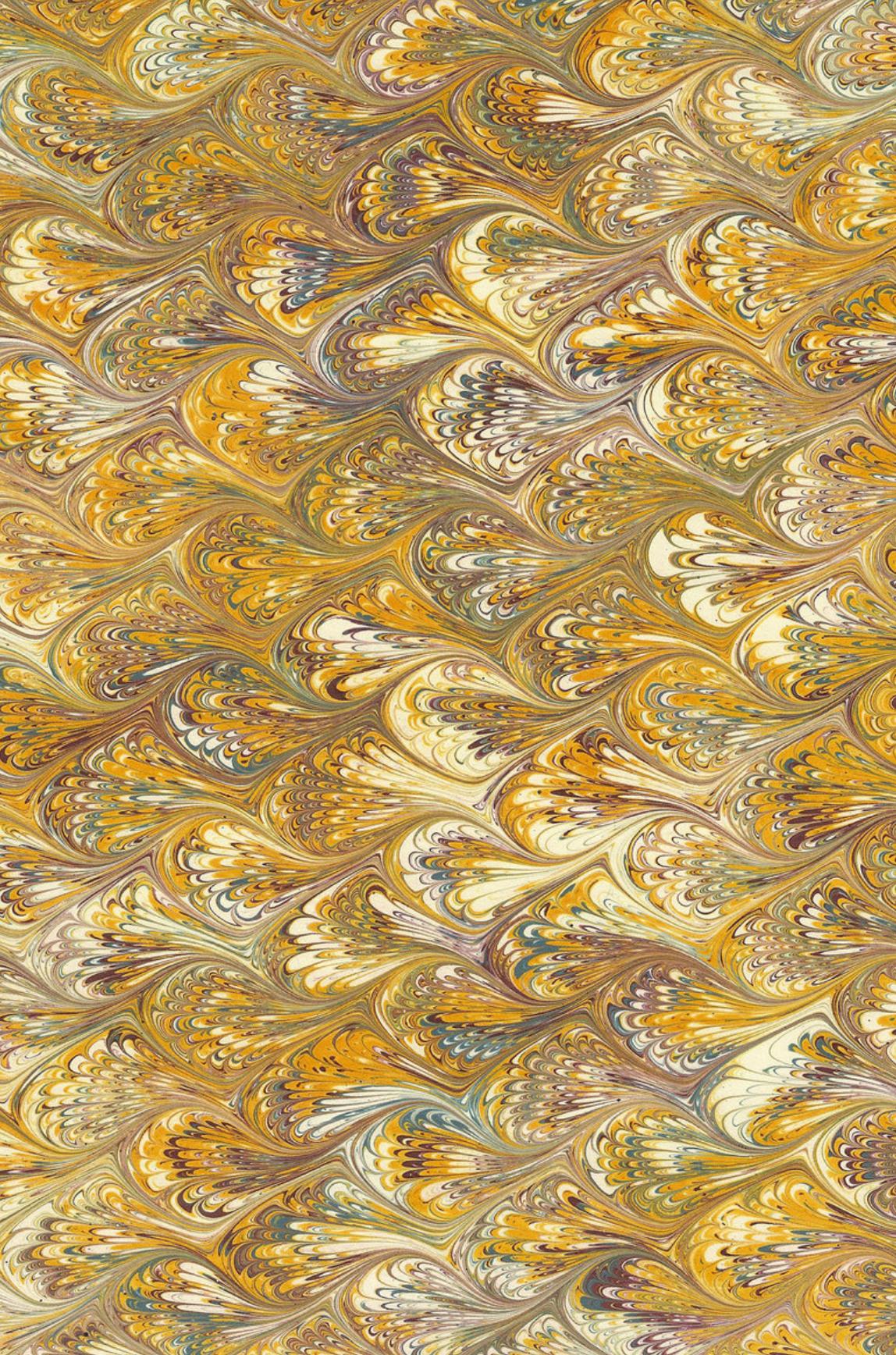
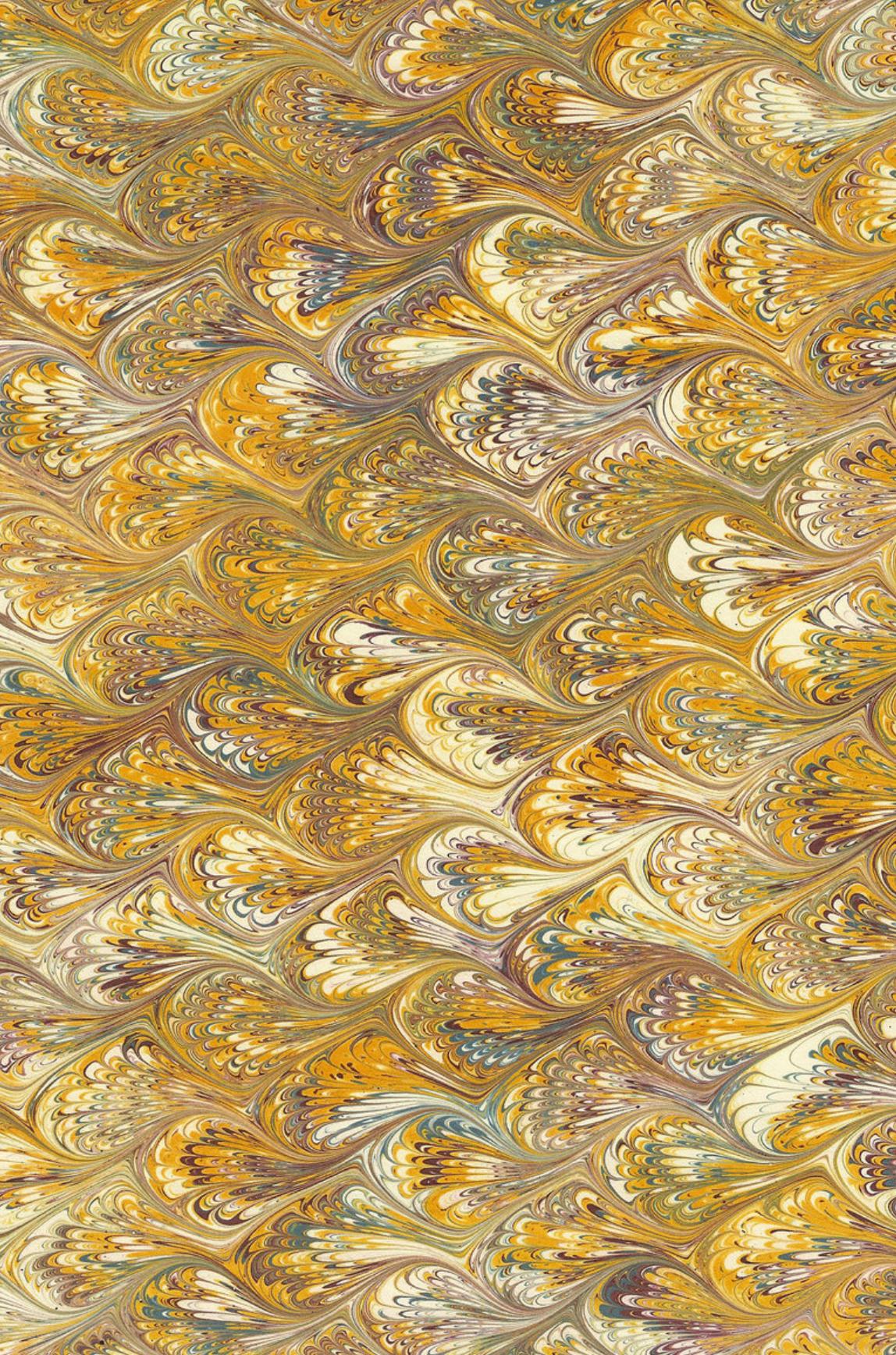


A Book of Life





A BOOK OF LIFE



A Handbook for Individualists

“... the powerful play goes on, and you will contribute a verse.”

Walt Whitman, “O Me! O Life!”, Leaves of Grass



I would like to thank ...

... a good friend of mine, for some valuable lessons and insights, including finding out what friendship is, and what it is not, and how to keep the balance between friends straight,

... an incredible and very professional young woman, for some interesting experiences and an inspiration,

... my parents, for confronting me with the fact that I must find my own goals in life, no matter what others want, or hope, or force, and for enabling me find out what is important for me, and what is not,

... two former friends of mine, for showing me the best and worst of what friendships can be, and

... myself, for selecting the pill first, when faced with knife, drink, or pill, and none of the above later on.

Thank you.



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V 1.3.1

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*For the selected few who are true to themselves,
and the millions who aspire it.*



CONTENT AREAS

YOU & YOURSELF

among others: You've got a Lifetime • Your Life Is Your Own, give it your own meaning • It Is Never Too Late To Change • Create yourself • Find out what you want in life • Act • Interesting Goals • What do other people live for?

YOU & YOUR WORLD

among others: You place in your(?) world • You are only a part of the world • The physical world is uncaring • The Nature of Life • Realities of Life • Shape your world • Mankind's Future • Some Elements of the World

YOU & OTHERS

among others: Other People • Attitudes • Balance • Defense • You make the world fair and just • Communication • Judge People • Relationships

YOU & EVENTS

Aging • Death

YOU & YOURSELF



*You've got a Lifetime
(no more, no less)*

When your life flashes before your eyes,
make sure you've got plenty to watch.

The price of anything
is the amount of life you exchange for it.
Henry David Thoreau

Life is like a coin.
You can spend it any way you wish,
but you only spend it once.
Lillian Dickson



Spiral, spin, ride the whirlwind.
Knowing when the drumming stops,
There'll be no second dance.
Ulatempa poetess, Rhythms, C.Y. 9825
Andromeda

Whether it's the best of times or the worst of times,
it's the only time we've got.
Art Buchwald

I wish I could have known earlier
that you have all the time you'll need
right up to the day you die.
William Wiley

Your Life Is Your Own, give it your own meaning

We should give meaning to life,
not wait for life to give us meaning

Stacy

"To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Sinclair in Babylon 5: "The Gathering"

You will never be happy if you continue to search for what happiness consists of.
You will never live if you are looking for the meaning of life.

Albert Camus

If a man cannot choose, he ceases to be a man.

"A Clockwork Orange" by Anthony Burgess

You don't get to choose how you're going to die. Or when.
You can only decide how you're going to live. Now.

Joan Baez

So often time it happens, we all live our life in chains,
and we never even know we have the key.

The Eagles, "Already Gone"

"Your heart is free. Have the courage to follow it."

William Wallace's father in "Braveheart"

All my life I had been looking for something, and everywhere I turned someone tried to tell me what it was. I accepted their answers too, though they were often in contradiction and even self-contradictory. I was naïve. I was looking for myself and asking everyone except myself questions which I, and only I, could answer. It took me a long time and much painful boomeranging of my expectations to achieve a realization everyone else appears to have been born with: that I am nobody but myself.

"Battle Royal" by Ralph Ellison



Man is free at the moment he wishes to be.
Voltaire



You Are Responsible For Yourself

Man is condemned to be free;
because once thrown into the world,
he is responsible for everything he does.

Sartre

Take your life in your own hands,
and what happens?
A terrible thing; no one to blame.

Erica Jong

Up to a point a man's life is shaped by environment, heredity, and movements and changes in the world about him. Then there comes a time when it lies within his grasp to shape the clay of his life into the sort of thing he wishes to be. Only the weak blame parents, their race, their times, lack of good fortune, or the quirks of fate. Everyone has it within his power to say, "This I am today; that I will be tomorrow."

Louis L'Amour

"People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in the world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them."

George Bernard Shaw

Fate violates causality.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash



"We are all subject to the fates. But we must all act as if we are not," said the witch, "or die of despair."

"His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman

"Do you want your sister to lose weight? Tell her to get off the couch, stop eating twinkies and maybe go out for field hockey. You know what? No one ever knows what they want to be when they grow up. You know it takes a little, little while to find that out, right, Jim? And you ... yeah, you. Sick of some jerk shoving your head down the toilet? Well, you know what? Maybe ... you should lift some weights, or uh, take a karate lesson and the next time he's tries to do it, you kick him in the balls."

Donnie, at the school assembly speaking out against Jim Cunningham, in "Donnie Darko"

You Are Responsible For What You Do With Your Life

Don't go around saying the world owes you a living.
The world owes you nothing. It was here first.

Mark Twain

It's me who is my enemy
Me who beats me up
Me who makes the monsters
Me who strips my confidence.
Paula Cole, "Me," This Fire

"The world does not owe us a living,
we owe the world a living, our own."

"A Chosen Faith" by Forrest Church

In one important way, an adult is always alone; he gives up the illusion that parents, teachers, grown-ups in general are devoted to him, and he loses the notion that things always turn out right. It's a trade-off, and ultimately it's a beneficial trade-off, because whoever makes that trade gets to be a grown-up. Only an adult has the power to carve out a good life for herself.

Sher



Make A Conscious Decision About Your Life

The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.

“Walden” by Henry David Thoreau

To know what you prefer, instead of humbly saying "Amen" to what the world tells you you ought to prefer, is to keep your soul alive.

Robert Louis Stevenson

It's like, at the end, there's this surprise quiz: am I proud of me?

I gave my life to become the person I am right now! Was it worth what I paid?

Richard Bach

“Normal is getting dressed in clothes that you buy for work, driving through traffic in a car that you are still paying for, in order to get to a job that you need so you can pay for the clothes, car and the house that you leave empty all day in order to afford to live in it.”

Ellen Goodman

“They don't have movies where you come from, do they?”

“We had something similar a few hundred years ago, but they lost their appeal when people discovered their real lives were more interesting.”

“Still, it's nice to take a break from your life now and then, don't you think?”

Crewman Cutler and Dr. Phlox in “Enterprise”

'You know what the greatest tragedy is in the whole world?' said Ginger, not paying him the least attention. 'It's all the people who never find out what it is they really want to do or what it is they're really good at. It's all the sons who become blacksmiths because their fathers were blacksmiths. It's all the people who could be really fantastic flute players who grow old and die without ever seeing a musical instrument, so they become bad ploughmen instead. It's all the people with talents who never even find out. Maybe they are never even born in a time when it's even possible to find out.' She took a deep breath. 'It's all the people who never get to know what it is they can really be. It's all the wasted chances.'

"Moving Pictures" by Terry Pratchett

"I am proud of what I am.
I believe in what I do.
Can you say that?"
Star Trek Quotations

All my life, I always wanted to be somebody. Now I see that I should have been more specific.

Jane Wagner, The Search For Intelligent Life In The Universe, performed by Lily Tomlin

Remember: Nobody ever lay on their deathbed thinking "gee, I wish I had spent more time watching TV/reading blogs/at the office."

"It's your life. You have to choose your own way. There is only one thing I want from you. Find something you love ... then do it the best you can."

Ben Sisko in Star Trek DS9: "Shadowplay"

"Don't wait around for your life to happen to you. Find something that makes you happy, and do it. Because everything else is all just background noise."

George Mason in "24"

If we would only give, just once, the same amount of reflection to what we want to get out of life that we give to the question of what to do with a two weeks' vacation, we would be startled at our false standards and the aimless procession of our busy days.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher





Do not compromise yourself

Don't compromise yourself.
You're all you've got.
Janis Joplin

Every time you don't follow your inner guidance,
you feel a loss of energy, loss of power, a sense of spiritual deadness.
Shakti Gawain

The reward for conformity was that everyone liked you — except yourself.
“Venus Envy” by Rita Mae Brown

Never be bullied into silence.
Never allow yourself to be made a victim.
Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself.
Harvey Fierstein

“I don't ask you to be honest with me,
be honest with yourself.”
Odrade in Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

Be who you are and say what you feel,
because those who mind don't matter
and those who matter don't mind.
Dr. Seuss

Every day we slaughter our finest impulses. That is why we get a heart-ache when we read those lines written by the hand of a master and recognize them as our own, as the tender shoots which we stifled because we lacked the faith to believe in our own powers, our own criterion of truth and beauty. Every man, when he gets quiet, when he becomes desperately honest with himself, is capable of uttering profound truths. We all derive from the same source. There is no mystery about the origin of things. We are all part of creation, all kings, all poets, all musicians; we have only to open up, to discover what is already there.

Henry Miller, Sexus



Do you like what you see in the mirror?

It Is Never Too Late To Change

"He stopped painting the day he enlisted. But he wanted to paint. He was good at it. And it was killing him not to ... one drink at a time. He didn't see any way out of his life, any way to change it. But the door's always there. You just have to open it."

Lochley to Garibaldi in Babylon 5: "The Wheel of Fire"

"Babylon 5 was the last of the Babylon stations. There would never be another. It changed the future ... and it changed us. It taught us that we have to create the future, or others would do it for us. It showed us that we have to care for one another, because if we don't, who will? And that true strength sometimes comes from the most ... unlikely places. Mostly though, I think it gave us hope — that there can always be new beginnings ... even for people like us."

Susan Ivanova in Babylon 5: "Sleeping in Light"

"As a girl you see the world as a giant candy store filled with sweet candy and such. But one day you look around and you see a prison and you're on death row. You wanna run or scream or cry but something's locking you up. Are the other folks cows chewing cud until the hour comes when their heads roll? Or are they just keeping quiet like you, planning their escape."

Justine in "The Good Girl" (2002)

"Both my wife and my daughter think I'm this gigantic loser. And they're right. I've lost something very important. I'm not exactly sure what it is, but I know I didn't always feel this ... sedated. But you know what? It's never too late to get it back."

Lester in "American Beauty"

"The secret to boredom is realizing that you're boring. If you could think up something to entertain yourself, you wouldn't be bored."

"That sounds more insultin' than insightful."

"We all have the power to change ourselves, to correct our heading and go another direction. If you don't like where you are now, you can always change it. You can. At any time and in any way you want."

The Shepherd and Rouge in "Rouge"



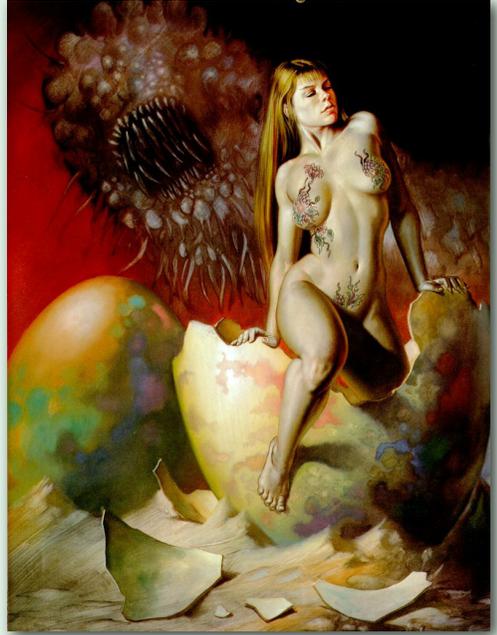
"You cannot undo what you have done.
But you can change the path you are on."
*Pherix Silvermoon to the traitor Aribeth de Tylmarande
in "Neverwinter Nights"*

It is never too late
to be who you might have been.
George Eliot

A year from now you may wish
you had started today.
Karen Lamb

The best way
to get something done
is to begin.

Be not afraid of going slowly;
be afraid only of standing still.
Chinese Proverb



“If the one who is to act wants to judge himself by the result, he will never begin.”
“Fear and Trembling” by Soren Kierkegaard

You’ve got a lot of choices. If getting out of bed in the morning is a chore and
you’re not smiling on a regular basis, try another choice.
Steven D. Woodhull

Don’t let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way
of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing
time to the best possible use.

Earl Nightingale



“I have time. All the time in the world. Do you?”
G'Kar to Sheridan in Babylon 5: "Point of No Return"

It's going to be an interesting, hard, and worthwhile journey

"I envy you ... the world you're going to."
"I envy you ... taking these first steps into a new frontier."
Sloane and Capt. Picard in "Star Trek VIII: First Contact"



The greatest explorer on this earth never takes voyages as long
as those of the man who descends to the depth of his heart.
Julien Green

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

e.e. cummings

The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the
tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened.
But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.

Friedrich Nietzsche



Just as we outgrow a pair of trousers, we outgrow acquaintances, libraries, principles, etc., at times before they're worn out and times – and this is the worst of all – before we have new ones.

G.C. Lichtenberg



"I left because I was curious. And because I was tired. Life as a human contains substance I never dreamed of in the Dreaming, Lord. The little victories, and the tiny defeats. I had my reasons."

Gilbert (Fiddler's Green), a dream who left the Dreaming to enter the 'real' world, in Sandman #16: "Lost Hearts" by Neil Gaiman



"That proves you are unusual," returned the Scarecrow; "and I am convinced the only people worthy of consideration in this world are the unusual ones. For the common folks are like the leaves of a tree, and live and die unnoticed."

"The Land of Oz" by L. Frank Baum



*In given your life meaning, you create yourself
(and vice versa)*

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, The Second Sin, 1973

I am, indeed, a king,
because I know how to rule myself.

Pietro Aretino, 10 May 1537

Be a reflective practitioner of your life.



The first and greatest victory is to conquer yourself;
to be conquered by yourself is of all things most shameful and vile.

Plato

Seek freedom and become captive of your desires.

Seek discipline and find your liberty.

Heretics of Dune

It's not that we don't want something that we do not achieve it,
it's wanting something else more.

It's not hard to make decisions
when you know what your values are.

Roy Disney

A man who has a why to live for,
can bear almost any how.

"Man's Search for Meaning" by Victor E. Frankl

Find out what you want in life



All men should strive to learn before they die what they are running from, and to, and why.

James Thurber

Who are you?
What do you want?
Why are you here?
Where are you going?

Lorien in Babylon 5: "Sleeping in Light"

"I can teach anybody how to get what they want out of life. The problem is that I can't find anybody who can tell me what they want."

Mark Twain

The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want.

Ben Stein

I must find a truth that is true for me.

Soren Kierkegaard

"It's easy to find something worth dying for.

Do you have anything worth living for?"

Lorien in Babylon 5: "Whatever Happened to Mr. Garibaldi?"

"I just don't know what I'm supposed to be."

"You'll figure that out. The more you know who you are, and what you want, the less you let things upset you."

Charlotte and Bob in "Lost in Translation"





Find out more about yourself

Our credulity is greatest concerning the things we know least about. And since we know least about ourselves, we are ready to believe all that is said about us. Hence the mysterious power of both flattery and calumny.

Eric Hoffer, The Passionate State of Mind

To dare to live alone is the rarest courage; since there are many who had rather meet their bitterest enemy in the field, than their own hearts in their closet.

Charels Caleb Colton, Lacon, 1825

Know yourself.
Don't accept your dog's admiration
as conclusive evidence
that you are wonderful.

Ann Landers

Adversity is like a strong wind. It tears away from us all but the things that cannot be torn, so that we see ourselves as we really are.

"Memoirs of a Geisha" by Arthur Golden

Go without a coat when it's cold; find out what cold is. Go hungry; keep your existence lean. Wear away the fat, get down to the lean tissue and see what it's all about. The only time you define your character is when you go without. In times of hardship, you find out what you're made of and what you're capable of. If you're never tested, you'll never define your character.

Henry Rollins

Always ask: 'When I did that,
what was I trying to gain?'

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

What do you despise?
By this are you truly known.
From "Manual of Muad'Dib" by the Princess
Irulan in "Dune" by Frank Herbert

"In here, Mr Garibaldi, you can not hide from yourself. Everything out there has only one purpose, to distract us from ourselves, what is truly important. There are no distractions in here. We can learn much from silence."

G'Kar, about his prison cell, in Babylon 5: "Messages from Earth"

I ... recommend to every one of my Readers, the keeping a Journal of their Lives for one Week, and setting down punctually their whole Series of Employments during that Space of Time. This kind of Self-Examination would give them a true State of themselves, and incline them to consider seriously what they are about. One Day would rectify the Omissions of another, and make a Man weigh all those indifferent Actions, which, though they are easily forgotten, must certainly be accounted for.

Joseph Addison, 1712

Free Yourself

Who is in control of your life?

Each player must accept the cards life deals him or her:
but once they are in hand, he or she alone must decide
how to play the cards in order to win the game.

Voltaire

from the wishbone

If you want to make your dreams come true,
the first thing you have to do is wake up.

J. M. Power

*Dream
achievable
dreams.*

A person will sometimes devote all his life to the development of one part of his body—the wishbone.

