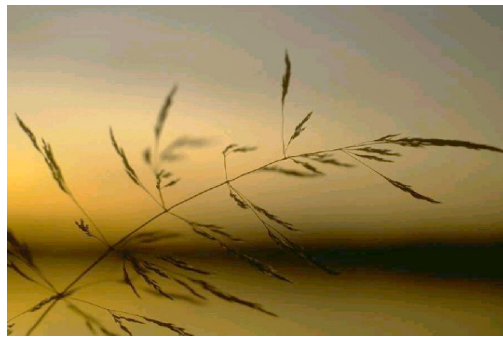
I am part of
an infinite voice
circling the cosmos
forever.

A Larger View

Every group has its own agenda. Seeking a larger view than the diverse parts of our lives gives us the perspective to evaluate the ongoing events of living with a clearer vision.

If we focus only on being a woman or a man, on being European, or Asian, or American, or on being a particular race or religion, we lose the sense of belonging to the entire human family—all of us living on one earth under the same sky.

Our ultimate destiny must be to help create a livable, happy environment for all who share our planet.



Seek the infinite, for that alone is joy unlimited, imperishable,
unfailing, self-sustaining, unconditional, timeless.

Swami Omkarananda

In some sense man is a microcosm of the universe:
therefore what man is, is a clue to the universe.

We are enfolded in the universe.

David Bohm