Robert Frost

from unreal potential

I am often confronted by the necessity of standing by one of my empirical selves and relinquishing the rest. Not that I would not, if I could, be ... a great athlete and make a million a year, be a wit, a bon-vivant and a lady killer, as well as a philosopher, a philanthropist ... and saint. But the thing is simply impossible. The millionaire's work would run counter to the saint's; the bon-vivant and the philanthropist would trip each other up; the philosopher and the lady killer could not well keep house in the same tenement of clay. Such different characters may conceivably, at the outset of life, be alike possible for a man. But to make any one of the actual, the rest must more or less be suppressed. So the seeker of truest, strongest, deepest self must review the list carefully and pick out one on which to stake his salvation. All other selves thereupon become unreal, but the fortunes of this self are real. Its failures are real failures, its triumphs real triumphs carrying shame and gladness with them.

William James



“The past is over.”

“We are all slaves to our histories. If there is to be a ...
bright future, we must learn to break those chains.”

Deleenn in Babylon 5: “GROPOS”

“You don't have to stay
anywhere forever.”

*Edwin Payne, on leaving Hell,
in Sandman: “Season of Mists” by Neil Gaiman*

"Why do you still live here?"

*Prophet of Bajor to Benjamin Sisko, regarding
the memories of the death of his wife he does not
want to let go, in Star Trek DS9*

“Everything I was, everything I had, all of it died that night. I don't have anything left to give.” “And that is exactly what you must give up. Yes, you have lost much, endured much, sacrificed greatly, but you cling to the memory of your sacrifices, of all the things you have lost or left behind. They drag behind you, like chains of your own making. They can have a terrible power over you, Marcus. The power of grief, and loss, and regret. Yes, you have let go of the people, the places, the things, but you have not let go of the pain. You have not forgiven yourself.” “For what?” “Being alive.”

Marcus and Deleenn in Babylon 5: “Ceremonies of Light and Dark”

“I know that you want me to talk about my feelings.”

“No I don't, Josh. The last thing I want you to do is talk about your feelings. I think if you heard a tape recording of this day, you wouldn't hear the word ‘feelings.’ What we need to be able to get you to do is to remember the shooting without reliving it. And you have been reliving it.”

Josh and Stanley in “The West Wing”

Anybody who is 25 or 30 years old has
physical scars from all sorts of things,
from tuberculosis to polio.
It's the same with the mind.

Moses R. Kaufman

We must embrace pain and
burn it as fuel for our journey.

Kenji Miyazawa

“There were many parts of my youth
that I'm not proud of ... they were
loose threads ... untidy parts of me
that I would like to remove. But when
I pulled on one of those treads ... it
unraveled the tapestry of my life.”

*Picard, coming to terms with his past, in Star Trek
TNG: “Tapestry”*

“Damn it, Bones, you're a doctor. You know that pain and guilt can't be taken away with a wave of a magic wand. There the things we carry with us, the things that make us who we are. If we lose them, we lose ourselves. I don't want my pain taken away. I need my pain.”

James Tiberius Kirk, turning down an offer he relived of all his pain and regrets, in “Star Trek V” (1991)

from parts of yourself

Do not think of yourself in only one term, not even if it is 'I am'.

“Well, life isn't easy for anybody, whether you're normal or super. But you're still Clark Kent. You were raised a certain way and that's never gonna change. Sure, your abilities were part of you, but they didn't define you.”

Jonathan in "Smallville"

You're not your job. You're not how much money you have in the bank. You're not the car you drive. You're not the contents of your wallet. You're not your fucking khakis.

Tyler Durden in Fight Club (1999)

from distractions

The self cannot be escaped, but it can be,
with ingenuity and hard work, distracted.

Donald Barthelme

Soon silence will have passed into legend. Man has turned his back on silence. Day after day he invents machines and devices that increase noise and distract humanity from the essence of life, contemplation, meditation ... tooting, howling, screeching, booming, crashing, whistling, grinding, and trilling bolster his ego. His anxiety subsides. His inhuman void spreads monstrously like a gray vegetation.

Jean Arp

For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin – real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way. Something to be got through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life.

Fr. Alfred D'Souza

from unreflected short-time pleasure

“... all thought ceases. Some spiritual groups see this as nirvana-which is bullshit. It is simply a predictable physiological result. And if heaven on earth is non-thinking and non-involvement, I really question why we are here.”

Found on an internet page

I have never belonged wholeheartedly to a country, a state, nor to a circle of friends, nor even to my own family. When I was still a rather precocious young man, I already realized most vividly the futility of the hopes and aspirations that most men pursue throughout their lives. Well-being and happiness never appeared to me as an absolute aim. I am even inclined to compare such moral aims to the ambitions of a pig.

Quoted in C.P. Snow, Variety of Men, (Harmondsworth 1969) 77., written in old age

A cynic knows the price of everything
and the value of nothing.
“*Lady Windermere’s Fan*” by Oscar Wilde, 1893

from cynical distance

“Cynicism is often clever and a nice posture
if you want to score debating points,
but not a good way to do business [or live your life]”
Alan Webber in an Authors@Google Talk

from apathy

“You’ve turned being un-engaged
into a Zen-like thing, and you
shouldn’t enjoy it so much is all, and
if it appears at times as if I don’t like
you, that’s the reason why.”
President Bartlet in “The West Wing”

Do not commit the error, common
among the young, of assuming that if
you cannot save the whole of mankind
you have failed.
Jan de Hartog, The Lamb’s War

There’s nothing terribly wrong with feeling lost, so long as that feeling precedes
some plan on your part to actually do something about it. Too often a person grows
complacent with their disillusionment, perpetually wearing their ‘discomfort’ like a
favorite shirt.

Jhonen Vasquez

from limits

"But where is it written that all our dreams must be small ones?"
Byron in Babylon 5

At last he came to a door, with these words in glowing emeralds:
THE END OF THE WORLD.
He did not hesitate. He opened the door and stepped through.
“Ender’s Game”

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are
powerful beyond measure. Is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually,
who are you not to be. 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 are all meant to shine, as children do. 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're liberated from our own fear, our presence
automatically liberates others.

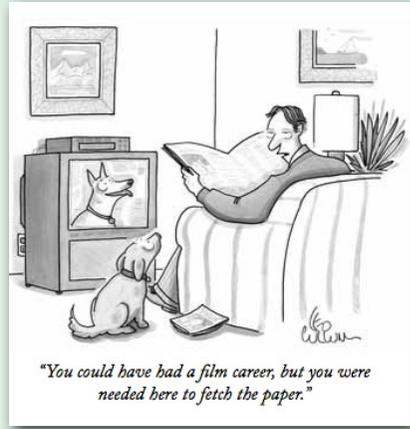
Marianne Williamson, A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of a Course in Miracles, 1992

from the preferences/opinions/influence of others

Never be a side-kick. You have your own life, your own dreams, your own desires. Realizing them is more important than being a side-kick for anyone.

It wasn't right for one person to impose his will on another, through strength or even through weakness. I was myself ... and I was going out to the stars again. Suddenly I knew it. Oh, college perhaps, first – but I was going. I owed this old man gratitude ... but I did not owe him the shape of my life. That was mine.

"Time for the Stars" by Robert A. Heinlein



On the doorsteps d'Avrigny met the cousin whom Villefort had mentioned, a personage as insignificant in our story as in the world he occupied — one of those beings designed from their birth to make themselves useful to others.

"The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas

Don't be a screen for other people's projections,
don't be a safety line for other people's insecurities.

My mother's first criterion for a man is that he be interesting. What this really means is that he be able to appreciate my mother, whose jokes hinge on some grammatical subtlety or a working knowledge of higher mathematics. You get the picture. Robbie is about as interesting as a pair of red high-top Converse sneakers. But Robbie points to the mattress on the floor. He grins, slowly unbuckling his belt, drops his jeans. "Lie down," says Robbie.

This is interesting enough for me.

From a short story by Abigail Thomas



"I still dreaded the thought of leaving my mother behind. I would have done anything to please her ... but not this one thing. I would not give up my life."

Sharwyn, Bard of Neverwinter, on leaving her mother to escape an arranged, loveless marriage, and to become a bard, in "Neverwinter Nights"

“Listen, I can’t get involved! I’ve got work to do! It’s not that I like the Empire; I hate it! But there’s nothing I can do about it right now. ... It’s all such a long way from here.”

“That’s your uncle talking.”

Luke and Obi-Wan in “Star Wars IV: A New Hope”

It took me a long time not to judge myself
through someone else's eyes.

Sally Field

Other people's opinion of you
does not have to become your reality.

Les Brown

I've decided to stay away from people
I used to know before I know who I was.

It is better to arouse envy than pity.

Pubilius Syrus

“I really ought to sell the suit back to them.” “Son, any statement that starts ‘I really ought to-’ is suspect. It means you haven’t analyzed your motives.” “But five hundred dollars is tuition for a semester, almost.” “Which has nothing to do with the case. Find out what you want to do, then do it. Never talk yourself into doing something you don’t want. Think it over.”

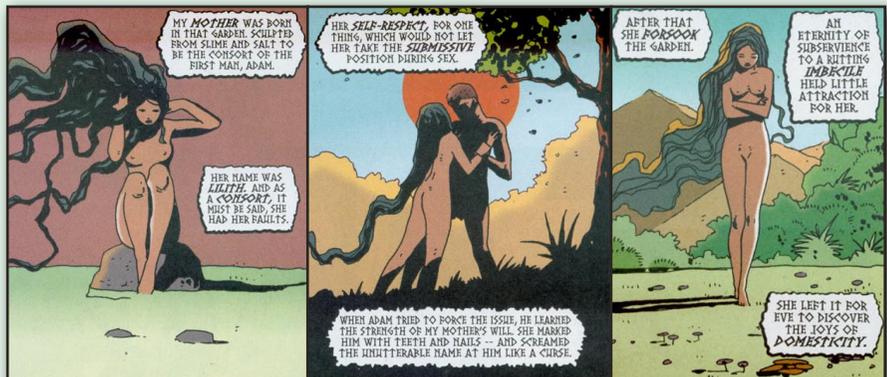
“Have Space Suit will Travel” by Robert A. Heinlein

It's cool to meet your boyhood idol. But it's even cooler
when he comes to you to see what cool stuff you're doing in your lab.

Randy Pausch

'I remember when the circus came to our village,' she said. 'I was ten. There was this girl with spangled tights. She walked a tightrope. She could even do somersaults on it. Everybody cheered and clapped. They wouldn't let me climb a tree, but they cheered her.'

"Moving Pictures" by Terry Pratchett



from role-models

Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise.
Seek what they sought.
Matsuo Basho

“This is how I’ve come to be seen by my people. Despite my best efforts, I’ve become an icon. I didn’t understand why or how until I saw this. I realized it’s simpler to make a statue to someone who you believe embodies all your better qualities than it is to actually improve yourself.”

“And this saves you from having to think.”

G’Kar and Garibaldi in Babylon 5: “The Wheel of Fire”

We begin life with the world presenting itself to us as it is. Someone – our parents, teachers, analysts – hypnotizes us to “see” the world and construe it in the “right” way. These others label the world, attach names and give voices to the beings and events in it, so that thereafter, we cannot read the world in any other language or hear it saying other things to us. The task is to break the hypnotic spell, so that we become undeaf, unblind and multilingual, thereby letting the world speak to us in new voices and write all its possible meanings in the new book of our existence. Be careful in your choice of hypnotists.

Sidney Jourard

from gender roles

Felicia Hardy was born in Queens, New York. Her father Walter was a world-renowned cat burglar who, before his arrest, encouraged her to never settle for second best. If she loved basketball, she should work to become a basketball player and not just a cheerleader.

Fictional character biography of “The Black Cat” from Wikipedia

And the crazy part of it was even if you were clever, even if you spent your adolescence reading John Donne and Shaw, even if you studied history or zoology or physics and hoped to spend your life pursuing some difficult and challenging career, you still had a mind full of all the soupy longings that every high-school girl was awash in ... underneath it, all you longed to be was annihilated by love, to be swept off your feet, to be filled up by a giant prick spouting sperm, soapsuds, silk and satins and, of course, money.

Erica Jong

“Do you know what my daughter's nurse told her today? ‘In a girl's voice lies temptation — a known fact. Eloquence in a woman means promiscuity. Promiscuity of the mind leads to promiscuity of the body.’ She doesn't believe it yet, but she will. She'll grow up just like her mother. Marry, raise children and honor her family. Spend her youth in needlepoint and rue the day she was born a girl. And when she dies, she'll wonder why she obeyed all the rules of God and Country for no biblical hell could ever be worse than a state of perpetual inconsequence.”

Beatrice Venier, explaining why she wants her best friend to pimp her daughter, in “Dangerous Beauty”

from opinions/roles of the society

We are strange beings, we seem to go free, but we go in chains — chains of training, custom, convention, association, environment — in a word, Circumstance — and against these bonds the strongest of us struggle in vain.

Mark Twain

"Is that what you really think or what they want you to think?"

V in "V for Vendetta"

Be neither a conformist or a rebel, for they are really the same thing. Find your own path, and stay on it.

Paul Vixie

Until you've lost your reputation, you never realize what a burden it was.

Margaret Mitchell

You are one, you can be on the same side as a lot of other people in a lot of cases, but hopefully not on the same side as a lot of the same people in a lot of different cases

Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.

Mark Twain

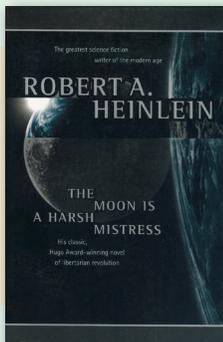
Just because something is tradition doesn't make it right.

"The College Blue Book" by Anthony J. D'Angelo

Tradition is just the frozen authority of the past.

"I never seek to protect a society which does not protect me, and which I will even say, generally occupies itself about me only to injure me; and thus by giving them a low place in my esteem, and preserving a neutrality towards them, it is society and my neighbor who are indebted to me."

"The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas



I am free, no matter what rules surround me. If I find them tolerable, I tolerate them; if I find them too obnoxious, I break them.

I am free because I know that I alone am morally responsible for everything I do.

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" by Robert A. Heinlein

from advertisement/propaganda

Pharmaceutical companies will soon rule the world if we keep letting them believe that we are a happy, functional society so long as all the women are on Prozac, all children on Ritalin, and all men on Viagra.

Polanyi, John C.

Advertising has us chasing cars and clothes,
working jobs we hate
so we can buy shit we don't need.

"Fight Club", based on the novel by Chuck Palahniuk

Advertisers constantly invent cures
to which there is no disease.

It is our job to make women
unhappy with what they have.

B. Earl Puckett

Our society's values are being corrupted
by advertising's insistence on the equation:

Youth equals popularity, popularity equals success, success equals happiness.

John Fisher, The Plot to Make You Buy, 1968

from religion

Faith is a euphemism for prejudice
and religion is a euphemism for superstition.

Paul Keller, American rationalist

There are ten church members
by inheritance for every one by
conviction.

"It is a lie, and I hate your religion.
If it is true, I hate your God."

"Why I Am Agnostic" by Robert Green Ingersol

To listen to some devout people,
one would imagine that God never laughs.

Ghose Aurobindo

If there is a sin against life, it consists ... in hoping for another life
and in eluding the implacable grandeur of this life.

Albert Camus

"You're saying that having beliefs is a bad thing?"

"I think it's better to have ideas. You can change an idea. Changing a belief is trickier."

Bethany and Rufus in "Dogma" (1999)



"Are your convictions so fragile that mine cannot stand in
opposition to them? Is your God so flimsy? So weak? For shame!"

Marquis de Sade in "Quills" (2000)

“I have issues with anyone who treats faith as a burden instead of a blessing. You people don’t celebrate your faith; you mourn it.”

Serendipity, a muse, in “Dogma” (1999)

Vorbis liked to see properly guilty consciences. That was what consciences were for. Guilt was the grease in which the wheels of the authority turned.

“Small Gods” by Terry Pratchett

It is possible to pay another man’s debts on his behalf, but it is not possible to make a guilty man innocent by suffering in his place.

“What is the Bible?” by Carl Lofmark

He is your god,
They are your rules,
you burn in Hell!

Before we can pray, “Lord, Thy Kingdom come,”
we must be willing to pray, “My Kingdom go.”

Alan Redpath

The captain frowned. “It’s a funny thing,” he said, “but why is it that the heathens and the barbarians seem to have the best places to go when they die?”

“Small Gods” by Terry Pratchett

Those who survived the San Francisco earthquake said, “Thank God, I’m still alive”. But, of course, those who died, their lives will never be the same again.

Sen. Barbara Boxer, (D, Calif.)

Christians say that – without exception – their God answers all of their prayers; it’s just that He sometimes says “yes” and other times “no,” “maybe,” or “wait.” Of course the same could be said of the rain-god, “Bob.”

Rev. Donald Morgan

“God has been mighty good to your fields, Mr. Farmer.”

“You should have seen how he treated them when I wasn’t around.”

Religion supports nobody. It has to be supported. It produces no wheat, no corn; it ploughs no land; it fells no forests. It is a perpetual mendicant. It lives on the labors of others, and then has the arrogance to pretend that it supports the giver.

Robert G. Ingersoll

Reason, Observation and Experience – the Holy Trinity of Science – have taught us that happiness is the only good; that the time to be happy is now, and the way to be happy is to make others so. This is enough for us. In this belief we are content to live and die. If by any possibility the existence of a power superior to, and independent of, nature shall be demonstrated, there will then be time enough to kneel. Until then, let us stand erect.

“The Gods” by Robert G. Ingersoll, 1872



“I think it’s in praise of full moons in general,” Magrat hazarded. “And then we have to raise our consciousness. It really ought to be full moon for that, I’m afraid. Moons are very important.” Granny gave her a long, calculating look. “That’s modern witchcraft for you, is it?” she said. “It’s part of it, Granny. There’s a lot more.” Granny Weatherwax sighed. “Each to her own, I suppose. I’m blown if I’ll let a ball of shiny rock tell me what to do.” “Yes, bugger all that,” said Nanny. “Let’s curse somebody.”

„Wyrd Sisters“ by Terry Pratchett

Whenever I think of how religion started, I picture some frustrated old man making out a list of all the ways he could gain power, until he finally came up with the great solution of constant fear and guilt, then he leaped up and started planning a new wardrobe.

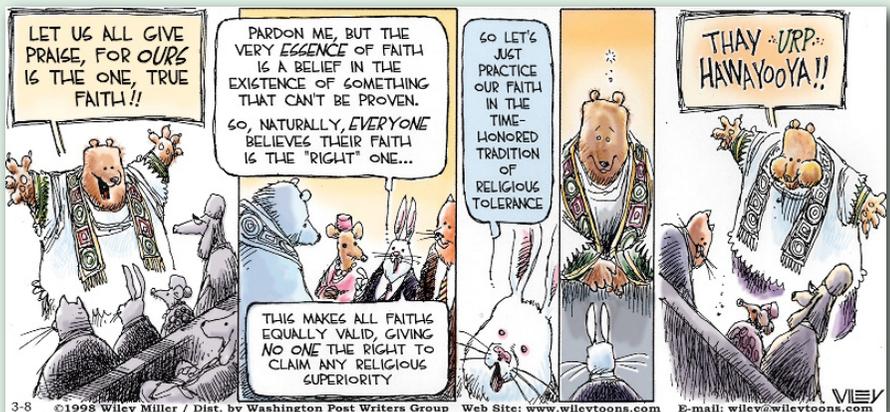
Steve Blake

“It’s an incredible con job when you think about it, to believe something now in exchange for something after death. Even corporations with their reward systems don’t try to make it posthumous.”

Gloria Steinem

Man can contemplate his own mortality and finds the thought intolerable. Any animal will struggle to protect itself from a threat of death. Faced with a predator, it flees, hides, fights or employs some other defensive mechanism, such as death-feigning or the emission of stinking fluids. There are many self-protection mechanisms, but they all occur as a response to an immediate danger. When man contemplates his future death, it is as if, by thinking of it, he renders it immediate. His defence is to deny it. He cannot deny that his body will die and rot – the evidence is too strong for that; so he solves the problem by the invention of an immortal soul – a soul which is more ‘him’ than even his physical body is ‘him’. If this soul can survive in an afterlife, then he has successfully defended himself against the threatened attack on his life. This gives the agents of the gods a powerful area of support. All they need to do is to remind their followers constantly of their mortality and to convince them that the afterlife itself is under the personal management of the particular gods they are promoting. The self-protective urges of their worshippers will do the rest.

“Manwatching: A Field Guide to Human Behaviour” by Desmond Morris, 1977



You must act to get what you want in life

"Know thyself" – a maxim as pernicious as it is odious. A person observing himself would arrest his own development. Any caterpillar who tried to "know himself" would never become a butterfly.

"Nouvelles Nourritures" by André Gide

"Chances are where you find them."

"Moving Pictures" by Terry Pratchett

Be always sure you're right,
then go ahead.

Davy Crockett

Contemplation often makes life miserable.

We should act more, think less,
and stop watching ourselves live.

Nicolas de Chamfort

It's not enough to have a dream,
unless you're willing to pursue it.
It's not enough to know what's right,
unless you're strong enough to do it.
It's not enough to learn the truth,
unless you also learn to live it.
It's not enough to reach for love,
unless you care enough to give it.

"Paradise on my right, Hell on my left
and the Angel of Death behind."

"Dune" by Frank Herbert

"I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no 'brief candle' to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."





The question isn't who is going to let me;
it's who is going to stop me.
"The Fountainhead" by Ayn Rand

The thing women have yet to learn
is nobody gives you power.
You just take it.
Roseanne Barr

Starting a change is one thing –
keeping it up an other.

Have an Agenda for yourself

I'm tough, I'm ambitious, and I know exactly what I want.

If that makes me a bitch, okay.

Madonna Ciccone

If I am not for myself, who will be?

Pirke Avoth

"Life's a bitch; now so am I."

Catwoman in "Batman Returns"

First be good to yourself,
then be good for others.

"It's nice to be nice,
but often not nice for oneself."

Ask yourself if what you are doing today
is getting you closer to where you want to be tomorrow.

"You're not one of us."

"I don't think I'm one of them, either," said Brutha. "I'm one of mine."

"Small Gods" by Terry Pratchett

"Don't ever let anyone make you feel
like you don't deserve what you want."
Patrick Verona in "10 Things I Hate About You"

The meek shall inherit the earth ...
... a 6 foot plot above them.
... the rest of us will go to the stars.

I don't know the key to success, but the key to
failure is trying to please everybody.

Bill Cosby

"So, preferring death to capture, I accomplished the most astonishing deeds, and which, more than once, showed me that the too great care we take of our bodies is the only obstacle to the success of those projects which require rapid decision, and vigorous and determined execution. In reality, when you have once devoted your life to your enterprises, you are no longer the equal of other men, or, rather, other men are no longer your equals, and whosoever has taken this resolution, feels his strength and resources doubled."

"The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself in any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
You are the guy who'll decide where to go.
Dr. Seuss

"It's very good. But I need to know more. I need to know the names. I think you know the names. Where did they meet? Things like that. I need to know them."

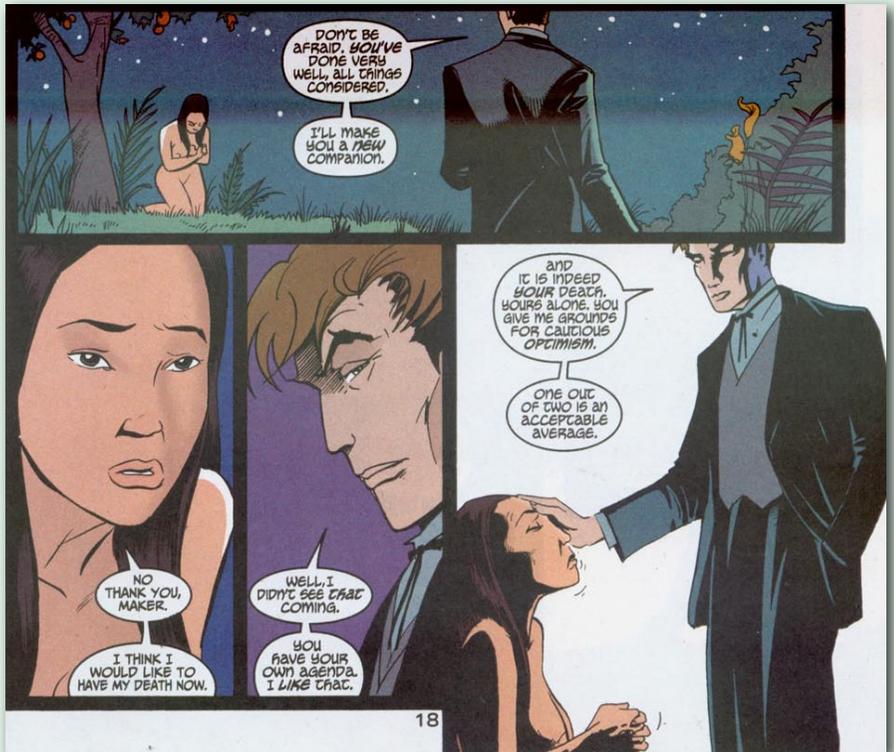
"Not from me,"

"Come on, Mr de Worde. We're on the same side here!"

"No. We're just on two different sides that happen to be side by side."

Vimes (head of police) and de Worde (journalist) in "The Truth" by Terry Pratchett

If you do not choose to lead, you will forever be led by others.
Find what scares you, and do it. And you can make a difference,
if you choose to do so.
J. Michael Straczynski



Burn for it

Dum vivimus, vivamus!
[While we live, let us live!]

*Motto of the Hero in
"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein*

Don't count the days,
make the days count.
Mohammed Ali

The most powerful weapon on earth
is the human soul on fire.
Ferdinand Foch

Take care of the minutes,
for the hours will take care of themselves.
Lord Chesterfield

"If we could live without passion,
maybe we'd know some kind of peace.
But we would be hollow. Empty rooms,
shuttered and dank. Without passion,
we'd be truly dead."
Angelus in "Buffy - The Vampire Slayer"

Don't do anything by half. If you love
someone, love them with all your soul.
When you go to work, work your ass
off. When you hate someone, hate
them until it hurts.
Henry Rollins





BORIS ©80

Interesting Goals

I am also trying to be more selective in choosing goals to be sure that they are SMART goals, which is to say that they are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.

Believe

"When I talk about belief,
why do you always assume I'm talking about God?"
Shepherd Meria Book in "Firefly"

Granny breathed out, slowly.

"Come and sit where I can see you. That's good manners. And let me tell you right now that I ain't at all afraid of you."

The tall, black-robed figure walked across the floor and sat down on a handy barrel, leaning its scythe against the wall. Then it pushed back its hood. Granny folded her arms and stared calmly at the visitor, meeting his gaze eye-to-socket.

I AM IMPRESSED.

"I have faith."

REALLY? IN WHAT PARTICULAR DEITY?

"Oh, none of them."

THEN FAITH IN WHAT?

"Just faith, you know. In general."

Death leaned forward. The candlelight raised new shadows on his skull.

COURAGE IS EASY BY CANDLELIGHT. YOUR FAITH, I SUSPECT, IS IN THE FLAME.

Death grinned.

Granny leaned forward, and blew out the candle. Then she folded her arms again and stared fiercely ahead of her.

After some length of time a voice said, ALL RIGHT, YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT.

"Maskerade" by Terry Pratchett



despair my ass

"I am anti-life, the beast of judgement. I am the dark at the end of everything. The end of universes, gods, worlds ... of everything. And what will you be then, Dreamlord?"

"I am hope."

Choronzon and Dream, playing the oldest game, in Sandman: "Preludes and Nocturnes" by Neil Gaiman



"I'm spiritual, religion to me is politics."

Jeffrey Selman in the "Infidel Guy Radio Show"

"You spin a pretty story," said Novinha. "But in the end, you're asking me to give him to Jane."

"As you said," Valentine answered. "All the stories are fictions. What matters is which fiction you believe."

"Children of the Mind"

'All right,' said Susan. 'I'm not stupid. You're saying humans need ... fantasies to make life bearable.' REALLY? AS IF IT WAS SOME KIND OF PINK PILL? NO. HUMANS NEED FANTASY TO BE HUMAN. TO BE THE PLACE WHERE THE FALLING ANGEL MEETS THE RISING APE. 'Tooth fairies? Hogfathers? Little —' YES. AS PRACTICE. YOU HAVE TO START OUT LEARNING TO BELIEVE THE LITTLE LIES. 'So we can believe the big ones?' YES. JUSTICE. MERCY. DUTY. THAT SORT OF THING. 'They're not the same at all!' YOU THINK SO? THEN TAKE THE UNIVERSE AND GRIND IT DOWN TO THE FINEST POWDER AND SIEVE IT THROUGH THE FINEST SIEVE AND THEN SHOW ME ONE ATOM OF JUSTICE, ONE MOLECULE OF MERCY. AND YET — Death waved a hand. AND YET YOU ACT AS IF THERE IS SOME IDEAL ORDER IN THE WORLD, AS IF THERE IS SOME... SOME RIGHTNESS IN THE UNIVERSE BY WHICH IT MAY BE JUDGED. 'Yes, but people have got to believe that, or what's the point —' MY POINT EXACTLY. She tried to assemble her thoughts. THERE IS A PLACE WHERE TWO GALAXIES HAVE BEEN COLLIDING FOR A MILLION YEARS, said Death, apropos of nothing. DON'T TRY TO TELL ME THAT'S RIGHT. 'Yes, but people don't think about that,' said Susan. Somewhere there was a bed ... CORRECT. STARS EXPLODE, WORLDS COLLIDE, THERE'S HARDLY ANYWHERE IN THE UNIVERSE WHERE HUMANS CAN LIVE WITHOUT BEING FROZEN OR FRIED, AND YET YOU BELIEVE THAT A... A BED IS A NORMAL THING. IT IS THE MOST AMAZING TALENT. 'Talent?' OH, YES. A VERY SPECIAL KIND OF STUPIDITY. YOU THINK THE WHOLE UNIVERSE IS INSIDE YOUR HEADS. 'You make us sound mad,' said Susan. A nice warm bed... NO. YOU NEED TO BELIEVE IN THINGS THAT AREN'T TRUE. HOW ELSE CAN THEY BECOME? said Death, helping her up on to Binky.

"Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett

correct yourself

A man needs self-acceptance or he can't live with himself;
he needs self-criticism or others can't live with him.

James A. Pike

Take the time to come home to
yourself every day.
Robin Casarjean

Open your arms to change,
but don't let go of your values.

“My opinions may have changed, but not the fact that I am right.”

Ashleigh Brilliant

After you've done a thing the same way for two years, look it over carefully.
After five years, look at it with suspicion.
And after ten years, throw it away and start all over.

Alfred Edward Perlman, New York Times, 3 July 1958

To stay young requires unceasing cultivation
of the ability to unlearn old falsehoods.
*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time
Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

They must often change,
who would be constant
in happiness or wisdom.
Confucius

Read, every day, something no one else is reading.
Think, every day, something no one else is thinking.
Do, every day, something no one else would be silly enough to do.
It is bad for the mind to continually be part of unanimity.

Christopher Morley

Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It fulfils the same function as pain
in the human body. It calls attention to an unhealthy state of things.

Winston Churchill

Get a feedback loop and listen to it. ... When people give you feedback, cherish it
and use it. ... When you see yourself doing something badly and nobody's bothering
to tell you anymore, that's a very bad place to be. Your critics are the ones telling
you they still love you and care.

Randy Pausch

"Every year, he likes to hire a conservative clerk to argue with, and arguing with him helped me to clarify the things I believe in. And one of those things is an independent court, above party or interests."

Joe in "The West Wing"

He that struggles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill.

Our antagonist is our helper.

"The Revolution in France" by Edmund Burke, 1790



Our enemies's opinion of us comes closer to the truth than our own.

Francois La Rochefoucauld

Observe your enemies for they first find out your faults.

Antisthenes

Humans are born with a susceptibility to that most persistent and debilitating disease of intellect: self-deception. The best of all possible worlds and the worst get their dramatic coloration from it. As nearly as we can determine, there is no natural immunity. Constant alertness is required.

The Coda in Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

Watchdogs. Their Bene Gesserit term for constant monitoring by Sisters to see that you did not fall into shallow ways. Very trying to acolytes but just another part of life to Reverend Mothers.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

"We want our watchdogs.
We'd be weaker without them."
Odrade in Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

"We take care of our own, Murbella. Once you're a Bene Gesserit, you're assured of lifelong maintenance."
"A comfortable niche." Sneering.
Odrade spoke softly. "Something quite different. You are challenged throughout your life. You repay the Sisterhood right up to the limits of your abilities."

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

"Vimes is fundamentally a person. He fears he may be a bad person because he knows what he thinks rather than just what he says and does. He chokes off those little reactions and impulses, but he knows what they are. So he tries to act like a good person, often in situations where the map is unclear." This, along with the Discworld habit of pushing any theory as hard as it goes, appears to have culminated in Vimes' psyche creating its own "internal policeman" to "Guard the Guardsmen", and Vimes' own sense of justice being so strong that it was even able to fend off an attack by a 'quasi-demonic thing of pure vengeance'.

Wikipedia

Self-Irony

Perhaps I know best why it is man alone who laughs; he alone suffers so deeply that he had to invent laughter.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Humor is a reminder that no matter how high the throne one sits on, one sits on one's bottom.

Taki

I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities.

Dr. Theodore Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss

A person without a sense of humor is like a wagon without springs.
It's jolted by every pebble on the road.

Henry Ward Beecher

"Humor is the only test of gravity, and gravity of humor: For a subject which will not bear raillery is suspicious, and a jest which will not bear serious examination is false wit." In other words, nothing's so serious that we should let it destroy our sense of humor, and nothing so silly that we should blind ourselves to the truths it might be carrying. And if there's anything Kirk taught me, it's that there's always a third way.

Lore Sjöberg

Self-Confidence

Confidence comes not from always being right but from not fearing to be wrong.

Peter T. McIntyre

The best way to gain self-confidence is to do what you are afraid to do.

"Do you know what these are?" [Vorna] asked him. "No." "They are from the foxglove flower. A tiny amount of them can give a dying heart fresh life. Like a miracle. But just a pinch too much and they become the deadliest poison. Pride is like that. Too little and a man has no sense of self-worth. The world would wear him down to dust. Too much and he becomes arrogant, vain and boastful. But just enough and he is a man to walk the mountains with."

"Sword in the Storm" by David Gemmell



Accept and respect yourself

Learn to ... be what you are, and learn to resign
with a good grace all that you are not.

Henri Frederic Amiel

If you don't like yourself,
you can't like other people.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

A man either likes himself,
or he commits suicide, one way or
another.

A man can stand a lot as long as he
can stand himself.

Axel Munthe

Before I can live with other folks I've
got to live with myself. The one thing
that doesn't abide by majority rule is a
person's conscience.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee

As Pratchett would put it, being Good
and Right doesn't make you Nice, and
she isn't. She prefers to be respected.

Susan Sto-Helit in Wikipedia

A man has to live with himself,
and he should see to it
that he always has good company.

Charles Evans Hughes

No one can make you feel inferior
without your consent.

Eleanor Roosevelt

The way you treat yourself
sets the standard for others.

Sonya Friedman



Don't be a little green man, who works and works in the background
while others soak up the spotlight in your place.

Jealousy is simply and clearly the fear that you do not have value. Jealousy scans for evidence to prove the point – that others will be preferred and rewarded more than you. There is only one alternative – self-value. If you cannot love yourself, you will not believe that you are loved. You will always think it's a mistake or luck. Take your eyes off others and turn the scanner within. Find the seeds of your jealousy, clear the old voices and experiences. Put all the energy into building your personal and emotional security. Then you will be the one others envy, and you can remember the pain and reach out to them.

Jennifer James

The willingness to accept responsibility
for one's own life is the source from
which self-respect springs.

Joan Didion

In my day, we didn't have self-esteem,
we had self-respect,
and no more of it than we had earned.

Jane Haddam

A competent and self-confident person is incapable of jealousy in anything.
Jealousy is invariably a symptom of neurotic insecurity.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

The quality of an individual is reflected in
the standards they set for themselves.

Ray Kroc



Be Self-Sustained

“How I feel about you doesn’t matter.
It’s you who has to live with yourself.”

Xena in Xena: Warrior Princess

A gold medal is a nice thing –
but if you’re not enough without it,
you’ll never be enough with it.

Cool Runnings

My mother drew a distinction between achievement and success. She said that achievement is the knowledge that you have studied and worked hard and done the best that is in you. Success is being praised by others, and that's nice, too, but not as important or satisfying. Always aim for achievement and forget about success.

Helen Hayes



Rest in yourself. Do what you think is
right. And never let the opinions of others
fuel or undermine your self-worth.

You won’t see me surrender,
you won’t hear me confess,
‘cause you left me with nothing,
but I’ve worked with less ...

Ani DiFranco

You live in accordance with yourself
when nothing external, not a person,
nor a membership, nor a job, nor a
relationship, nor the absence of pain, is
ever more important than your internal
sense of doing what you think is right for
you.



My manner of thinking, so you say, cannot be
approved. Do you suppose I care? A poor fool indeed
is he who adopts a manner of thinking for others!
My manner of thinking stems straight from my
considered reflections; it holds with my existence,
with the way I am made. It is not in my power to
alter it; and were it, I'd not do so.

Donatien Alphonse Francois de Sade



Explore

Never say 'no' to adventures. Always say 'yes'
otherwise you'll lead a very dull life.

Ian Fleming

Curiosity kills the cat —
but it also makes her go
where no cat has gone before.

Trust that little voice in your head that says
“Wouldn't it be interesting if ...” And then do it.

“More Joy of Photography” by Duane Michals

Once a year, go someplace
you've never been before.

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

Mark Twain

“Be prepared to appreciate what you meet.”

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

A journey of a thousand miles
must begin with a single step.

Lao Tzu

The real voyage of discovery
consists not in seeking new landscapes,
but in having new eyes.

Marcel Proust

One does not discover new lands
without consenting to lose sight of
the shore for a very long time.

André Gide

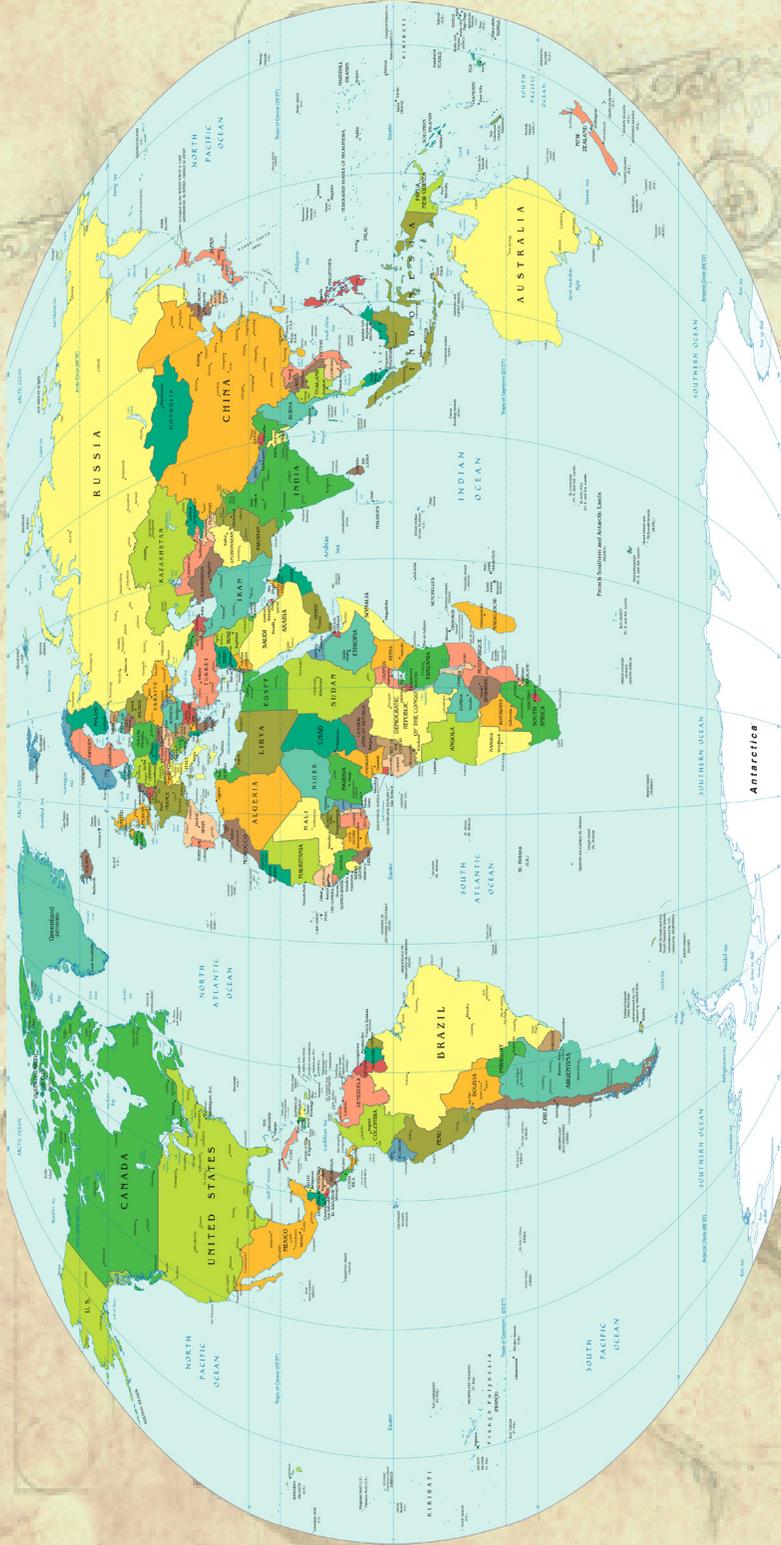
“Windy or not, a day this beautiful has to be lived. The day is bright and clear, the sky blue, and the dry air feels light. A northerly wind stirs a primal urge to move. The geese feel it, and so do I. Perhaps it is a last internal vestige from a time, long ago, when we migrated with the seasons across open plains, following the animals we pursued for food. Perhaps that is why the sight of migrating geese arrests our attention, why we feel the pull. We want to go, to travel in fresh or moody weather, taking in each newly revealed vista.”

Carl Safina



“If you can't take a little bloody nose, maybe you ought to go back home and crawl under your bed. It's not safe out here. It's wonderous with treasures to satiate desires both subtle and gross; but it's not for the timid.”

Q, an omnipotent alien lifeform, in Star Trek TNG: “Q Who”



Where do you want to go?

Where have you been?

See what is there

"If you want to amount to anything as a witch, Magrat Garlick, you got to learn three things. What's real, what's not, and what's the difference."

"Witches Abroad" by Terry Pratchett

"You're a bit young for this," she said, "but as you grow older you'll find most people don't set foot outside their own heads much. You too," she added gnomically.

"Equal Rites" by Terry Pratchett

"My father says that almost the whole world is asleep. Everybody you know. Everybody you see. Everybody you talk to. He says that only a few people are awake and they live in a state of constant total amazement."

Patricia in "Joe Versus the Volcano" (1990)

I think a photography class should be a requirement in all educational programs because it makes you see the world rather than just look at it.

"He taught me everything I know about flying, and combat. He said to ignore the propaganda, focus on what you see. I've never seen the Minbari fight dishonorably. They never pull a sneak attack."

Sinclair to Ivanova in Babylon 5: "Midnight on the Firing Line"

"I've always prided myself on seeing things the way they truly are," Thufir Hawat said. "That's the curse of being a Mentat. You can't stop analyzing your data."

"Dune" by Frank Herbert

She didn't know if her other gift was from Death, but she'd always told the children that they had a lazy eye and a business eye. There were two ways of looking at the world. The lazy eye just saw the surface. The business eye saw through into the reality beneath.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

"How do you prove that there are eggs in a bird's nest? Don't strain your gray matter: go climb the tree and find out. There is no other way. Now we are climbing the tree."

"Time for the Stars" by Robert A. Heinlein



“You know what my Third Stage instructor said? ‘Know nothing! Learn to be totally naive.’ “

She was astonished. “Nothing at all?”

“You approach everything with a clean slate, nothing on you or in you. Whatever comes is written there by itself.”

She began to see it. “Nothing to interfere.”
Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

“Being an outsider isn’t so bad. It gives one a unique perspective.”
Odo in Star Trek DS9: “The Search, Part II”

Never assume the obvious is true.
“*Sleeper Spy*” by *William Safire*

“You see but you do not observe.”
Sherlock Holmes by *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*

I respect faith, but doubt is what gets you an education.

Wilson Mizner

It’s like a finger, pointing at the moon.

If you stare at the finger,
you miss all the heavenly glory.

Bruce Lee in “Enter The Dragon”

Every man takes the limits of his own
field of vision for the limits of the world.

“*Pessimism*” by *Arthur Schopenhauer, 1851*

Observe a cat entering a room for the first time: it searches and smells about, ... it trusts nothing until it has examined and made acquaintance with everything.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The most important thing
in communication is to hear
what isn’t being said.

Peter F. Drucker

You shouldn’t say it is not good.
You should say, you do not like it;
and then, you know, you’re perfectly safe.

James Whistler

“I know it’s true. I saw it with my own eyes.”
Naivety was never better expressed
and the conjuror makes full use of this weakness.
James Randi in “Mind Myths”

Skeptical Guidelines

- I. What is the issue? (*ask questions, wonder*)
- II. What is claimed? (*define the terms*)
- III. Which reasons are given to support the claims? (*examine evidence, make inferences visible*)
- IV. How well is the claim supported? (*analyze assumptions and biases, avoid emotional reasoning, do not oversimplify*)
- V. What would be a reasonable support of the hypothesis? (*consider other interpretations, tolerate uncertainty*)
- VI. Why is the claim believed by the proponents? (*consider the motives*)

The first question I ask myself when something doesn't seem to be beautiful is why do I think it's not beautiful. And very shortly you discover that there is no reason.

John Cage

It is amazing how complete is the delusion that beauty is goodness.

Leo Tolstoy

Every day may not be good, but there's something good in every day.

"I don't care about what something was designed to do,
I care about what it can do."

Gene Kranz in "Apollo 13"

I am an old man and have known a great many troubles,
but most of them never happened.

Mark Twain

How many legs does a dog have if you call the tail a leg? Four. Calling a tail a leg doesn't make it a leg.

Abraham Lincoln

"Luke, you're going to find that many of the truths we cling to depend greatly on our own point of view."

Obi-wan Kenobi in

"Star Wars IV: The Return of the Jedi"

"Do you know what a 'duvet' is?"

"It's a comforter ..."

"It's a blanket. Just a blanket."

Tyler Durden and Narrator in "Fight Club"

There are always three sides to every story:

your side, the other side,

and the truth.

Truths can be in soap operas
and comic books.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

In gardens, beauty is a by-product.
The main business is sex and death.

Sam Llewelyn

When I was a Boy Scout, we played a game when new Scouts joined the troop. We lined up chairs in a pattern, creating an obstacle course through which the new Scouts, blindfolded, were supposed to maneuver. The Scoutmaster gave them a few moments to study the pattern before our adventure began. But as soon as the victims were blindfolded, the rest of us quietly removed the chairs. I think life is like this game. Perhaps we spend our lives avoiding obstacles we have created for ourselves and in reality exist only in our minds. We're afraid to apply for that job, take violin lessons, learn a foreign language, call an old friend, write our Congressman – whatever it is that we would really like to do but don't because of personal obstacles. Don't avoid any chairs until you run smack into one. And if you do, at least you'll have a place to sit down.

Pierce Vincent Eckhart

If a tree falls in a forest, and no one hears it, does it make a sound?

Yes, it does make a sound, because a sound is defined as mechanical vibration traveling through the air or another medium at a frequency to which the human ear is sensitive. So a falling oak makes a pretty serious sound, even without an ear around.

“I think that association is a fine idea. I was threatened by some rat who tried to intimidate me into letting him pick my magicians. I took it up with the association, and they took care of it; I didn't have any more trouble. I think an organization which can clamp down on racketeers is a pretty fine thing.”

“You had to sign with the association to get their help, didn't you?”

“Why, yes, but that's entirely reasonable-”

“Isn't it possible that your gangster got what he wanted when you signed up?”

Magic Inc. by Robert A. Heinlein

“...and then Jack chopped down the beanstalk, adding murder and ecological vandalism to the theft, enticement and trespass charges already mentioned, but he got away with it and lived happily ever after without so much as a guilty twinge about what he had done. Which proves that you can be excused just about anything if you're a hero, because no one asks inconvenient questions.”

Susan in "Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett

After hearing two eyewitness accounts
of the same accident, you begin to
wonder about history.

Early bird gets the worm,
but the second mouse gets the cheese.

“What would you do if you could see anything?”

“Close my eyes.”

Clark aka Superman and Martha, his mother - after he develops his X-ray vision he sees the girl he loves kissing her boyfriend, in "Smallville"

When I was four years old they tried to test my IQ, they showed me this picture of three oranges and a pear. They asked me which one is different and does not belong, they taught me different was wrong.

Ani Difran

I wouldn't mind been called
chairman of the board as long as I
could be chairman of the board.

Female manager about the gender noun debate

About a year ago I was a guest on a network news show in New York. They were showing film clips from a gay pride parade down Fifth Avenue, but they only decided to show the part with men in dresses and heels. I had seen the parade, and there were men in business suits as well. After showing the film, the newsperson made some comments, and I found the comments extremely offensive. “This is what's wrong with the media,” I said. “You show a fringe position. You show one point of view. You're closing the minds of the people by not showing them what the reality is.” I got up and walked out, and I've never been asked back again.

Kathleen Nolan

They can do this because Google has a grip on the interface. When we boot up and get online we hardly notice that Google dispatches a cookie set to expire in 35 years. Then Google filters our reality, dictates our aesthetic, collates and catalogs our memories, chooses what information we mine. The Google experience becomes a collective Rorschach test, which shapes our worldview and affects who we are and what we will become.

Wired.com

A newspaper consists of just the same number of words, whether there be any news in it or not.

Henry Fielding

The writing of history is largely a process of diversion. Most historical accounts distract attention from the secret influences behind great events.

The Bashar Teg in "Chapterhouse Dune"



'But,' said Granny Weatherwax, 'look at it like this: what's Christine got to look forward to? She'll just become a singer. Stuck in a little world. Oh, maybe she'll be good enough to get a little fame, but one day the voice'll crack and that's the end of her life. You have got a choice. You can either be on the stage, just a performer, just going through the lines ... or you can be outside it, and know how the script works, where the scenery hangs, and where the trapdoors are. Isn't that better?'

"Maskerade" by Terry Pratchett

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.

William Blake

The moment one gives close attention to any thing, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself.

Henry Miller

One summer night, out on a flat headland, all but surrounded by the waters of the bay, the horizons were remote and distant rims on the edge of space. Millions of stars blazed in darkness, and on the far shore a few lights burned in cottages. Otherwise there was no reminder of human life. My companion and I were alone with the stars: the misty river of the Milky Way flowing across the sky, the patterns of the constellations standing out bright and clear, a blazing planet low on the horizon. It occurred to me that if this were a sight that could be seen only once in a century, this little headland would be thronged with spectators. But it can be seen many scores of nights in any year, and so the lights burned in the cottages and the inhabitants probably gave not a thought to the beauty overhead; and because they could see it almost any night, perhaps they never will.

Rachel Carson



Be Sensible

"It is better to be good than nice."

SwamiWebanada

Susan was sensible. It was, she knew, a major character flaw. It did not make you popular, or cheerful, and – this seemed to her to be the most unfair bit – it didn't even make you right. But it did make you definite, and she was definite that what was happening around her was not, in any accepted sense, real.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett



"I am... everything about them that was worth being, I hope. They were very different and they were both me, born just an instant apart, and neither of them was very happy by himself. It makes you wonder if there is anything to astrology after all." "Oh, there is," said Susan. "Delusion, wishful thinking and gullibility." "Don't you ever let go?" "I haven't yet." "Why?" "I suppose... because in this world, after everyone panics, there's always got to be someone to tip the wee out of the shoe."

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

"I see a lot of your sort," Susan went on. "Heroes have a very strange grasp of elementary maths, you know. If you'd smashed the clock before it struck, everything would have been fine. Now the world has stopped and we've been invaded and we're probably all going to die, just because you stopped to help someone. I mean, very worthy and all that, but very, very ... human." She used the word as if she meant it to mean "silly". "You mean you need cool calculating bastards to save the world, do you?" said Lobsang. "The cool calculation does help, I must admit," said Susan.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

'Carrot just didn't understand what Wolfgang is like. You can't beat something like him in a fair fight. I know he's family, but ... personal is not the same as important. Carrot always said that.'

"The Fifth Elephant" by Terry Pratchett

"What's the hurry?"

"Got important things to do," said Granny, without turning around. "Been letting everyone down."

"Some people might say this is important."

"No. It's just personal. Personal's not the same as important. People just think it is."

"Lords and Ladies" by Terry Pratchett

She'd been a witch here all her life. And one of the things a witch did was stand right on the edge, where the decisions had to be made. You made them so that others didn't have to, so that others could even pretend to themselves that there were no decisions to be made, no little secrets, that things just happened. You never said what you knew. And you didn't ask for anything in return.

"Carpe Jugulum" by Terry Pratchett



Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it.

"Winnie-The-Pooh" by A.A. Milne

Poverty, Frost, Famine, Rain, Disease,
are the beadles and guardsmen that hold us to Common Sense.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Eight years involved with the nuclear industry have taught me that when nothing can possibly go wrong and every avenue has been covered, then is the time to buy a house on the next continent.

alt.fan.pratchett

"The avalanche has already started.
It is too late for the pebbles to vote."

Kosh to M'ola in Babylon 5: "Believers"

Ein Kluger bemerkt alles,
ein Dummer macht über alles seine Bemerkungen.

Heinrich Heine

"But I have sworn to protect this sorry world, and sometimes that means saying and doing ... what other people can't. What they shouldn't have to."

Giles in Buffy, The Vampire Slayer: "The Gift"

[Buffy has just beaten (but not killed) Glory, an evil goddess. Glory's only link to this dimension is the human Ben, into whom Glory transforms after she momentarily withdraws from this dimension. Giles, Buffy's mentor, sits next to Ben as he regains consciousness.]

Giles: "Can you move?"

Ben: "Need ... a minute ... She could have killed me."

Giles: "No she couldn't. Never. And sooner or later, Glory will re-emerge and make Buffy pay for that mercy, and the world with her. Buffy even knows that, and still she wouldn't take a human life. Because she's a hero, you see. She's not like us."

Ben: "Us?"

[Giles coldly clamps his hand over Ben's mouth and nose. Ben struggles feebly for a while. Then stops.]

Buffy - The Vampire Slayer: "The Gift"



Think

Man is not a rational being,
but a rationalizing being.

“Life is a comedy for those who think
and a tragedy for those who feel.”

Horace Walpole

“Think if you want to stay alive. Fear
will kill you if you don’t control it.”

“The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

“They die of shame because they didn’t
do the one thing that would save their
lives: thinking.”

*Charles Morse, on what happens to men
lost in the wilderness*

“I am talking sense. At the moment we’re as helpless as goldfish. We’re simply trying to survive – and the first principle of survival is not to worry about the impossible and concentrate on what’s possible. I’m hungry and thirsty and uncomfortable and very, very tired ... and all I can do about it is sleep. So if you will kindly keep quiet, that’s what I’ll do.”

“Have Spacesuit, Will Travel” by Robert A. Heinlein

“In six days — less than a week — the world turned upside down. San Francisco became a war zone. Do you know what people do when you tell them they no longer have rights? That an individual is powerless? They fight. It was ludicrous to think mankind would just roll on its back and comply. I saw my neighbors — people I’ve known for years — become bloodthirsty savages. Infected, uninfected, it didn’t matter. We were all driven mad. The survival instinct went ballistic. Food, guns, medicine, blood — it all became priceless. Worth killing for. Those who had become the targets of the had nots. A city of five million people. Within a month more than half were dead. Six weeks later, about ten thousand like me. AB Negatives. We were all determined to live. But we didn’t gather together. There was no unity. It was every man for himself. Trust had been abolished. By the end of the year, it was me. Just me.”

“How? How did you do it?”

“I remained calm. It’s the great secret of survival. When all around is chaos, when everyone is driven to the brink of insanity ... relax.”

Neville and Anna in “I Am Legend” (Movie Script)

“Stupidity is the devil. Look in the eye of a chicken and you’ll know.
It’s the most horrifying, cannibalistic, and nightmarish creature in this world.”

Werner Herzog

“Humans have a knack for choosing precisely the things that are worst for them.”

Dumbledore in “Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone” by R.K. Rowling



Don't ever take a fence down
until you know why it was put up.
Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Don't push the on-button if you
don't know where the off-button is.
Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

One half the troubles in the world can be traced to saying
'yes' too quickly and not saying 'no' soon enough.
J. Billings

"They don't have intelligence. They have
what I call 'thintelligence'. They see the
immediate situation. They think narrowly
and they call it 'being focused.' They
don't see the surround. They don't see the
consequences"

*Malcolm, on the deficiencies of engineers and
technicians, in "Jurassic Park" by Michael Crichton*

I not only use all the brains that I
have, but all that I can borrow.
Woodrow Wilson

"You must remember, there's always
something cleverer than yourself."
Merlin

It is the mark of an educated mind
to be able to entertain a thought
without accepting it.
Aristotle

The biggest cause of trouble in the
world today is that the stupid people
are so sure about things and the
intelligent folks are so full of doubts.

Bean longed to be able to talk these
things over with someone — with
Nikolai, or even with one of the
teachers. It slowed him down to have
his own thoughts move around in
circles — without outside stimulation
it was hard to break free of his own
assumptions. One mind can think
only of its own questions; it rarely
surprises itself.

Ender's Shadow

But then she remembered how the idea
had been ridiculed in the scientific press,
while it was immediately picked up by
the lunatic fringe and incorporated
into dozens of fringe religions. Once
that happened, how could a scientist
hope to get funding for such a project?
How could a scientist expect to have a
career if others came to think of him as
a proponent of a metaphysical religion?

Xenocide

There are two kinds of wrong regarding science fiction — believing that everything
described is possible because it is science fiction, and believing nothing of the
described is possible ... because it is written as science fiction.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash



In a contest of identical armies,
the only weapon is thought.
About Chess

There is nothing so stupid as the educated man if you get him off the thing he was educated in.

Will Rogers

Like most intellectuals,
he is immensely stupid.

Marquise de Merteuil

Expertise in one field does not carry over into other fields. But experts often think so. The narrower their field of knowledge the more likely they are to think so.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

None of our men are 'experts.' We have most unfortunately found it necessary to get rid of a man as soon as he thinks himself an expert because no one ever considers himself expert if he really knows his job. A man who knows a job sees so much more to be done than he has done, that he is always pressing forward and never gives up an instant of thought to how good and how efficient he is. Thinking always ahead, thinking always of trying to do more, brings a state of mind in which nothing is impossible. The moment one gets into the 'expert' state of mind a great number of things become impossible.

Henry Ford, Sr.

Always listen to experts. They'll tell you what can't be done, and why. Then do it.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

When a distinguished but elderly scientist states that something is possible, he is almost certainly right. When he states that something is impossible, he is very probably wrong.

Arthur C. Clarke

What are the facts? Again and again and again – what are the facts? Shun wishful thinking, ignore divine revelation, forget what “the stars foretell,” avoid opinion, care not what the neighbors think, never mind the unguessable “verdict of history” – what are the facts, and to how many decimal places? You pilot always into an unknown future; facts are your single clue. Get the facts!

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth?

"The Sign of Four" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



The temptation to form premature theories upon insufficient data is the bane of our profession.

Sherlock Holmes

You can't rule out the impossible, because you never know which of your assumptions about what was possible might turn out, in the real universe, to be false.

Ender's Shadow

“He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.”

Chinese proverb

“I don’t understand.”

Albert Einstein

The scientist is not a person who gives the right answers, he’s one who asks the right questions.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, Le Cru et le cuit, 1964

... absence of evidence does not mean evidence of absence.

“The Dragons of Eden” by Carl Sagan

Dein ganzes Leben lang werden Leute versuchen, dir etwas einzureden. Und fast alles davon, ungefähr 95 Prozent, ist falsch. Das ist eine Tatsache des Lebens. Menschen werden vollgestopft mit Fehlinformationen. Deshalb ist es schwer herauszufinden, wem man glauben kann.

Sarah Harding in “Lost World”

“The true test of intelligence is not how much we know how to do, but how we behave when we don’t know what to do.”

John Holt

If “everybody knows” such-and-such, then it ain’t so, by at least ten thousand to one.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

There’s an old expression in the newspaper business: “If your mother says she loves you, check it out.” In other words, make sure your bullshit detector is always on. Be skeptical of what you’re told, of what you read. Cross-check your facts with other sources. What applies in the newsroom applies tenfold on the internet, where anybody is free to post any damned thing they want to.

Scientists do not believe in absolute truth. They look for verifiable evidence.

Real scientists, anyway.
Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

If it can’t be expressed in figures, it is not science; it is opinion.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

In science, “fact” can only mean “confirmed to such a degree that it would be perverse to withhold provisional assent.” I suppose that apples might start to rise tomorrow, but the possibility does not merit equal time in physics classrooms.

Stephen J. Gould

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

Buddha

I think perhaps the most important problem is that we are trying to understand the fundamental workings of the universe via a language devised for telling one another when the best fruit is.

Terry Pratchett

We should be careful to get out of an experience only the wisdom that is in it – and stop there; lest we be like the cat that sits down on a hot stove-lid. She will never sit down on a hot stove-lid again – and that is well; but also she will never sit down on a cold one anymore.

Mark Twain

“You were very funny. Everything to you was a problem to be solved, a test to be passed. But you know, Stephen, sometimes the test is not to find the answer. It’s to see how you react when you realize there is no answer.”

Lazareno to Franklin in Babylon 5: “Confessions and Lamentations”

A process cannot be understood by stopping it. Understanding must move with the flow of the process, must join it, and flow with it.

The First Law of Mentat in “Dune”

Back in 1989, a year after the publication of Stephen Hawking’s *A Brief History of Time*, a brilliant physicist at a Cambridge college confessed to me that he had given up on page 28. “I couldn’t make head nor tail of it,” he said with total candour. The comment suggests that those who enjoyed Hawking’s book the most probably understood it the least.

John Cornwell, “The London Times”

“What I am going to tell you about is what we teach our physics students in the third or fourth year of graduate school ... It is my task to convince you not to turn away because you don’t understand it. You see my physics students don’t understand it ... That is because I don’t understand it. Nobody does.”

Richard P. Feynman

Pick a savage so far back in the jungle that they don’t even have installment-plan buying. Say he has an I.Q. of 190 and Pee-wee’s yen to understand. Dump him into Brookhaven Atomic Laboratories. How much will he learn? With all possible help? He’ll learn which corridors lead to what rooms and he’ll learn that a purple trefoil means: “Danger!” That’s all. Not because he can’t; remember he’s a supergenius – but he needs twenty years schooling before he can ask the right questions and understand the answers.

“Have Space Suit will Travel” by Robert A. Heinlein

It’s not that I’m so smart, it’s just that I stay with problems longer.

Albert Einstein

Men give me credit for some genius. All the genius I have is this: When I have a subject in mind, I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. My mind becomes pervaded with it ... the effort which I have made is what people are pleased to call the fruit of genius. It is the fruit of labor and thought.

Alexander Hamilton

I never did anything worth doing by accident; nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work.

Thomas Alva Edison

Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocrities. The latter cannot understand it when a man does not thoughtlessly submit to hereditary.

Albert Einstein

The one permanent emotion of the inferior man is fear – fear of the unknown, the complex, the inexplicable. What he wants above everything else is safety.

Henry Louis Mencken



When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)

For every framling scientist who is longing for the truth, there are ten petty-minded descabequados [headless ones] who despise knowledge, who never think of an original hypothesis, whose only labor is to prey on the writings of the true scientists in order to catch tiny errors or contradictions or lapses in method. These suckflies will pore over every report you make, and if you are careless even once they will catch you.

Speaker for the Dead

Most people who have found that they are more intelligent than most around them, have yet to learn that one of the most intelligent things they can do is prevent said people ever finding this out.

“Lords and Ladies” by Terry Pratchett

“Spare me your sixth grade Michael Moore logic!”

James Heller in “24”

Homer: “It’s just like David & Goliath, but this time, David won!”

Lisa’s brain to herself (voice over): ‘Yes, I know, I heard it too. Here’s some music.’

[Her brain plays some classical music.]

The Simpsons

“Stupidity cannot be cured with money, or through education, or by legislation. Stupidity is not a sin, the victim can’t help being stupid. But stupidity is the only universal capital crime; the sentence is death, there is no appeal, and execution is carried out automatically and without pity.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Zu dem Adler sprach die Taube:
Wo das denken aufhört,
da beginnt der Glaube;
Recht, sprach jener,
mit dem Unterschied jedoch,
Wo du glaubst, da denk' ich noch.
Ludwig Robert, Schriftsteller

This crime called blasphemy was
invented by priests for the purpose of
defending doctrines not able to take care
of themselves.

Robert G. Ingersoll

Believers in the supernatural claim to have special wisdom about the world. But real wisdom means knowing truth from falsehood, knowing the difference between evidence and wishful thinking. Yes, the real world is mysterious and sometimes frightening. But would the supernatural make it better? The real world has beauty, poetry, love and the joy of honest discovery. Isn't that enough?

"The Power of Belief" by John Stossel

Freethinkers reject faith as a valid tool of knowledge. Faith is the opposite of reason because reason imposes very strict limits on what can be true, and faith has no limits at all. A Great Escape into faith is no retreat to safety. It is nothing less than surrender.

"Losing Faith in Faith: From Preacher to Atheist" by Dan Barker

The difference between science and the fuzzy subjects is that science requires reasoning, while those other subjects merely require scholarship.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

One man's "magic" is another man's engineering. "Supernatural" is a null word.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

Even the weakest disputant is made so conceited by what he calls religion, as to think himself wiser than the wisest who thinks differently from him.

Walter Savage Landor, Imaginary Conversations

Fortune Cookie

You are easily influenced by what you read, and have the ability to relate vague sentences to your own mundane existence.

On two subjects the overwhelming majority of people regarded their own opinions as Absolute Truth, and sincerely believed that anyone who disagreed with them was immoral, outrageous, sinful, sacrilegious, offensive, intolerable, stupid, illogical, treasonable, actionable, against the public interest, ridiculous, and obscene. The two subjects were (of course) sex and religion. On sex and religion each American citizen knew the One Right Answer, by direct Revelation from God. In view of the wide diversity of opinion, most of them must necessarily have been mistaken. But on these two subjects they were not accessible to reason. "But you must respect another man's religious beliefs!" For Heaven's sake, why? Stupid is stupid — faith doesn't make it smart.

"To Sail Beyond The Sunset" by Robert A. Heinlein



Think-Act

Think like a man of action,
act like a man of thought.

Henri Louis Bergson

Vision without action is a daydream.
Action with without vision is a nightmare.

Japanese Proverb

Putting off an easy thing makes it hard.
Putting off a hard thing makes it impossible.

George Claude Lorimer

There comes a time in every man's life
when he must stop thinking and start doing.

Star Trek Quotations

"I'm hungry. I'm tired."
"Which is more urgent?"

Children of the Mind

The world needs dreamers and the world needs doers.

But above all, the world needs dreamers who do.

"Simple Abundance" by Sarah Ban Breathnach, 1996

I always say, keep a diary,
and some day it'll keep you.

Mae West

There are two kinds of people – those who don't do
what they want to do so they write down in a diary
about what they haven't done and those who are
too busy to write about it 'cause they're out doing it!

Benjamin Dingle, The More the Merrier

"What you want is irrelevant,
what you have chosen is at hand."

Spock

I do not believe in a fate that falls on men
however they act; but I do believe in a fate
that falls on man unless they act.

G. K. Chesterton

No prizes for predicting rain.
Prizes only awarded for building arks.

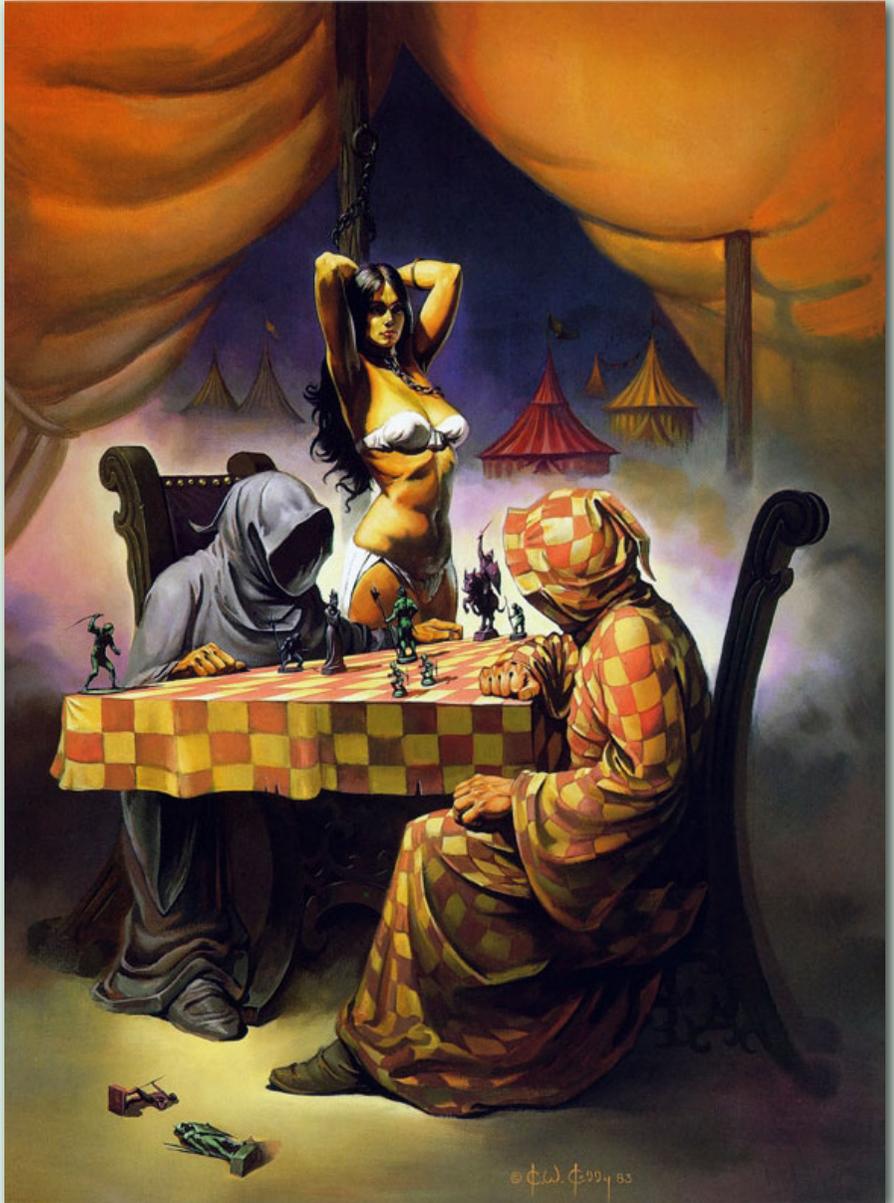
People know you for what you've done,
not for what you plan to do.

It is not the critic who counts; Not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; Who strives valiantly; Who errs, and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; But who does actually strive to do the deeds; Who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; Who spends himself in a worthy cause; Who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worse, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt

Dalamar's mouth went suddenly dry, and the words of an old saying came mocking to mind: Who leaps, leaps best when he knows where he will land. Of course, who doesn't leap at all, knowing or unknowing, gets to stand at the edge of the precipice until he must turn back with nothing earned but the failure to act. Unacceptable.

From a "Dragonlance" Novel



OWN OPINION



“Who is he that shall control me? Why may not I act and speak and write and think with entire freedom? What am I to the universe, or, the univserse, what is it to me? Who hath forged the chains of wrong and right, of Opinion and Custom? And must I wear them?”

“The Mind on Fire” by Emerson

Freedom begins when you tell Mrs. Grundy to go fly a kite.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

All of us could take a lesson from the weather.
It pays no attention to criticism.

“I don’t care about your negotiations and I don’t care about your treaty. All I care about is my patient and at the moment he needs more treatment and less politics. Now, you can either leave her willingly, or I’ll call security and have you thrown out!”

“I will not forget how you have spoken to me today!”

“Neither will I.”

Dr. Bashir and Kai Winn in Star Trek DS9: “Life Support”

Toby: “No, sir. In his defense, he caught the bad note. He came to me. He made it important.”

Leo: “Yeah.”

Toby: He wasn’t distracted bt the fact that his office was filled with bicycles.

Will: “Excuse me?”

Toby: “Yeah.”

Will: “You said that I caught the bad note?”

Toby: “Yeah, that was planted there to see how well you’d do telling truth to power.”

Bartlet: “Not very well so far.”

Will: “I have no difficulty telling, sir, telling truth to power.”

“The West Wing”

“He’s his own man.”

“And I thought I found the last one.”

Josh, refering to the presidential candidate Santos, and Leo, in “The West Wing”

“There must be 300 people on staff now. Surely a few of them are capable ...”

“They’re kids. Not a single one of these non-shavers would challenge my assumptions, stand up to me in a meeting.”

Joey and Josh in “The West Wing”

“Who monitors the birds?”
“I monitor the birds.”
“Who monitors you?”
*Hawkes, during his combat
education, in “Space 2063”*

At age 20 we worry about what others think of us.
At 40 we don’t care what they think of us.
At 60 we discover they haven’t been thinking of
us at all.

Ann Landers

“Whose side are you on?”
“We are on the side of the truth.
Is there another?”
*Ashan and Lennier in Babylon 5:
“There All the Honor Lies”*

I like to look at the law as sort of a guideline,
kind of a helpful suggestion.
Helena Kyle in “Birds of Prey”

“No, Your Majesty, I cannot make a fool of You. Only You can do that.”
“Job: A Comedy of Justice” by Robert A. Heinlein

Any training school for free citizens must begin by teaching distrust, not trust.
It must teach questioning, not acceptance of stock answers.

Cammar Pilru Dune: House Corrino (2001)

“As strong as you think you are, the one thing you can’t stop is the lone gunman determined to kill you, even if he gets killed in the process. I’m that man, Sheridan.”
[...] “Our new friend just said all the security in the world can’t stop a lone gunman dedicated to exchange his life for the target, and he is right. So you may as well live instead of being a prisoner.”

Assassin to soon-to-be president Sheridan in “Babylon 5”: “No Compromises”

“Ling Ling finds a wallet on the ground filled with money. She takes the wallet to the address on the driver’s license but keeps the money inside the wallet. [Scoffs] I-I’m sorry Mrs. Farmer. I don’t get this.”

“Just place an X on the Life Line in the appropriate place.”

“No, I mean I know what to do, I just don’t get this. You can’t just lump things into two categories. Things aren’t that simple.”

“The Life Line is divided that way.”

“Life isn’t that simple. I mean who cares if Ling Ling returns the wallet and keeps the money? It has nothing to do with either fear or love.”

“Fear and love are the deepest of human emotions.”

“Okay. But you’re not listening to me. There are other things that need to be taken into account. Like the whole spectrum of human emotion. You can’t just lump everything into these two categories and then just deny everything else.”

“If you don’t complete the assignment you’ll get a zero for the day.”

Donnie Darko and Kitty Farmer in “Donnie Darko”

[...]

“I’ll tell you what he said. He asked me to forcibly insert the Life Line exercise card into my anus.”

Kitty Farmer, to Donnie’s parents, about the answer he gave to her threat, in “Donnie Darko”

Take responsibility for your actions

Live as you choose,
but accept the consequences.
Joseph C. Clark

“We make our own choices,
we pay our own prices.”
Violet (1996)

“We make choices. No one else can live our lives for us. And we must confront and accept the consequences of our actions.”
Dream in “Sandman” by Neil Gaiman

“We do what we must, Lucien. Sometimes we can choose the path we follow. Sometimes our choices are made for us. And sometimes we have no choice at all.”
Dream, in Sandman: “Season of Mists” by Neil Gaiman

"He didn't know what he was doing," she said. "When you don't understand the consequences of your acts, how can you be blamed for them?" He knew that she was talking as much about him, Ender the Xenocide, as about Nimbo. "You don't take the blame," he answered. "But you still take responsibility. For healing the wounds you caused."
Xenocide

“There is a saying in Cairhien, though I have heard it as far away as Tarabon and Saldaea. ‘Take what you want and pay for it.’ Sivan and I took the path we wanted, and we knew we would have to pay for it eventually.”
Moiraine in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

A man may fall many times, but he won't be a failure until he says that someone pushed him.
Elmer G. Letterman

"It's just like back in Jordan, Pan," she whispered, "looking in the Retiring Room."
"If you hadn't done that, none of this would have happened," he whispered back.
"Then it's up to me to undo it, isn't it?"
"The Golden Compass" by Philip Pullman

Part of getting a second chance is taking responsibility for the mess you made in the first place.

Most of our faults are more pardonable than the means we use to conceal them.
François de la Rochefoucauld

It is not the deed itself but the lying that digs you in.
Lawyer

“The Devil made me do it.”
I have never made one of them do anything.”
Lucifer, in Sandman: “Season of Mists”



It is easy to ignore responsibility
when one is only an intermediate link in a chain of action.
Stanley Milgram

A harsh smile touched Paul's lips and he said: "Well spoken. I apologize." Kynes met Paul's stare and, presently, said: "No Harkonnen ever admitted error. Perhaps you're not like them, Atreides."
Dune by Frank Herbert

Never ruin an apology with an excuse.
Kimberly Johnson

Excuses are the nails used to build a house of failure.
Don Wilder and Bill Rechin

In dreams begin responsibilities.
WB Yeats

Each man must for himself alone decide what is right and what is wrong, which course is patriotic and which isn't. You cannot shirk this and be a man. To decide against your conviction is to be an unqualified and excusable traitor, both to yourself and to your country, let me label you as they may.
Mark Twain

"Well, gentlemen, when the shit hits the fan, some guys run and some guys stay."
Lt. Col. Frank Slade in "The Scent of a Woman"

I saw the errors I had made and assumed full responsibility for everything. You know, instead of being a man who would say, 'Well, it's a rotten system we live under,' and griping about politics, economics and the social condition, I said, 'Despite all that, I could have acted differently, I could have come out,' do you see? And I saw that as being the fault of my own nature, character and temperament. I accepted it, and once I did that, a great weight fell off me. I was liberated. I was able to really enjoy myself.

Henry Miller



When you realize you've made a mistake, make amends immediately. It's easier to eat crow while it's still warm.

Dan Heist

"Should we be obeying some old piece of paper or should we make our own decisions?"
Arthur in "Misfortune Teller"

Locus of Control

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

Don't worry about things that you have no control over, because you have no control over them. Don't worry about things that you have control over, because you have control over them.

Mickey Rivers

I am only one, but I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I can do something.
And I will not let what I cannot do
interfere with what I can do.

Edward Everett Hale

There is only one way to happiness,
and that is to cease worrying about things
which are beyond the power of our will.

Epictetus

A sin [original sin] without volition is a slap at morality and an insolent contradiction in terms: that which is outside the possibility of choice is outside the province of morality. If a man is evil by birth, he has no will, no power to change it; if he has no will, he can be neither good nor evil; a robot is amoral. To hold, as man's sin, a fact not open to his choice is a mockery of morality. To hold man's nature as his sin is a mockery of nature. To punish him for a crime he committed before he was born is a mockery of justice. To hold him guilty in a matter where no innocence exists is a mockery of reason.

Ayn Rand



Abstract morality is useless in a concrete case.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

Integrity has no need for rules.

Never let your sense of morals
prevent you from doing what's right.

Isaac Asimov

It is easier to fight for one's principles
than to live up to them.

Bonitas non est pessimis esse meliorem.

[It is not goodness to be better than the worst.]

Seneca

Wickedness isn't a manifestation of some greater force, it's just our fear
of our own weakness turned outwards. Everyone has a choice —
it's too bad so many people choose the path of least resistance.

Witchblade #52

Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking. There are too many
people who think that the only thing that's right is to get by, and the only thing that's
wrong is to get caught.

J. C. Watts

Ideals are like stars: you will not
succeed in touching them with your
hands, but like the seafaring man
on the desert of waters, you choose
them as your guides, and following
them you reach your destiny.

Carl Schurz

Without a doubt the greatest injury
of all was done by basing morals
on myth. For, sooner or later, myth
is recognized for what it is, and
disappears. Then morality loses the
foundation on which it has been
built.

Lord Samuel

“You must save yourself.”

“How?”

“Confess ... whatever foolishness they put
before you ...”

“That I am a witch?”

“What does it matter what you say to these
hypocrites?”

“I would be saying it.”

“There is no honor with fools like these.
God will forgive you.”

“Marco, if I give them my lie, I give them
my soul. I'll lose everything I ever was. My
love, my words, my heart.”

“Yes, but you would live.”

“As someone else.”

*Marco Venier and Veronica Franco
in “Dangerous Beauty”*

‘It is not easy to honourable. The world is full of cunning, crafty mem who have no
understanding of honour or loyalty. They connive, they steal, and and invariably,
in the eyes of the world, they succeed. To be honest requires great effort, and
continuous courage. And as for fairness, that is hardest of all.’

“Sword in the Storm” by David Gemmell

“Don’t be too moral. You may cheat yourself out of much of life. So aim above morality. Be not simply good; Be good for something.”

Thoreau

Thou shalt remember the Eleventh Commandment
[Thou shalt not get caught.] and keep it Wholly.

“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

“Don’t be afraid of your darker side, have fun with it.”

Troi to Riker in Star Trek TNG: “Frame of Mind”

Sin lies only in hurting other people unnecessarily. All other “sins”
are invented nonsense. (Hurting yourself is not sinful – just stupid.)

“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

“There's no greys, only white that's got grubby. I'm surprised you don't know that.
And sin, young man, is when you treat people as things. Including yourself. That's
what sin is.”

“It's a lot more complicated than that-”

“No. It ain't. When people say things are a lot more complicated than that, they
means they're getting worried that they won't like the truth. People as things, that's
where it starts.”

“Carpe Jugulum” by Terry Pratchett



I don't know who you are. Please believe. There is no way I can convince you that this is not one of their tricks. But I don't care. I am me, and I don't know who you are, but I love you.

I have a pencil. A little one they did not find. I am a woman. I hid it inside me. Perhaps I won't be able to write again, so this is a long letter about my life. It is the only autobiography I have ever written and oh God I'm writing it on toilet paper.

I was born in Nottingham in 1957, and it rained a lot. I passed my eleven plus and went to girl's Grammar. I wanted to be an actress.

I met my first girlfriend at school. Her name was Sara. She was fourteen and I was fifteen but we were both in Miss. Watson's class. Her wrists. Her wrists were beautiful. I sat in biology class, staring at the picket rabbit foetus in its jar, listening while Mr. Hird said it was an adolescent phase that people outgrew. Sara did. I didn't.

In 1976 I stopped pretending and took a girl called Christine home to meet my parents. A week later I enrolled at drama college. My mother said I broke her heart.

But it was my integrity that was important. Is that so selfish? It sells for so little, but it's all we have left in this place. It is the very last inch of us. But within that inch we are free.

London. I was happy in London. In 1981 I played Dandini in Cinderella. My first rep work. The world was strange and rustling and busy, with invisible crowds behind the hot lights and all that breathless glamour. It was exciting and it was lonely. At nights I'd go to the Crew-Ins or one of the other clubs. But I was stand-offish and didn't mix easily. I saw a lot of the scene, but I never felt comfortable there. So many of them just wanted to be gay. It was their life, their ambition. And I wanted more than that.

Work improved. I got small film roles, then bigger ones. In 1986 I starred in "The Salt Flats." It pulled in the awards but not the crowds. I met Ruth while

working on that. We loved each other. We lived together and on Valentine's Day she sent me roses and oh God, we had so much. Those were the best three years of my life.

In 1988 there was the war, and after that there were no more roses. Not for anybody.

In 1992 they started rounding up the gays. They took Ruth while she was out looking for food. Why are they so frightened of us? They burned her with cigarette ends and made her give them my name. She signed a statement saying I'd seduced her. I didn't blame her. God, I loved her. I didn't blame her. But she did. She killed herself in her cell. She couldn't live with betraying me, with giving up that last inch. Oh Ruth. . . .

They came for me. They told me that all of my films would be burned. They shaved off my hair and held my head down a toilet bowl and told jokes about lesbians. They brought me here and gave me drugs. I can't feel my tongue anymore. I can't speak.

The other gay women here, Rita, died two weeks ago. I imagine I'll die quite soon. It's strange that my life should end in such a terrible place, but for three years I had roses and I apologized to nobody.

I shall die here. Every last inch of me shall perish. Except one.

An inch. It's small and it's fragile and it's the only thing in the world worth having. We must never lose it, or sell it, or give it away. We must never let them take it from us.

I don't know who you are. Or whether you're a man or a woman. I may never see you or cry with you or get drunk with you. But I love you. I hope that you escape this place. I hope that the world turns and that things get better, and that one day people have roses again. I wish I could kiss you.

Valerie
X

“Death is lighter as a feather,
duty heavier than a mountain.”
“The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

Duty and Honor are not to the
chain of command, but to the
ideal to which they are fixed.
Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

“The first duty of every Starfleet officer
is to the truth, whether it's historical truth
or scientific truth or personal truth. If you
can't find it within yourself to stand up and
tell the truth, then you don't deserve to
wear that uniform.”

Jean-Luc Picard in Star Trek TNG: “The First Duty”

The two highest achievements of the human mind are the twin concepts of “loyalty”
and “duty.” Whenever these twin concepts fall into disrepute – get out there fast!
You may possibly save yourself, but it is too late to save that society. It is doomed.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Then out spoke brave Horatius, the Captain of the Gate: “To every man upon this
earth, Death cometh soon or late. And how can man die better, than facing fearful
odds, For the ashes of his fathers, and the temple of his Gods!”

Horatius on the Bridge, from “Days Of Ancient Rome”, by Lord Macaulay

“It’s never easy – the pull of divided
loyalties. – Whatever choice we do end
up making we feel as though we’ve
betrayed someone.”

Wesley in “Angel”

My kind of loyalty was loyalty to
one’s country, not to its institutions or
its office-holders.

*“A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court”
by Mark Twain, 1889*

“Are we on? This is ... this is the President. I have just been informed that the
midrange military bases at Beta Durani and Proxima 3 have fallen to the Minbari
advance. We have lost contact with Io and must presume they have fallen to an
advance force. Intelligence believes the Minbari intend to bypass Mars and hit Earth
directly. They say the attack could come at any time. We have ... we have continued
to broadcast our surrender and a plea for mercy. They have not responded. We can
only conclude that we stand at the twilight of the human race. To buy time for more
evacuation transports to leave Earth, we ask for the support of every ship capable
of fighting to take part in a last defense of our home world. We will not lie to you:
survival is not a possibility. Those who enter the battle will never come back. But for
every ten minutes we can delay the enemy advance, several hundred more civilians
may be able to escape to neutral territory. Though Earth may fall, the human race
must have a chance to continue elsewhere. No greater sacrifice has ever been asked
of a people. But I ask you now to step forward one last time, one last battle to hold
the line against the night.
God go with you all.”

The United-Earth-President in Babylon 5: “The Beginning”

"Duty is everything,
the greatest of joys,
the deepest of sorrows."

*Aribeth de Tylmarande
in "Neverwinter Nights"*



Goodness without wisdom
always accomplished evil.

“Stranger In A Strange Land” by Robert A. Heinlein

“However, I know, as the prime lesson of my profession, that good intentions are the source of more folly than all other causes put together.”

*Star, Empress of the Twenty Universes,
in “Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein*

Humans say the Road to Hell
is paved with good intentions.

Why? Do they think
there’s a shortage of bad ones?

*Karm’Luk P’an Ku
“The Joy of Lucidity”
C.Y. 8633
Andromeda*



“I once heard a wise man say
there are no perfect men.
Only perfect intentions.”

Azeem in “Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves”

If I knew something that would serve my country but would harm mankind, I would never reveal it; for I am a citizen of humanity first and by necessity, and a citizen of France second, and only by accident.

Montesquieu

“It’s funny how all living organisms are alike. When the chips are down ... When the pressure is on ... every creature on the face of the earth is interested in one thing and one thing only: It’s own survival.”

Iris in “Minority Report”

“There are rules, Garak, even in a war.”

“Correction: humans have rules in war. Rules that tend to make victory a little harder to achieve, in my opinion.”

O’Brien and Garak in Star Trek DS9: “Rocks and Shoals”

“Inter arma silent leges.”

[During war, the laws are silent.]

Marcus Tullius Cicero

“The Federation needs men like you, Doctor. Men of conscience, men of principle, men who can sleep at night. You’re also the reason that Section 31 exists. Someone has to protect men like you against a universe that doesn’t share your sense of right and wrong.”

Sloan, member of Section 31, which protects the Federation by breaking its laws, in Star Trek DS9



“My father used to say, that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I laid the first stone right there. I’d committed myself. I’d pay any price, go to any length, because my course was righteous ... my intentions were good.

In the beginning, that seemed like enough.”

Sisko in Star Trek DS9 - 6x19: “In The Pale Moonlight”

“That’s why you came to me, isn’t it, Captain? Because you knew I could do those things that you weren’t capable of doing? Well, it worked. And you’ll get what you want: a war between the Romulans and the Dominion. And if your conscience is bothering you, you should soothe it with the knowledge that you may have just saved the entire Alpha Quadrant. And all it cost was the life of one Romulan senator, one criminal, and the self-respect of one Starfleet officer. I don’t know about you, but I’d call that a bargain.”

Elim Garak to Captain Benjamin Sisko, in Star Trek DS9 6x19: “In the Pale Moonlight”



“I think I can live with it. And the most damning thing of all ... if I had to do it all over again, I would. Garak was right about one thing: A guilty conscience is a small price to pay for the safty of the Alpha Quadrant. So, I will learn to live with it. Because I can live with it ... I can live with it. ...

Computer, erase that entire personal log.”

Last lines of Sisko in Star Trek DS9: “In The Pale Moonlight”

“All of us are descendants of people who did nasty things, Rabbi. We don’t like to think of barbarians in our ancestry but they’re there.”

“Such talk!”

“Reverend Mothers can recall them all, Rabbi. Remember, it is the victors who breed. You understand?”

“I’ve never heard you talk so boldly. What has happened to you, daughter?”

“I survived, knowing that victory sometimes is achieved at a moral price.”

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

Crash priority: make sure, before bidding farewell to the romantic shores of exotic Pluto and its friendly colorful natives, that neither Peewee nor the Mother Thing is here-if they are, take them along-because, contrary to some opinions, it is better to be a dead hero than a live louse. Dying is messy and inconvenient but even a louse dies someday no matter what he will do to stay alive and he is forever having to explain his choice. The gummed-up spell that I had had at the hero business had shown that it was undesirable work but the alternative was still less attractive.

“Have Space Suit will Travel” by Robert A. Heinlein

Morpheus is understandably apprehensive about the task, but sets about it nevertheless; this is clearly one of his more basic characteristics, the belief that one should attempt to do what one believes is right.

Critic about "Sandman" by Neil Gaiman

The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But ... the good Samaritan reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"

Martin Luther King, Jr.

When the need arises – and it does – you must be able to shoot your own dog. Don't farm it out, that doesn't make it nicer, it makes it worse.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

'Artor! Nobblyesse obligay!'

'What? Is that some sort of vampire code?' Reg whispered.

'It means something like: a count's gotta do what a count's gotta do,' said Windle.

"Reaper Man" by Terry Pratchett

Remember the three R's:

Respect for self;

Respect for others;

Responsibility for all your actions.

Prefer a loss to a dishonest gain: the one brings pain at the moment, the other for all time.

Chilon, in Diogenes Laetius, Lives

Do not do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.

Their tastes may not be the same.

"Maxims for Revolutionists" by G. B. Shaw, 1898

What you don't see with your eyes,
don't witness with your mouth.

Jewish Proverb

It is almost the definition of a gentleman to say that he is one who never inflicts pain.

Cardinal John Henry Newman

"I'm a woman, I like men. If that means I'm not lady-like, then I guess I'm just not a lady."
"You're different. No arguin' that. But you're a lady. I'd take my oath on it."

Josephine and Wyatt Earp in "Tombstone"

Darling, a true lady takes off her dignity with her clothes and does her whorish best. At other times you can be as modest and dignified as your persona requires.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

"You knew Rand's parents?" Egwene asked cautiously. Whatever they said, she still thought of Tam and Kari al'Thor as Rand's parents.

"That is his story," Amys said, "if he wants to hear it." By the firmness of her mouth, she would not say another word on the subject.

The Wheel of Time

"Perhaps we could create a small cloud or something?" said Magrat.

"No! That's cheating!"

"Well, you always cheat."

"I cheat for myself. You can't cheat for other people."

[after causing a child to run to her and thereby interfering in the contest]

"I know what you're going to say," she said. "But there wasn't any danger to the little mite."

"But you—"

"Me?" said Nanny. "I hardly did anything. They didn't know he was going to run into the circle, did they? They both reacted just like they normally would, didn't they? Fair's fair."

"Well, in a way, but—"

"No one cheated," said Nanny.

"Lords and Ladies" by Terry Pratchett

"Then do your best to keep our name free from dishonor. Go to work, labor, young man, struggle ardently and courageously; live, yourself, your mother and sister, with the most rigid economy, so that from day to day the property of those whom I leave in your hands may augment and fructify. Reflect how glorious a day it will be, how grand, how solemn, that day of complete restoration, on which you will say in this very office, 'My father died because he could not do what I have this day done; but he died calmly and peaceably, because in dying he knew what I should do.'"

"My father, my father!" cried the young man, "why should you not live?"

"If I live, all would be changed; if I live, interest would be converted into doubt, pity into hostility; if I live I am only a man who has broken his word, failed in his engagements — in fact, only a bankrupt. If, on the contrary, I die, remember, Maximilian, my corpse is that of an honest but unfortunate man. Living, my best friends would avoid my house; dead, all Marseilles will follow me in tears to my last home. Living, you would feel shame at my name; dead, you may raise your head and say, 'I am the son of him you killed, because, for the first time, he has been compelled to break his word.'"

"The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas

"I went to Centauri Prime as your guest, your protector and perhaps even as your conscience, but not as anyone's eyes and ears. So no, I will not be testifying before the council."

G'Kar to Londo in Babylon 5: "And All My Dreams, Torn Asunder"

"I don't know why he saved my life; maybe in those last moments he loved life more than he had ever before. Not just his life; anybody's life; my life."

Deckard in "Blade Runner"

Any organization could profit from a 10-year-old member with enough strength of character to refuse to swear falsely.

New York Times editorial, 12 December 1993, on the Boy Scouts refusing membership to Mark Welsh, who would not sign a religious oath

Take care that your silence
does not signal consent.



“Why do you think Devilicus went bad?”

“I’m not sure. Probably wasn’t aware of it. You see, Ryan, in life, the road to darkness is a journey, not a light switch.”

Ryan and Lex, about a Superhero turned villain and in analogy to Lex, in “Smallville”

“You can look the other way once, and it’s no big deal, except it makes it easier for you to compromise the next time, and pretty soon that’s all your doing; compromising, because that’s the way you think things are done. You know those guys I busted? You think they were the bad guys? Because they weren’t, they weren’t bad guys, they were just like you and me. Except they compromised ... Once.”

Jack Bauer in “24”

"We all did what we had to do,
and in this circumstances
we did the best we could."

Former head of a concentration camp in "V for Vendetta"

IN ORDER TO HAVE A CHANGE OF FORTUNE AT THE LAST MINUTE
YOU HAVE TO TAKE YOUR FORTUNE TO THE LAST MINUTE, said
Death. WE MUST DO WHAT WE CAN .

'And if that doesn't work?' said Pestilence.

Death gathered up Binky's reins. The Auditors were much closer now. He could make out their individual, identical shapes. Remove one, and there were always a dozen more.

THEN WE DID WHAT WE COULD, he said, UNTIL WE COULD NOT.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

“This is from an independent study that I have faith in. 30% of workers plan to steal from their employers, 30% give in to occasional temptation, 5% will commit fraud regardless of circumstances, 85% will commit fraud given the circumstances.”

“Just out of curiosity, what are the right circumstances?”

“Need, opportunity and the ability to rationalize their behavior, it’s called the fraud triangle.”

Sam and Leo in “The West Wing”

“Of course that makes me angry! ... ‘The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral. Returning violence with violence only multiplies violence, add deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.’”

“Dr. King.”

“I’m part of that darkness now, Leo. When did that happen?”

“Dr. King wasn’t wrong. He just didn’t have your job.”

President Bartlet and Leo in The West Wing: "The Dogs of War"

And it was worse than that. It was as if he’d said, “No, don’t kill me, I’m frightened; kill my mother instead; she doesn’t matter, I don’t love her,” and as if she’d heard him say it, and pretended she hadn’t so as to spare his feelings, and offered herself in his place anyway because of her love for him. He felt as bad as that. There was nothing worse to feel.

“His Dark Materials” by Philip Pullman

“There are moments when we all become someone else, something other than what we are. It takes only a moment. But we spend the rest of our lives looking back at that moment in shame.”

Delenn in Babylon 5: “Objects at Rest”

Mullan has a keen psychological understanding of oppression, something he says he learned by reading an article about the lack of organized resistance in Bosnian rape camps.

"One woman said, 'I'd have given them my daughter rather than have them rape me again.' There's something moving about that kind of honesty, because we'd like to believe that people rise up and fight this kind of thing, but oppression is much more sophisticated than that. Because in making people act as isolated individuals, you win every time. The greatest threat to the world is a collective. But if you break it down into individuals, you can smash them to smithereens."

Movie critic for "The Magdalene Sisters"

“I know about sureness,” said Didactylos. Now the light, irascible tone had drained out of his voice. “I remember, before I was blind, I went to Omnia once. This was before the borders were closed, when you still let people travel. And in your Citadel I saw a crowd stoning a man to death in a pit. Ever seen that?”

“It has to be done,” Brutha mumbled. “So the soul can be shriven and-”

“Don’t know about the soul. Never been that kind of a philosopher,” said Didactylos.

“All I know is, it was a horrible sight.”

“The state of the body is not-”

“Oh, I’m not talking about the poor bugger in the pit,” said the philosopher. “I’m talking about the people throwing the stones. They were sure all right. They were sure it wasn’t them in the pit. You could see it in their faces. So glad it wasn’t them that they were throwing just as hard as they could.”

“Small Gods” by Terry Pratchett

Take Risks

"If you want to get ahead, you have to take chances ... stand out in a crowd ... get noticed."
Star Trek TNG: "Tapestry"

Do what you feel in your heart to be right,
for you'll be criticized anyway.
You'll be damned if you do and damned if you don't.
Eleanor Roosevelt

"Sometimes it's better to miss an opportunity
than to invite disaster."
Stilgar in "Dune" (2000)

"Fortune favors the bold.
I guess we are about to find out ..."
*Sisko, while encountering a vast fleet of enemy ships
with only the Defiant at his disposal, in Star Trek DS9*

"My God, what have I done?"
"What you always do. Turn death into a fighting chance to live."
Kirk and McCoy, watching the Enterprise burn up in the atmosphere of a planet, in "Star Trek III"

Too many people are thinking of security instead of opportunity.
They seem more afraid of life than death.
James F. Byrnes

Life is a compromise of
what your ego wants to do,
what experience tells you to do,
and what your nerves let you do.
Bruce Crampton

Take calculated risks.
That is quite different from being rash.
General George S. Patton

Opportunity is as scarce as oxygen;
men fairly breathe it and do not know it.
Doc Sane

"Most people are born and years later die without really having lived at all. They play it safe and tiptoe through life with no aspiration other than to arrive at death safely."

Tony Campolo, "Carpe Diem"

"Do you want to live forever?"
Valeria in "Conan"

"No risk, no gain."
"Too much risk, all dead,"
Children of the Mind

"Risk is part of the game
if you want to sit in that chair."
Kirk in Star Trek: "Generations"

Certainly the game is rigged.
Don't let that stop you; if you
don't bet, you can't win.
*Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love"
by Robert A. Heinlein*



Allow yourself to make mistakes

“Mistakes are the price we pay for a full life.”

Sophia Loren

"You're afraid of making mistakes. Don't be. Mistakes can be profited by. Man, when I was young I shoved my ignorance in people's faces. They beat me with sticks. By the time I was forty my blunt instrument had been honed to a fine cutting point for me. If you hide your ignorance, no one will hit you and you'll never learn."

Fahrenheit 451

"I didn't think so, but if I was wrong, I was wrong. I'd rather do something, and make a mistake than be frightened and be doing nothing. That's the problem back home. Folks have been conned to thinking they can't change the world, have to accept what is. I'll tell you something my friends. The world is changing every day, the only question is who's doing it."

Rev. Dexter in Babylon 5: "And the Rock Cried Out, No Hiding Place"

It is wise to keep in mind that no success or failure is necessarily final.

The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one.

Elbert Hubbard

What great thing would you attempt if you knew you could not fail?

Robert H. Schuller

Demand perfection of yourself and you'll seldom attain it. Fear of making a mistake is the biggest single cause of making one. Relax — pursue excellence, not perfection.

Bud Winter

Congratulations! You're not perfect! It's ridiculous to want to be perfect anyway. But then, everybody's ridiculous sometimes, except perfect people. You know what perfect is? Perfect is not eating or drinking or talking or moving a muscle or making even the teensiest mistake. Perfect is never doing anything wrong – which means never doing anything at all. Perfect is boring! So you're not perfect! Wonderful! Have fun! Eat things that give you bad breath! Trip over your own shoelaces! Laugh! Let somebody else laugh at you! Perfect people never do any of those things. All they do is sit around and sip weak tea and think about how perfect they are. But they're really not one-hundred-percent perfect anyway. You should see them when they get the hiccups! Phooey! Who needs 'em? You can drink pickle juice and imitate gorillas and do silly dances and sing stupid songs and wear funny hats and be as imperfect as you please and still be a good person. Good people are hard to find nowadays. And they're a lot more fun than perfect people any day of the week.

"Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days!" by Stephen Manes

That some good can be derived from every event is a better proposition than that everything happens for the best, which it assuredly does not.

James K. Feibleman

Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; you shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

One of the secrets of life is to make stepping stones out of stumbling blocks.

Jack Penn

Go ahead and fail. But fail with wit, fail with grace, fail with style. A mediocre failure is as insufferable as a mediocre success. Embrace failure! Seek it out. Learn to love it. That may be the only way any of us will ever be free.

“Even Cowgirls Get the Blues” by Tom Robbins

It is sometimes a mistake to climb; it is always a mistake never even to make the attempt. If you do not climb, you will not fall. This is true. But is it that bad to fail, that hard to fall? ... Sometimes you wake, and sometimes, yes, you die. But there is a third alternative. ... sometimes, when you fall, you learn to fly.

Morpheus in Sandman: “Fear of Falling” by Neil Gaiman



A man should never be ashamed to admit he has been in the wrong,
which is but saying, in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday.
Pope

Fall seven times,
stand up eight.
Japanese Proverb

When you lose,
don't lose the lesson.

"The wise are not wise because they make no mistakes.
They are wise because they correct their mistakes as soon as they recognize them."
Xenocide

From the errors of others,
a wise man corrects his own.
Syrus

"An error doesn't become a mistake
until you refuse to correct it."
Orlando A. Battista

Supposing you have tried and failed again and again. You may have a fresh start
any moment you choose, for this thing we call "failure" is not the falling down, but
the staying down.

Mary Pickford

You may have to fight a battle
more than once to win it.
Margaret Thatcher

"You lost today, kid. But that doesn't
mean you have to like it."
Fedora in "Indianer Jones and the Last Crusade"

In the game of life it's a good idea to have a few early losses, which relieves you of
the pressure of trying to maintain an undefeated season.

Bill Baughan

"It is possible to make no mistakes and still lose;
that's not a weakness, that's life."
Jean-Luc Picard in Star Trek TNG: "Peak Performance"

"I assure you I've done a lot of really stupid things, and none of them bother me.
All the mistakes, and all the dopey things, and all the times I was embarrassed —
they don't matter. What matters is that I can kind of look back and say: pretty much
any chance I had to do something cool I tried to grab for it — and that's where my
solace comes from."

Randy Pausch



Anny

Deal with problems

A crisis is when you can't say: 'let's forget the whole thing'.

If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is on fire, then you got a problem. Everything else is inconvenience.

Robert Fulghum



It's astonishing how much trouble one can get oneself into, if one works at it. And astonishing how much trouble one can get oneself out of, if one simply assumes that everything will, somehow or other, work out for the best.

Destruction, in Sandman #72: "The Wake"

"Trying to avoid complications often creates them."

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

Better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

Chinese Proverb

"I must do something" always solves more problems than "Something must be done."

And Susan was bright enough to know that the phrase "Someone ought to do something" was not, by itself, a helpful one. People who used it never added the rider "and that someone is me."

"Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett

"Because all's well, at the moment, in the world. At least all the various problems are in their compartments." Going ashore and out of the ferry terminal he explained his theory that the only way to deal with problems was the Asian way: to put them into individual compartments and take them up only when ready for them.

"That's good, if you can do it," she said, walking close beside him but not touching now.

"If you can't you'll go under — ulcers, heart attack, old before your time, your health broken."

Noble House

Acceptance of what has happened is the first step to overcoming the consequences of any misfortune.

William James

“Our species can only survive if we have obstacles to overcome. You take away all obstacles. Without them to strengthen us, we will weaken and die.”

Star Trek Quotations

“This could be the greatest disaster NASA’s ever faced.”

“With all due respect, sir, I believe this may be our finest hour.”

Bureaucrat and Gene Kranz in Apollo 13 (1995)

If I had a formula for bypassing trouble, I would not pass it round. Trouble creates a capacity to handle it. I don’t embrace trouble; that’s as bad as treating it as an enemy. But I do say meet it as a friend, for you’ll see a lot of it and had better be on speaking terms with it.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

There are times in everyone’s life when something constructive is born out of adversity ... when things seem so bad that you’ve got to grab your fate by the shoulders and shake it.

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

Focus on a problem and it grows.
Focus on the solution.

The best way out of a problem
is through it.

When solving problems, dig at the roots instead of just hacking at the leaves.

“The College Blue Book” by Anthony J. D’Angelo

“The job now is to turn this around and make it into something positive. My dad always told me that’s the only way you deal with pain; you don’t surrender, you don’t fight it, you turn it into something positive. He used to say: ‘If you are falling off a cliff, you may as well try to fly. You’ve got nothing to lose.’”

Sheridan’s log in Babylon 5: “Whatever Happened to Mr. Garibaldi?”

Once you open a can of worms, the only way to recan them is to use a larger can.

Zymurgy’s First Law of Evolving System Dynamics

“Do I need to tell you the first rule of damage control?”

“No, you don’t, but the next time you refer to this pregnancy as damage control ...”

“Get the information out early, get it out yourself, do it on your own terms.”

Toby and Andy in “The West Wing”

There is absolutely no point in sitting around and feeling sorry for yourself. The great power you have is to let go ... focus on what you have, no that which has been mean or unkindly removed.

Minnie Driver

Giving up doesn't always mean you are weak. Sometimes it means that you are strong enough to let go.

Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a stroke of luck.

"People think that Hell is fire and brimstone and the Devil poking you in the butt with a pitchfork, but it's not. Hell is when you should have walked away, but you didn't."

Jack Grimaldi in "Romeo Is Bleeding" (1993)

Instead of worrying he spent the time making plans.

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

A hundredload of worry
will not pay an ounce of debt.

George Herbert

If you can't sleep, then get up and do something instead of lying there worrying. It's the worry that gets you, not the lack of sleep.

Dale Carnegie

When at night you cannot sleep,
talk to the Shepherd
and stop counting sheep.

"Pessimism is a luxury of good times ...
In difficult times, pessimism is a self-
fulfilling, self-inflicted death sentence."

Evelin Lindner

I think the next best thing to solving a problem is finding some humor in it.

Frank A. Clark



Deal with Energy Sappers

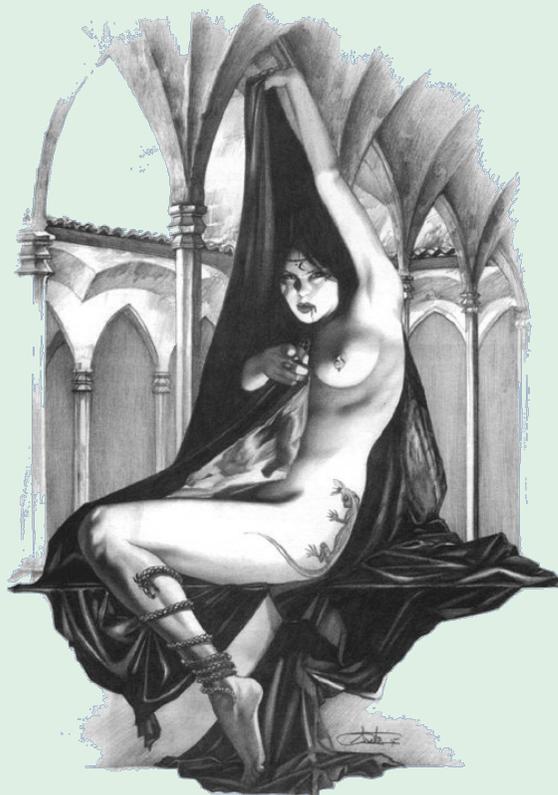
It isn't the mountains ahead that wear you out,
it's the grain of sand in your shoe.

Things that sap your energy are hard to see, they appear infrequently, nibble instead of bite, and they do not seem important. But they are, more so than large problems that force solutions. Their continuous drain harms your quality of life over the long term more than you would ever expect possible when looking at them. Remember that over time, small leaks sink a great ship, and tiny insects call fell a mighty tree.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

“My psychology professor used to say that was the first step — no, the second step. The first step when you have a problem is to know you have it. Well, I've known that for some time. The second step is to make a decision: Do you want to keep the problem, or do you want to do something about it? I've decided to do something about it.”

“Gateway” by Frederik Pohl





Control Yourself

breathe.

All control starts with the self.
"The Fifth Elephant" by Terry Pratchett

Discipline without freedom is tyranny.
Freedom without discipline is chaos.
Cullen Hightower



| brēð |



“And that’s why you are dangerous,”
she said, measuring out her words.
“You’ve mastered your passions.”
“Dune Messiah” by Frank Herbert

Do something every day that you
don’t want to do; this is the golden
rule for acquiring the habit of doing
your duty without pain.

Mark Twain

[Lawrence has just extinguished
a match between his thumb and
forefinger. Potter attempts the same.]
Potter: “Ooh! It damn well ‘urts!”
T.E. Lawrence: “Certainly it hurts.”
Potter: “What’s the trick then?”
T.E. Lawrence: “The trick, William
Potter, is not minding that it hurts.”
“Lawrence of Arabia”

Nearly all men can stand adversity,
but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.
Abraham Lincoln

Do not consider painful
what is good for you.

It is not the mountain we conquer
but ourselves.
Edmund Hillary

Do every day or two something for no
other reason than you would rather
not do it, so that when the hour of dire
need draws nigh, it may find you not
unnerved and untrained to stand the
test.

William James

“See, the drinking gives a control freak like you permission to let it go,
to be angry, to lash out, to lose it.”
Lochley to Garibaldi in Babylon 5: “The Wheel of Fire”

Anything I’ve ever done that
ultimately was worthwhile ...
initially scared me to death.
Betty Bender

“Alcoholism is not a disease, it’s a failing.
You’ve turned it into a church. You
worship the altar of self-pity. I come to
these rooms for one reason, to remember
what I don’t want to become... helpless,
impotent, and weak.”
Donald Lydecker at an AA meeting in “Dark Angel”

“The mind can go either direction under stress — toward positive or toward
negative: on or off. Think of it as a spectrum whose extremes are unconsciousness
at the negative end and hyperconsciousness at the positive end. The way the mind
will lean under stress is strongly influenced by training.”

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

“You see, the problem is, Jerry, your manifestations injure our entities. And pretty soon, there’ll be no entities to play with, and you’ll be all alone again. All because you can’t control yourself. Because with all your power you don’t have the power to stop, do you, Jerry.”

The Sphere

What was insane was that, deep down, Mitchell had liked wielding his godlike ability. Oh, he had wailed about it. Seemed frightened by it. But deep, deep in his subconscious somewhere, Mitchell had derived a delirious enjoyment from his ability to manipulate power, to manipulate people. To play God. What was odd was that the human he’d taken over from that first, earlier ship had had the same reaction. Q had thought it a fluke, but now he realized it to be a major flaw of the species. Power corrupted, and absolute power corrupted them absolutely.

Q-Squared

I may have given the impression that boot camp was made harder than necessary. This is not correct. It was made as hard as possible and on purpose. It was the firm opinion of every recruit that this was sheer meanness, calculated sadism, fiendish delight of witless morons in making other people suffer. It was not. It was too scheduled, too intellectual, too efficiently and impersonally organized to be cruelty for the sick pleasure of cruelty; it was planned like surgery for purposes as unimpassioned as those of a surgeon. Oh, I admit that some of the instructors may have enjoyed it but I don’t know that they did — and I do know (now) that the psych officers tried to weed out any bullies in selecting instructors. They looked for skilled and dedicated craftsmen to follow the art of making things as tough as possible for a recruit; a bully is too stupid, himself too emotionally involved, and too likely to grow tired of his fun and slack off, to be efficient. Still, there may have been bullies among them. But I’ve heard that some surgeons (and not necessarily bad ones) enjoy the cutting and the blood which accompanies the humane art of surgery. That’s what it was: surgery. Its immediate purpose was to get rid of, run right out of the outfit, those recruits who were too soft or too babyish ever to make Mobile Infantrymen. It accomplished that, in droves. (They darn near ran me out.) Our company shrank to platoon size in the first six weeks. Some of them were dropped without prejudice and allowed, if they wished, to sweat out their terms in the non-combatant services; others got Bad Conduct Discharges, or Unsatisfactory Performance Discharges, or Medical Discharges. Usually you didn’t know why a man left unless you saw him leave and he volunteered the information. But some of them got fed up, said so loudly, and resigned, forfeiting forever their chances of franchise. Some, especially the older men, simply couldn’t stand the pace physically no matter how hard they tried. [...] But, much more important than the purpose of carving away the fat quickly and saving the government the training costs of those who would never cut it, was the prime purpose of making as sure as was humanly possible that no cap trooper ever climbed into a capsule for a combat drop unless he was prepared for it — fit, resolute, disciplined, and skilled. If he is not, it’s not fair to the Federation, it’s certainly not fair to his teammates, and worst of all it’s not fair to him. But was boot camp more cruelly hard than was necessary? All I can say to that is this: The next time I have to make a combat drop, I want the men on my flanks to be graduates of Camp Currie or its Siberian equivalent. Otherwise I’ll refuse to enter the capsule.

“Starship Troopers” by Robert A. Heinlein

Ride the Blows

"I never did mind about the little things."
Maggie in "Point of No Return" (1993)

Life is filled with tragedy;
if you let it overwhelm you,
you cannot enjoy life's innocent pleasures.
Richard Ames in "The Cat Who Walks Through Walls"

"Before I became a tailor, I lived by one simple motto:
Never let sentiment get in the way of your work."
Garak in Star Trek DS9: "Profit and Loss"

"Rain is only a problem
if you don't want to get wet."
Old Samurai Saying
in *"Sin City: Sex and Violence"*

The best thing one can do
when it's raining is to let it rain.
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

To accuse others for one's misfortunes is a sign of want of education;
to accuse oneself shows that one's education has begun;
to accuse neither oneself nor others shows that one's education is complete.
Epicetus, "The Encheiridion"

Adversity has the same effect on a man that severe training has on the pugilist:
it reduces him to his fighting weight.

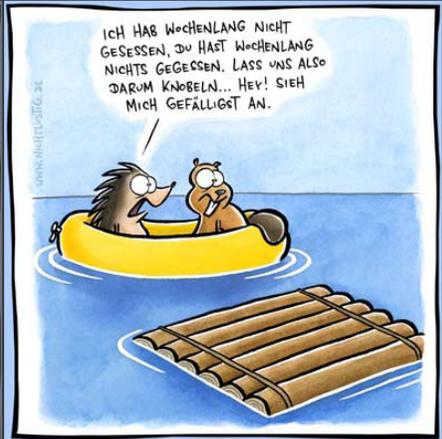
Josh Billings

Everything that could get wrong did go wrong,
but at the end of the day everyone had a whole lot of fun.
Randy Pausch

Anyone can carry his burden, however hard, until nightfall.
Anyone can do his work, however hard, for one day.
Anyone can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, purely, till the sun goes down.
And this is all life really means.

Robert Louis Stevenson

“Even in your darkest moments,
you can always find something
that will make you smile.”
Sisko in Star Trek DS9: “In The Cards”



Resolve

Expect – Decide – Do – Persist – Get Results

"You've heard of animals chewing off a leg to escape a trap? There's an animal kind of trick. A human would remain in the trap, endure the pain, feigning death that he might kill the trapper and remove a threat to his kind."

Reverend Mother Gaius Helen Mohiam, testing Paul Atréides with the Gom Jabbar in "Dune"

You have to expect things of yourself
before you can do them.

Michael Jordan

They can because they think they can.

Virgil

To expect defeat
is nine-tenths of defeat itself.

Francis Crawford

Whenever anyone says "I can't,"
it makes me wish he'd get stung to death
by about ten thousand bees.
When he says "I'll try," five thousand bees.
("I can," one bee.)

Jack Handey

Fuck it. Let's do it.

Australian Proverb

"Yo, she-bitch! Let's go!"

Ash to the Witch in "Evil Dead III"

I don't care if they eat me alive,
I've got better things to do then survive.

Ani DiFranco

"From now on, we live in a world
where man has walked on the
moon. It wasn't a miracle, we just
decided to go."

Jim Lovell

If you believe in yourself and have the
courage, the determination, the dedication,
the competitive drive and if you are willing
to sacrifice the little things in life and pay
the price for the things that are worthwhile,
it can be done.

*Reported in Vince Lombardi, Jr., What It Takes to Be
#1: Vince Lombardi on Leadership (2003), p. 105.*

It is easier to get forgiveness
than permission.

Stewart's Law of Retroaction



"Well, when it comes down to me against a situation,
I don't like the situation to win."

MacGyver



"Victory is life."
"Today is a good day to die!"
*Ikat'ika and Worf in Star Trek DS9:
"By Inferno's Light"*

It's not the size of the dog in the fight,
it's the size of the fight in the dog that matters.

Una salus victus nullam sperare salutem
[The one hope of the doomed is not to hope for safety.]
*Motto of the Argosy Special Operations, taken from Book II of Virgil's
Aeneid, in Andromeda: "Una Salus Victus"*

"Alright, I'll give it a try."
"No! Try not. Do ... or do not. There
is no try."
*Luke Skywalker and Yoda in "Star Wars IV:
The Empire Strikes Back"*

Where there's a will, there's a way.
And a maniac is matchless for invention.
The Marquis in "Quills"

"With all due respect, chaplain, I don't think our maker wants to hear from me right now, because he knows I'm gonna go out in that sky, in this plane, and remove one of his creations from his universe. And when I return, I'm gonna drink a bottle of scotch, as if it were Chiggy von Richthofen's blood, and celebrate his death."
"Amen."

McQueen and the Chaplain in "Space 2063"

“It doesn’t matter how many people say it cannot be done or how many people have tried it before; it’s important to realize that whatever you’re doing, it’s your first attempt at it.”

Wally “Famous” Amos

The great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.

Seneca

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

Samuel Johnson, Rasselas, 1759

Things are only impossible until they’re not.

Jean-Luc Picard in Star Trek TNG

Eighty percent of success is showing up.

Woody Allen

A winner says “Lets find out.”; a loser says, “Nobody knows.”

Runners just do it – they run for the finish line even if someone else has reached it first.

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
Theodore Roosevelt

If you’re doing your best, you won’t have any time to worry about failure.

Quoted in “P.S. I Love You”, compiled by H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

“How is it that you are so brave while the rest of us shake in our boots?”

“I don’t think of what might happen, only what must be done.”

Ivy Walker and Lucius Hunt in “The Village”

"And then he showed these men of will what will really is."

Verbal in "The Usual Suspects" (1995)

“The whole world now knows, my son Sean Mullen was kidnapped for ransom three days ago. This is a recent photograph of him. Sean, if you’re watching, we love you. And this ... well, this is what waits for the man that took him. This is your ransom, \$2,000,000 in unmarked bills, just like you wanted. ... But this is as close as you’ll ever get to it. You’ll never see one dollar of this money, because no ransom will ever be paid for my son. Not one dime, not one penny. Instead, I’m offering this money as a reward on your head — dead or alive, it doesn’t matter. So congratulations, you’ve just become a \$2,000,000 lottery ticket ... except the odds are much, much better. Do you know anyone that wouldn’t turn you in for \$2,000,000?”

Tom Mullen on live TV in “Ransom”



“And I see a whole army of my countrymen here in defiance of tyranny. You have come to fight as free men, and free men you are. What will you do without freedom? Will you fight? [dissent under the fighters] Ay, fight and you may die, run and you’ll live. At least a while. And dying in your beds many years from now, would you be willing to trade all the days from this day to that for one chance, just one chance to come back here and tell our enemies that they may take our lives, but they’ll never take our freedom?”

William Wallace

“Now, I know you’ve sacrificed much. But fighting these odds looks like rage, not courage.”

“It’s well beyond rage. Help me. For Christ’s sake, help yourselves! If we join, we can win. If we win, well then we’ll have what none of us has ever had before: a country of our own.”

Robert the Bruce and William Wallace

The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out; the brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. The brick walls are there to stop the people who don't want it badly enough. They are there to stop the other people!

Randy Pausch

Pain is temporary,
pride is forever.

When I hear somebody sigh that ‘Life is hard,’
I am always tempted to ask, ‘Compared to what?’

Sidney J. Harris

“Clark, you can quit if you want.
But remember, quitting is a very hard habit to break.”

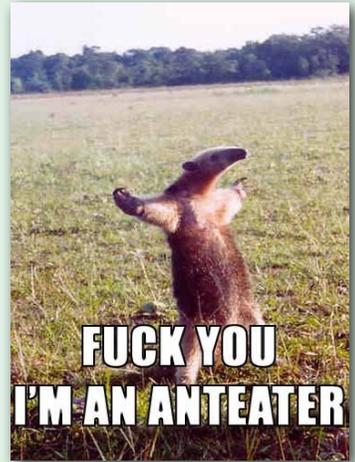
Jonathan in “Smallville”

Don’t be discouraged. It’s often the last
key in the bunch that opens the lock.

The greatest oak was once a little nut
who held its ground.

Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan ‘press on’ has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

Calvin Coolidge



“The Universe doesn’t give
you any points for doing
things that are easy.”

Sheridan to Garibaldi in Babylon 5:

“The Geometry of Shadows”

Look at a stone cutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred-and-first blow it will split in two, and I know it was not the last blow that did it, but all that had gone before.

Jacob A. Riis

“Win, lose or draw,
this thing’s going to know it was in a fight.”
Garibaldi in Babylon 5: “Infection”

“No! I don’t have to do anything,
I’m right, they’re wrong. They’re
strong ... I’m much stronger.”
Leo in “The West Wing”

A winner makes commitments;
a loser makes promises.

“We cannot win.”
“No, but we will meet them in battle none the less.”
Gamling and Theoden in “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King”

“You just have to say ‘No, I won’t’ one more time than they can say ‘Yes, you will.’”
John Sheridan in Babylon 5: “Intersections in Real Time”

“The humans, I think, knew they were doomed. Where another race would surrender to despair, the humans fought back with even greater strength. They made the Minbari fight for every inch of space.”
Londo in Babylon 5: “In the Beginning”

“Not like this. Not like this! If I’m going out, I’m taking you bastards with me! Target main cruiser, set for full velocity ram, afterburners on my mark. Mark.”
Sinclair on the Line in Babylon 5: “And the Sky Full of Stars”

“When the Dark One’s armies swooped down upon the lands of Manetheren, the men of the Mountain Home stood before it, with their backs to the Tarendrelle. The host that faced the men of Manetheren was enough to daunt the bravest heart. Ravens blackened the sky; Trollocs blackened the land ... At night their cookfires outnumbered the stars and dawn revealed the banner of Ba’alzamon at their heads ... Hold for three days against odds that should overwhelm them in the first hour. Yet somehow, through bloody assault and desperate defence, they held through an hour, and the second hour, and the third. For three days they fought, and though the land became a butcher’s yard, no crossing of the Tarendrelle did they yield. By the third night no help had come, and they fought on alone. For six. For nine.”

Moiraine in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

“You remember the stories John use to tell us about the the three chinamen playing Fantan? This guy runs up to them and says, ‘Hey, the world’s coming to an end!’ and the first one says, ‘Well, I best go to the mission and pray,’ and the second one says, ‘Well, hell, I’m gonna go and buy me a case of Mezcal and six whores,’ and the third one says ‘Well, I’m gonna finish the game.’ I shall finish the game, Doc.”

William H. Bonney in “Young Guns”

“If people tell you can’t do something, then it’s probably worth doing,” she said in a recent interview with Wired News. “When I was told no, I became like a compressed spring — the harder I was pushed down, the more forcefully I pushed back.”

Arlene Blum

The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will.

Vince Lombardi

The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a ‘C’, the idea must be feasible.

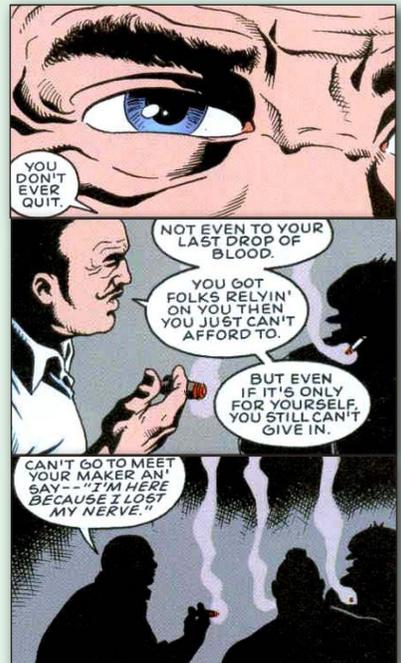
A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith’s paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service (Smith went on to found FedEx)

Persist, whether it is against fiery opposition or against terrible boredom, but persist.

In the real world, there is no such thing as an A+ for effort.

“So we went to Atari and said, ‘Hey, we’ve got this amazing thing, even built with some of your parts, and what do you think about funding us? Or we’ll give it to you. We just want to do it. Pay our salary, we’ll come work for you.’ And they said, ‘No.’ So then we went to Hewlett-Packard, and they said, ‘Hey, we don’t need you. You haven’t got through college yet.’”

Apple Computer Inc. founder, Steve Jobs, on attempts to get Atari and HP interested in his and Steve Wozniak’s personal computer.



Have Courage

“Don't get afraid, get angry.”
Susan in “Hogfather” by Terry Pratchett



In order to fear, you had to be a me.
Don't let anything happen to me.
That was the song of fear.
“Thief of Time” by Terry Pratchett

“Aren't you very much afraid?”
“Wouldn't do me any good, would it?”
The Wolf and Little Red Riding Hood
in “The Company of Wolves”

“Remember this. We are always more afraid than we wish to be.
But we can always be braver than we thought we could be.”
Aiel Wise One Sorilea, from Lord of Chaos by Robert Jordan

Courage is not the absence of fear,
but rather the judgement
that something else is more important than fear.
Ambrose Redmoon

Courage is resistance to fear,
mastery of fear,
not absence of fear.
Mark Twain

Courage consists not in blindly overlooking
danger, but in seeing it, and conquering it.
Richter

Courage is the complement
of fear. A man who is fearless
cannot be courageous.
(He is also a fool.)
Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus
Long in “Time Enough For Love” by
Robert A. Heinlein

Courage is ... the knowledge of how to fear
what ought to be feared and how not to fear
what ought not to be feared.
David Ben-Gurion

Would you put your head in a bear's mouth just to show you weren't afraid?
Would you do it twice just because you'd done it once and didn't die?
“The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan



“Sometimes fear can be a good thing. Keeps you from taking unnecessary chances. Courage doesn’t mean that you don’t have fear. It means you’re learned to overcome it.”

Star Trek Quotations

"It is so easy for people to praise or condemn. I am a fine swordsman. Therefore I am a hero. I become a brave man. Yet where is the bravery without fear? I have never feared a battle. Varaconn did. He trembled with fright. Yet he was there. Beside me. He overcame his fear. That, to me, is the greatest courage."

"Sword in the Storm" by David Gemmell

There are at least two kinds of cowards. One kind always lives with himself, afraid to face the world. The other kind lives with the world, afraid to face himself.

Roscoe Snowden

Expose yourself to your deepest fear; after that, fear has no power, and the fear of freedom shrinks and vanishes.

You are free.

Jim Morrison

Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I’ll try again tomorrow.

Mary Anne Radmacher

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, “I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.”

"You Learn By Living" by Elenor Roosevelt

“If they succeed, you can drink to their courage.

And if they fail, you can still drink to their courage.”

Derek, preparing to celebrate the ongoing suicide mission of one ship of their armada by bringing Blood Wine to the bridge, in Star Trek DS9: "Once More Into the Breach"

It may be better to be a live jackal than a dead lion, but it is better still to be a live lion. And usually easier.

"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein



“This body is only a shell. You can not touch me. You can not harm me.
I’m not afraid.”

Deleenn to Sebastian in Babylon 5: “Comes the Inquisitor”

I must not fear.
Fear is the mind-killer.
Fear is the little-death
that brings total obliteration.

I will face my fear.
I will permit it to pass over me
and through me.
And when it has gone past I will turn
the inner eye to see its path.
Where the fear has gone there will be
nothing.

Only I will remain.
Bene Gesserit Litany Against Fear in “Dune”
by Frank Herbert

The things you fear are undefeatable,
not by their nature, but by your
approach.

Jewel Kilcher

“All I understand is that you apparently
don’t have the backbone to stand up
and fight to protect the ones you love.
I speak of courage, gentlemen. Does
courage mean so little to you?”

Star Trek Quotations

That is the most imbecilic attempt to
rationalize personal cowardice I’ve
ever heard.

Star Trek Quotations

“Clark, you were not forced into exile. You ran away from your problems. You are
not being noble, you’re being a coward!”

Chloe in “Smallville”

A new idea is delicate. It can be killed
by a sneer or a yawn; it can be stabbed
to death by a quip, and worried to
death by a frown on the right man’s
brow.

Charlie Brower

Many great ideas have been lost
because the people who had them
could not stand being laughed at.

I’d rather live in pain or die a horrible death
than to live a single day more in fear.
Everything is better than living in fear.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash



“When I sleep, I dream about it. Them. Every night. All around
me, in me. I used to be afraid to dream, but I’m not anymore.”
“Why?”
“Because no matter how bad the dreams get ... when I wake up
it’s always worse.”

Ripley and Call in “Alien 4”

The only courage that matters is the kind
that gets you from one moment to the next.

Mignon McLaughlin

You probably can't imagine what it
is like to be so lost and frightened
that you will listen to any voice
which promises change.

Star Trek Quotations

A timid person is frightened before a
danger, a coward during the time, and a
courageous person afterwards.

Jean Paul Richter

My father used to tell me, "Alex, there is nothing wrong with being scared ... as long as you don't let it affect you until the danger is over. Being hysterical is okay, too ... afterwards and in private. Tears are not unmanly ... in the bathroom with the door locked. The difference between a coward and a brave man is mostly a matter of timing."

Alex Hergensheimer in "Job: A Comedy of Justice" by Robert A. Heinlein

I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee



Own your emotions

What do you feel at the moment?

When did you last express yourself emotionally?

It was sad music. But it waded the sadness like a battle flag. It said the universe had done all it could but you were still alive.

Soul Music



“For too long I’ve been parched of thirst and unable to quench it. Too long I’ve been starving to death and haven’t died. I feel nothing. Not the wind on my face nor the spray of the sea. Nor the warmth of a woman’s flesh. [steps into moonlight becoming a skeleton] You best start believing in ghost stories Miss Turner. You’re in one!”

Barbossa in “Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl”

He could see Bonzo's anger growing hot. Hot anger was bad. Ender's anger was cold, and he could use it. Bonzo's was hot, and so it used him.

“Ender's Game”

Harness your anger,
don't let it harness you.

The fear hadn't drained out of Agnes, but it had found a space in which to metamorphose into anger.

“Maskerade” by Terry Pratchett

The world needs anger. The world often continues to allow evil because it isn't angry enough.

Bede Jarrett

It's all right letting yourself go,
as long as you can get yourself back.

Mick Jagger

The angry man will defeat himself
in battle as well as in life.

He who fears something
gives it power over him.

Moorish Proverb

No point in getting emotional about anything. Being emotional didn't help with survival. What mattered was to learn everything, analyze the situation, choose a course of action, and then move boldly. Know, think, choose, do. There was no place in that list for "feel." Not that Bean didn't have feelings. He simply refused to think about them or dwell on them or let them influence his decisions, when anything important was at stake.

Ender's Shadow

“Feelings aren't positive and negative, they simply exist. It's what we do with those feeling that becomes good or bad. For example, feeling angry about an injustice could lead someone to take a positive action to correct it.”

Picard in “Star Trek VII - Generations”

When we hate our enemies, we are giving them power over us: power over our sleep, our appetites, our blood pressure, our health, and our happiness. Our enemies would dance with joy if only they knew how they were worrying us, lacerating us, and getting even with us! Our hate is not hurting them at all, but our hate is turning our own days and nights into a hellish turmoil.

Dale Carnegie

Like Death, which some of the city's less fortunate citizens considered he intimately resembled, the Patrician never got angry until he had time to think about it. But sometimes he thought very quickly.

“Sourcery” by Terry Pratchett

G r a n n y Weatherwax was often angry. She considered it one of her strong points. G e n u i n e anger was one of the world's great creative forces.

But you had to learn how to control it. That didn't mean you let it trickle away. It meant you dammed it, carefully, let it develop a working head, let it drown whole valleys of the mind and then, just when the whole structure was about to collapse, opened a tiny pipeline at the base and let the iron-hard stream of wrath power the turbines of revenge.

“Wyrd Sisters” by Terry Pratchett

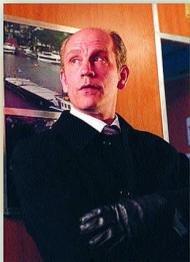
Don't hate,
it's too big a burden to bear.

Martin Luther King, Sr.

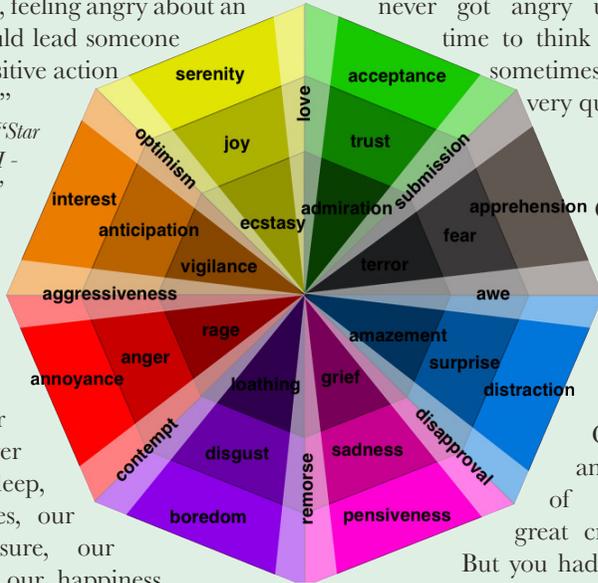
“Never hate your enemies.
It affects your judgment.”

Michael Corleone in The Godfather: Part III (1990)

Wenn du jemanden haßt,
mußt du auf die Konsequenzen vorbereitet sein.
Battle Royale II



“You know the most interesting thing about doing something terrible? That after a few days, you can't even remember it.”
Tom Ripley in “Ripley's Game” (2002)



Deal with depression

despair my ass

Have the courage to live.

Anyone can die.

Robert Cody

“What if this is as good as it gets?”

*Melvin Udall, to a group of depressed psychiatric patients,
in “As Good as It Gets” (1997)*

There still is
some beauty
in this life.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

Be not afraid of life. Believe that life
is worth living, and your belief will
help you create the fact.

William James

A vigorous five-mile walk will do more
good for an unhappy but otherwise
healthy adult than all the medicine and
psychology in the world.

Paul Dudley White

“In the village I come from there was a man once. He went fishing one day and his boat was attacked by crocodiles. One of them ate his leg. He pulled himself to the shore and a lion attacked him. It ate one of his arms. He dragged himself through the desert on the way home and a scorpion stung his eye. So he only had one eye. When he reached the village I sat with him. I said, ‘You have lost a leg, an arm and one eye. You must have a mighty will to live.’ He said, ‘No, Lord, it’s just better than the alternative.’ Life is a gift from our fathers to us. Who are you to give it up for lack of lifting a spoon?”

Juba in “Gladiator”

If you see a whole thing – it seems that it’s always beautiful. Planets, lives. ... But up close a world’s all dirt and rocks. And day to day, life’s a hard job, you get tired, you lose the pattern.

Ursula Le Guin



“You don’t need a reason to live.”

Armitage III

Depression is a disease ... and it is sneaky. Sometimes it comes as a great shadow, but often the clouds begin creeping upon you, one by one. Gradually or massively, your life does not seem worthwhile anymore. The reason to live is missing and you feel empty and hurt and hollowed out. But it has actually nothing to do with your life. It is the perception of your life, getting tired of bearing an unbearable load or being nibbled to death by countless (in itself) tiny bites. And it is physical. It is more a physical disease than “a case of bad mood”. It is like loosing control over a limb — you cannot go on until you fix it. And you can fix it.

It can change, your situation can change, your perception can change. So, even when you have every right to feel down, it does not have to be the end of your life. Seek professional help, you have nothing to loose. And you will have to fight for that help because good professionals usually are overbooked. But even with a long waiting period before you, you have something to live for. You have made a commitment to use help, to improve your life. And this commitment will enable you to live and can already change something for the better.

If a person wants to take his own life, it is his privilege.
Maureen Johnson in "To Sail Beyond the Sunset" by Robert A. Heinlein

“Wenn Sie Ihr Leben beenden wollen, dann beenden Sie doch Ihr Leben, aber dafür müssen Sie doch nicht sterben.”

Sibel Kekillis in "Gegen die Wand"

People like myself usually kill themselves early in the game ... I wonder what would happen if one of us would actually finish it.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

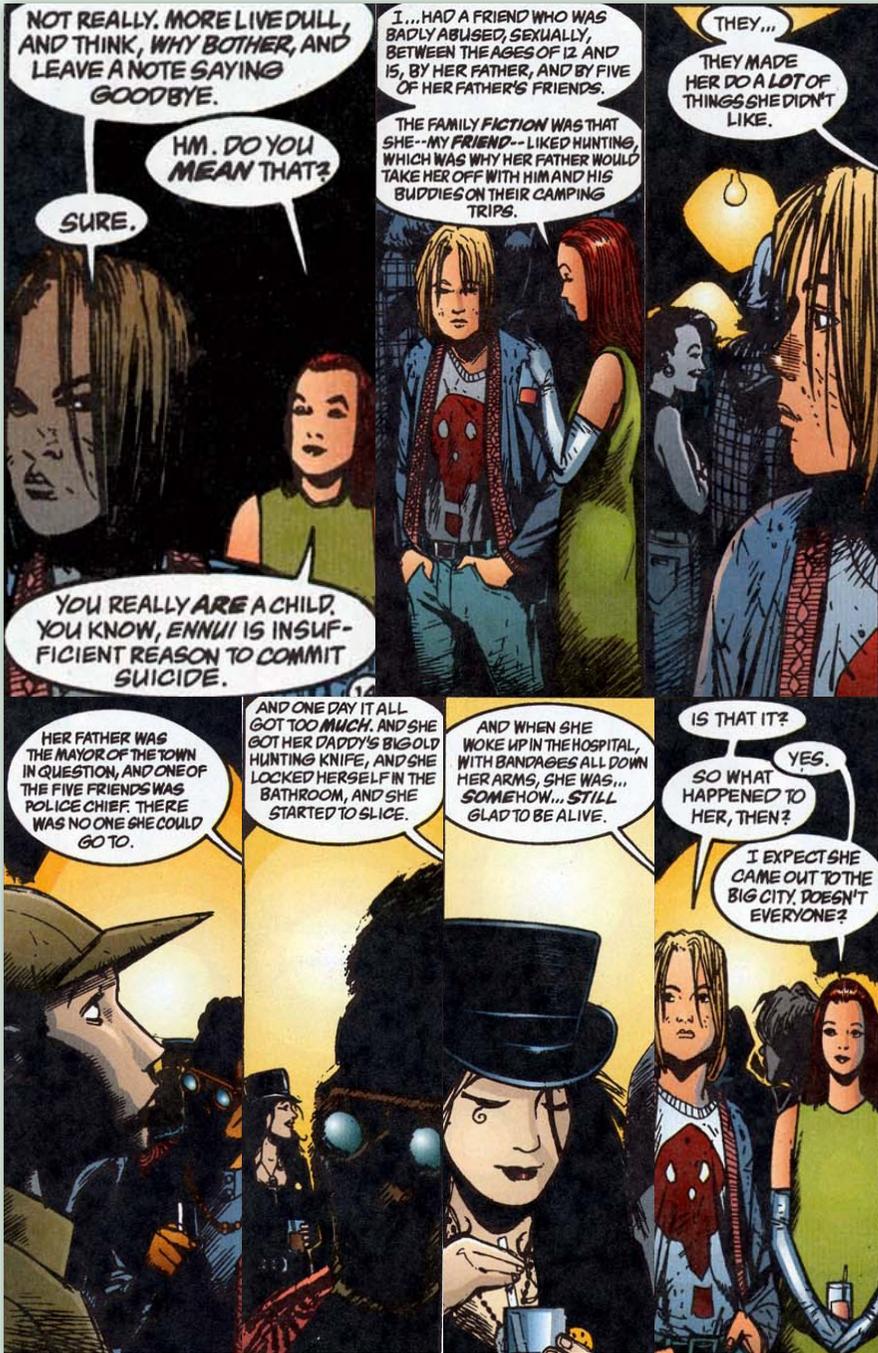
You just have to decide whether you are Tigger or an Eeyore.

Randy Pausch

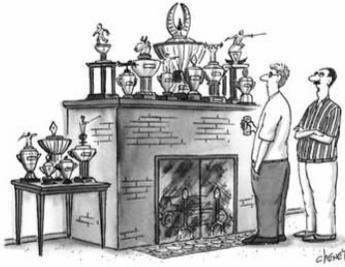
Your distress about life might mean you have been living for the wrong reason, not that you have no reason for living.

Tom O'Connor





Don't be in such a hurry
to reach the end of your life.



"Those? Oh, just a few souvenirs from my bipolar-disorder days."



"Is there any chance of getting my testicles back?"



"Discouraging data on the antidepressant."



"It must be his beeper."



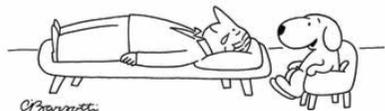
"Then I said, 'So what does a lesbian vegan Wiccan do for fun?'"



*"At first I'm pissed because she's all 'Fur is death! Fur is death!'
But then I think, Dude! She's naked!"*



"The suggestions are supposed to go in the box."



"Well, I think you're wonderful."

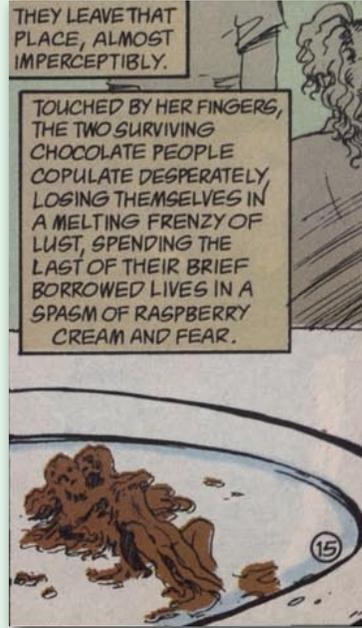
Live in the now

Most people aren't. They live their lives as a sort of temporal blur around the point where their body actually is – anticipating the future, or holding on to the past. They're usually so busy thinking about what happens next that the only time they ever find out what is happening now is when they come to look back on it. Most people are like this. They learn how to fear because they can actually tell, down at the subconscious level, what is going to happen next. It's already happening to them.

"Wyrd Sisters" by Terry Pratchett

So Shut Up, Live, Travel, Adventure, Bless,
And Don't Be Sorry.

Jack Kerouac



I had lost fourteen hundred tarns of gold. Yet I did not regret the loss nor did it disturb me in the least. Who would not cheerfully trade a dozen such fortunes to witness one such game.

Beasts of Gor

One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon – instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today.

Dale Carnegie





“Seize the time, Meribor. Live now;
make now always the most precious time.
Now will never come again.”
Picard in Star Trek TNG: “The Inner Light”



Enjoy and be HAPPY

Some pursue happiness,
others create it.

To everyone is given the key to heaven;
the same key opens the gates of hell.

Ancient Proverb

He who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing anything but his own disposition will waste his life in fruitless efforts.

Samuel Johnson

“Living poor like this, you can’t avoid. Living alone — you can’t avoid that either — even if you live with someone, eventually they die and you’re alone, or you die and leave them alone. But living in fear, you can choose that. I’ve chosen to live happily, if somewhat meagerly.”

The Shepherd in “Rouge”

You need to learn to be happy by nature, because you’ll seldom have the chance to be happy by circumstance.

Lavetta Sue Wegman

Never pass up a good thing.
Jean Rasczak in “Starship Troopers”

The only way to avoid being miserable is not to have enough leisure to wonder whether you are happy or not.

George Bernard Shaw

Ancient Egyptians believed that upon death they would be asked two questions and their answers would determine whether they could continue their journey in the afterlife. The first question was, "Did you bring joy?" The second was, "Did you find joy?"

Leo Buscaglia



For most of life, nothing wonderful happens. If you don't enjoy getting up and working and finishing your work and sitting down to a meal with family or friends, then the chances are that you're not going to be very happy. If someone bases his happiness or unhappiness on major events like a great new job, huge amounts of money, a flawlessly happy marriage or a trip to Paris, that person isn't going to be happy much of the time. If, on the other hand, happiness depends on a good breakfast, flowers in the yard, a drink or a nap, then we are more likely to live with quite a bit of happiness.

Andy Rooney

Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Maybe you can keep me from ever being happy, but you're not gonna stop me from having fun.

Ani DiFranco

Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.

George Orwell

If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a boat, writing a symphony, educating his son, growing double dahlias in his garden, or looking for dinosaur eggs in the Gobi desert. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the radiator. He will not be striving for it as a goal in itself. He will have become aware that he is happy in the course of living life twenty-four crowded hours of the day.

W. Beran Wolfe

"The truth is, I probably don't want to be too happy or content, 'cause then what? I actually like the quest, the search. That's the fun. The more lost you are, the more you have to look forward to. What do you know? I'm having a great time and I don't even know it."

Ally in "Ally McBeal"

I made a very important discovery at Camp Currie. Happiness consists in getting enough sleep. All the wealthy, unhappy people you've ever met take sleeping pills; Mobile Infantrymen don't need them. Give a cap trooper a bunk and time to sack out in it, and he's as happy as a worm in an apple – asleep.

"Starship Troopers" by Robert A. Heinlein



Der einzige Weg, eine Versuchung loszuwerden, ist, ihr nachzugeben. Widerstehst du ihr, wird deine Seele krank vor Sehnsucht nach den Dingen, die sie sich versagt hat.

Oscar Wilde

Do you really think it is weakness that yields to temptation? I tell you that there are terrible temptations which it requires strength, strength and courage to yield to.

Oscar Wilde

Yield to temptation; it may not pass your way again.

"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein



You will always be fond of me.
I represent to you all the sins
you never had the courage to commit.







Zoya

“When did I ever fail to enjoy anything?”

Star in “Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein

Dance as if no one’s watching,
sing as if no one’s listening,
and live everyday as if it were your last.

Irish proverb

Dancing is like fucking ...
it doesn't matter how you look —
just concentrate on how you feel.

Fear of Flying (1973) by Erica Jong

A dress makes no sense unless it inspires
men to want to take it off you.

Françoise Sagan

When Was the Last Time ...

- ... you stepped into a field of flowers, with your eyes closed, just breathing in and out?
- ... you fought against a strong wind, feeling its power, measuring it with your own?
- ... you tasted something new – a new dish, a new sweet, a new sweetheart?
- ... you walked through the rain – just feeling the raindrops on your skin?
- ... you stepped into a river, feeling the cold water rushing by?
- ... you tasted snow, falling from the sky?
- ... you took a long, hot bath, letting the water relax your every muscle?
- ... you sat before an open fire, feeling the radiant heat on your skin, breathing the smoke-filled air?
- ... you let someone caress your body, massaging your every muscle with scented oils?
- ... you deliberately chose a body odor that suits you, enhances you, makes you smell more like yourself?
- ... you closed your eyes somewhere in a wood or a city and just listened to the beat of nature?
- ... you danced with your eyes closed?

Daniel Wessel

Col. Frank Slade has a very special plan for the weekend. It involves travel, women, good food, fine wine, the tango, chauffeured limousines and a loaded forty-five. And he's bringing Charlie along for the ride.

Movie review for "The Scent of a Woman"

See with your own eyes,
hear with your own ears,
smell with your own nose,
taste with your own tounge,
feel with your own skin.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

To make us feel small in the right way is a function of art; men can only make us feel small in the wrong way.

E. M. Forster, Two Cheers for Democracy, 1951

Use your senses, remember,
you've got at least five of them.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

I love the rain.
I want the feeling of it on my face.

Katherine Mansfield

"All right. I admit it. He's got a point. The sunsets are bloody marvelous, you old bastard. Satisfied?"

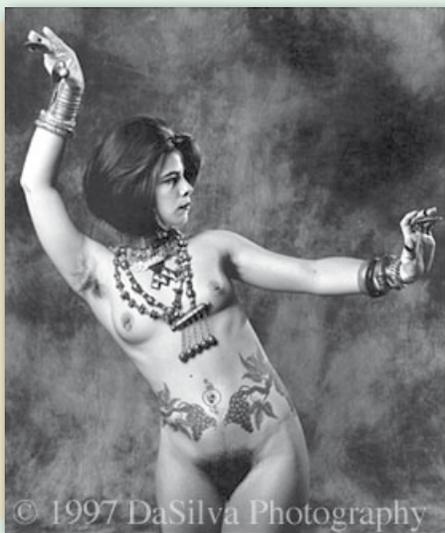
*Lucifer, about God, in Sandman:
"Season of Mists" by Neil Gaiman*

It's not Multimedia just Dualmedia. And don't call it an experience, it's less than half of what human beings are capable of. Sure, sight and sound are important, without doubt the most important senses, but they are not the only ones. And we are not talking about living, we're talking about feeling alive.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

There will be times when you will be in the field without a camera. And, you will see the most glorious sunset or the most beautiful scene that you have ever witnessed. Don't be bitter because you can't record it. Sit down, drink it in, and enjoy it for what it is!

DeGriff



"Men of all shapes and sizes, ages and creeds, and states of marital or relationship bliss enjoy, every now and then, the sight of a woman with no clothes on. It's just as well we do, you know, otherwise there'd be no new little earthlings, would there? If you want to call that oppression or sexism or the commodification of the female body then go right ahead, but don't expect me to talk to you at dinner parties. I prefer to call it sexual attraction, but then I'm a sad fuck who spends half his life in front of computer, so what the hell do I know?"

Michael Marshall Smith, "More Tomorrow"

I find I always have to write something
on a steamed mirror.
Elaine Dundy

I still get wildly enthusiastic about little
things I play with leaves. I skip down
the street and run against the wind.
Leo Buscaglia

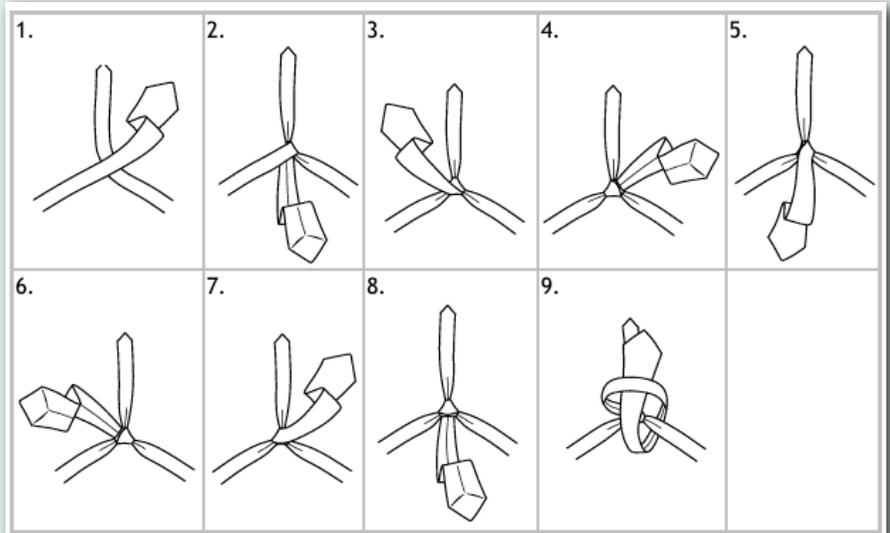
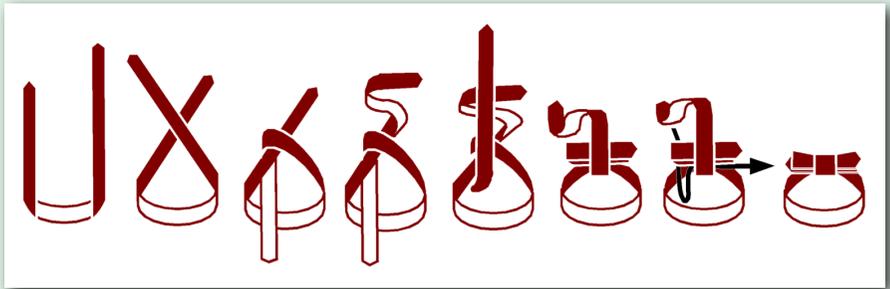
Think what a better world it would be
if we all, the whole world, had cookies
and milk about three o'clock every
afternoon and then lay down on our
blankets for a nap.

Barbara Jordan

"It occurs to me I have never walked
the length of this place end to end."
"Well, Deleenn, it's five miles long."
"I know. Coming?"
"Now?"
"Now is all we have."

Deleenn and Sheridan in "Babylon 5"

Think big thoughts but relish small pleasures.
"Life's Little Instruction Book" by H. Jackson Brown, Jr.



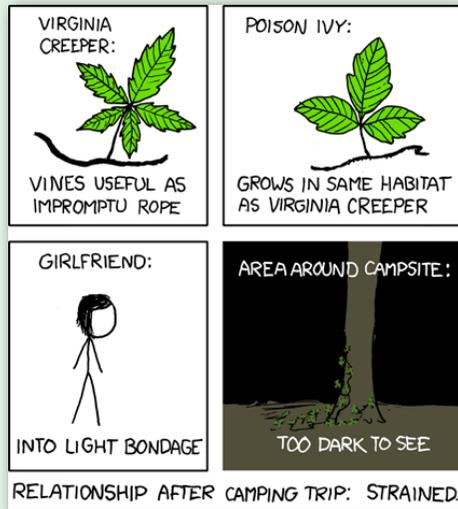


“I thought I’d gone to the limits. I hadn’t. The Cenobites gave me an experience beyond limits ... pain and pleasure, indivisible.”

Frank Cotton in “Hellraiser” (1987)

To sit alone in the lamplight with a book spread out before you, and hold intimate converse with men of unseen generations – such is a pleasure beyond compare.

Kenko Yoshida



Memorize your favorite poem.

The written word is all that stands between memory and oblivion. Without books as our anchors, we are cast adrift, neither teaching nor learning. They are windows on the past, mirrors on the present, and prisms reflecting all possible futures. Books are lighthouses erected in the dark sea of time.

Jeffery Robbins in “Gargoyles”



“Ooh, but I still smell her. [Inhales deeply through nose] Women! What can you say? Who made ‘em? God must have been a fuckin’ genius. The hair... They say the hair is everything, you know. Have you ever buried your nose in a mountain of curls... just wanted to go to sleep forever? Or lips... and when they touched, yours were like... that first swallow of wine... after you just crossed the desert. Tits. Hoo-hah! Big ones, little ones, nipples staring right out at ya, like secret searchlights. Mmm. Legs. I don’t care if they’re Greek columns... or secondhand Steinways. What’s between ‘em... passport to heaven. I need a drink. Yes, Mr Sims, there’s only two syllables in this whole wide world worth hearing: pussy. Hah! Are you listenin’ to me, son? I’m givin’ ya pearls here.”

Lt. Col. Frank Slade in “The Scent of a Woman”

I refuse to spend my life worrying about what I eat. There is no pleasure worth forgoing just for an extra three years in the geriatric ward.

John Mortimer

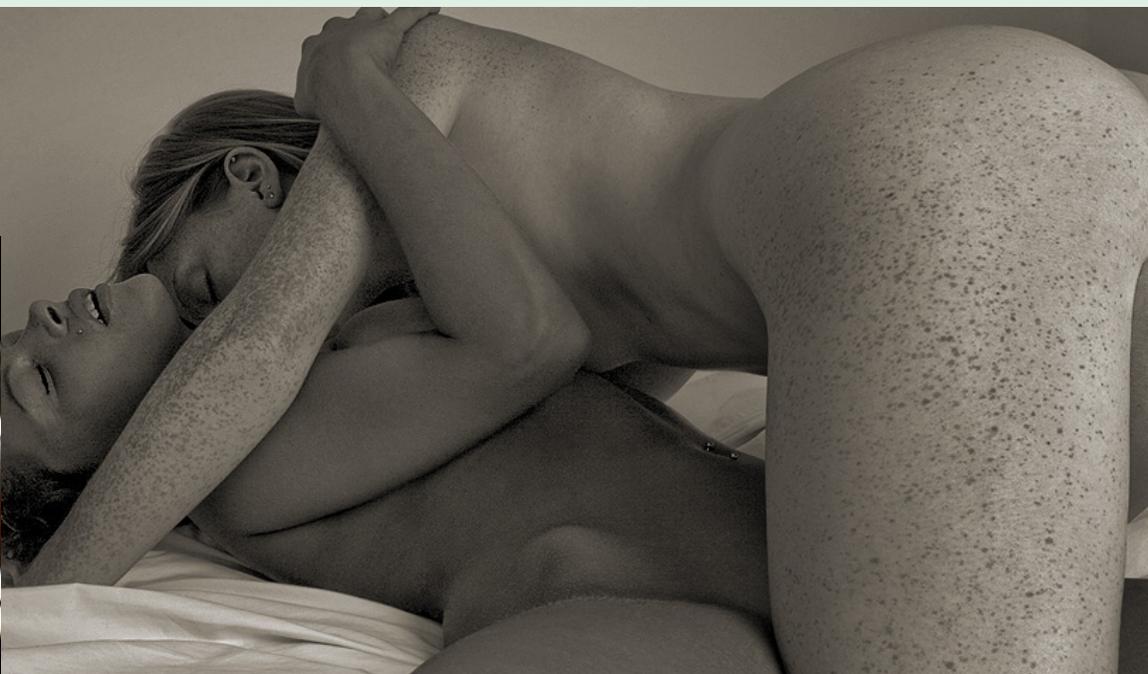
In music the passions enjoy themselves.

“Beyond Good and Evil” by Nietzsche, 1886



“What did you make me play?” demanded Crusher. “Make you?” Trelane seemed appalled, even offended, by the very suggestion. “My dear captain, I made you play nothing. Nothing, on my word of honor. I gave you the facility, yes. The dexterity, the knowledge. All of those, my gift to you to try and atone for my boorish behavior earlier. But the music that you produced ... that, Captain, came from within you.”

Q-Squared



**Excerpt about Rodin from
“Stranger In A Strange Land”
by Robert A. Heinlein**

“Enough statues to fill a graveyard!”

“Please, Ben. ‘Statues’ are dead politicians at boulevard intersections. What you see is ‘sculpture.’ And please speak in a low, reverent tone lest I become violent ... for here we have exact replicas of some of the greatest sculpture this naughty globe has produced.”

“Well, that hideous thing I’ve seen before ... but when did you acquire the rest of this ballast?”

Jubal ignored him and spoke quietly to the replica of La Belle Heaulmière. “Do not listen to him, ma petite chere — he is a barbarian and knows no better.” He put his hand to her beautiful raaged cheek, then gently touched one empty, shrunken dug. “I know just how you feel but it can’t be very much longer. Patience, my lovely.”

He turned back to Caxton and said briskly, “Ben, I don’t know what you have on your mind but it will have to wait while I give you a lesson in how to look at sculpture — though it’s probably as useless as trying to teach a dog to appreciate the violin. But you’ve just been rude to a lady and I don’t tolerate that.”

“Huh? Don’t be silly, Jubal; you’re rude to ladies — live ones — a dozen times a day. And you know which ones I mean.” Jubal shouted, “Anne! Upstairs! Wear your cloak!”

“You know I wouldn’t be rude to the old woman who posed for that. Never. What I can’t understand is a so-called artist having the gall to pose somebody’s great grandmother in her skin ... and you having the bad taste to want it around.” Anne came in, cloaked, said nothing. Jubal said to her, “Anne have I ever been rude to you? Or to any of the girls?”

“That calls for an opinion.”

“That’s what I’m asking for. Your opinion. You’re not in court —”

“You have never at any time been rude to any of us, Jubal.”

“Have you ever known me to be rude to a lady?”

“I have seen you be intentionally rude to a woman. I have never seen you be rude to a lady.”

“That’s all. No, one more opinion. What do you think of this bronze?”

Anne looked carefully at Rodin’s masterpiece, then said slowly, “When I first saw it, I thought it was horrible. But I have come to the conclusion that it may be the most beautiful thing I have ever seen.”

“Thanks. That’s all.” She left. “Do you want to argue it, Ben?”

“Huh? When I argue with Anne, that’s the day I turn in my suit.” Ben looked at it. “But I don’t get it.”

“All right, Ben. Attend me. Anybody can look at a pretty girl and see a pretty girl. An artist can look at a pretty girl and see the old woman she will become. A better artist can look at an old woman and see the pretty girl that she used to be. But a great artist — a master — and that is what Auguste Rodin was — can look at an old woman, portray her exactly as she is ... and force the viewer to see the pretty girl she used to be ... and more than that, he can make anyone with the sensitivity of an armadillo, or even you, see that this lovely young girl is still alive, not old and ugly at all, but simply prisoned inside her ruined body. He can make you feel the quiet, endless tragedy that there was never a girl born who ever grew older than eighteen in her heart ... no matter what the merciless hours have done to her. Look at her, Ben. Growing old doesn’t matter to you and me; we were never meant to be admired — but it does to them. Look at her!”

Ben looked at her. Presently Jubal said gruffly, “All right, blow your nose and

wipe your eyes — she accepts your apology. Come on and sit down. That's enough for one lesson."

"No," Caxton answered, "I want to know about these others. How about this one? It doesn't bother me as much ... I can see it's a young girl, right off. But why tie her up like a pretzel?"

Jubal looked at the replica "Caryatid Who has Fallen under the Weight of her Stone" and smiled. "Call it a tour de force in empathy, Ben. I won't expect you to appreciate the shapes and masses which make that figure much more than a 'pretzel' — but you can appreciate what Rodin was saying. Ben, what do people get out of looking at a crucifix?"

"You know how much I go to church."

"How little' you mean. Still, you must know that, as craftsmanship, paintings and sculpture of the Crucifixion are usually atrocious — and the painted, realistic ones often used in churches are the worst of all ... the blood looks like catsup and that ex-carpenter is usually portrayed as if he were a pansy ... which He certainly was not if there is any truth in the four Gospels at all. He was a hearty man, probably muscular and of rugged health. But despite the almost uniformly poor portrayal in representations of the Crucifixion, a poor one is about as effective as a good one for most people. They don't see the defects; what they see is a symbol which inspires their deepest emotions; it recalls to them the Agony and Sacrifice of God."

"Jubal, I thought you weren't a Christian?"

"What's that got to do with it? Does that make me blind and deaf to fundamental human emotion? I was saying that the crummiest painted plaster crucifix or the cheapest cardboard Christmas Crèche can be sufficient symbol to evoke emotions in the human heart so strong that many have died for them and many more live for them. So the

craftsmanship and artistic judgment with which such a symbol is wrought are largely irrelevant. Now here we have another emotional symbol — wrought with exquisite craftsmanship, but we won't go into that, yet. Ben, for almost three thousand years or longer, architects have designed buildings with columns shaped as female figures — it got to be such a habit that they did it as casually as a small boy steps on an ant. After all those centuries it took Rodin to see that this was work too heavy for a girl. But he didn't simply say, 'Look, you jerks, if you must design this way, make it a brawny male figure.' No, he showed it ... and generalized the symbol. Here is this poor little caryatid who has tried — and failed, fallen under the load. She's a good girl — look at her face. Serious, unhappy at her fafrure, but not blaming anyone else, not even the gods ... and still trying to shoulder her load, after she's crumpled under it.

"But she's more than good art denouncing some very bad art; she's a symbol for every woman who has ever tried to shoulder a load that was too heavy for her — over half the female population of this planet, living and dead, I would guess. But not alone women — this symbol is sexless. It means every man and every woman who ever lived who sweated out life in uncomplaining fortitude, whose courage wasn't even noticed until they crumpled under their loads. It's courage, Ben, and victory."

"Victory?"

"Victory in defeat, there is none higher. She didn't give up, Ben; she's still trying to lift that stone after it has crushed her. She's a father going down to a dull office job while cancer is painfully eating away his insides, so as to bring home one more pay check for the kids. She's a twelve-year old girl trying to mother her baby brothers and sisters because Mama had

to go to Heaven. She's a switchboard operator sticking to her job while smoke is choking her and the fire is cutting off her escape. She's all the unsung heroes who couldn't quite cut it but never quit. Come. Just salute as you pass her and come see my Little Mermaid."

Ben took him precisely at his word; if Jubal was surprised, he made no comment. "Now this one," he said, "is the only one Mike didn't give to me. But there is no need to tell Mike why I got it ... aside from the selfevident fact that it's one of the most delightful compositions ever conceived and proudly executed by the eye and hand of man."

"She's that, all right. This one I don't have to have explained — it's just plain pretty!"

"Yes. And that is excuse in itself, just as with kittens and butterflies. But there is more to it than that ... and she reminded me of Mike. She's not quite a mermaid — see? — and she's not quite human. She sits on land, where she has chosen to stay ... and she stares eternally out to sea, homesick and forever lonely for what she left behind. You know the story?"

"Hans Christian Andersen."

"Yes. She sits by the harbor of KØbenhavn — Copenhagen was his home town — and she's everybody who ever made a difficult choice. She doesn't regret her choice, but she must pay for it; every choice must be paid for. The cost to her is not only endless homesickness. She can never be quite human; when she uses her dearly bought feet, every step is on sharp knives. Ben, I think that Mike must always walk on knives — but there is no need to tell him I said so. I don't think he knows this story or, at least, I don't think he knows that I connect him with it."

"I won't tell him." Ben looked at the replica. "I'd rather just look at her and not think about the knives."

"She's a little darling, isn't she? How would you like to coax her into bed? She would probably be lively, like a seal, and about as slippery."

"Cripes! You're an evil old man, Jubal."

"And getting eviler and eviler by the year. Uh ... we won't look at any others; three pieces of sculpture in an hour is more than enough — usually I don't let myself look at more than one in a day."

"Suits. I feel as if I had had three quick drinks on an empty stomach. Jubal, why isn't there stuff like this around where a person can see it?"

"Because the world has gone nutty and contemporary art always paints the spirit of its times. Rodin did his major work in the tail end of the nineteenth century and Hans Christian Andersen antedated him by only a few years. Rodin died early in the twentieth century, about the time the world started flipping its lid ... and art along with it. Rodin's successors noted the amazing things he had done with light and shadow and mass and composition — whether you see it or not — and they copied that much. Oh, how they copied it! And extended it. What they failed to see was that every major work of the master told a story and laid bare the human heart. Instead, they got involved with 'design' and became contemptuous of any painting or sculpture that told a story — sneering, they dubbed such work 'literary' — a dirty word. They went all out for abstractions, not deigning to paint or carve anything that resembled the human world."

Jubal shrugged. "Abstract design is all right — for wall paper or linoleum. But art is the process of evoking pity and terror, which is not abstract at all but very human. What the self-styled modern artists are doing is a sort of unemotional pseudo-intellectual masturbation ... whereas creative art is more like intercourse, in which the artist

must seduce — render emotional — his audience, each time. These laddies who won't deign to do that — and perhaps can't — of course lost the public. If they hadn't lobbied for endless subsidies, they would have starved or been forced to go to work long ago. Because the ordinary bloke will not voluntarily pay for 'art' that leaves him unmoved — if he does pay for it, the money has to be conned out of him, by taxes or such."

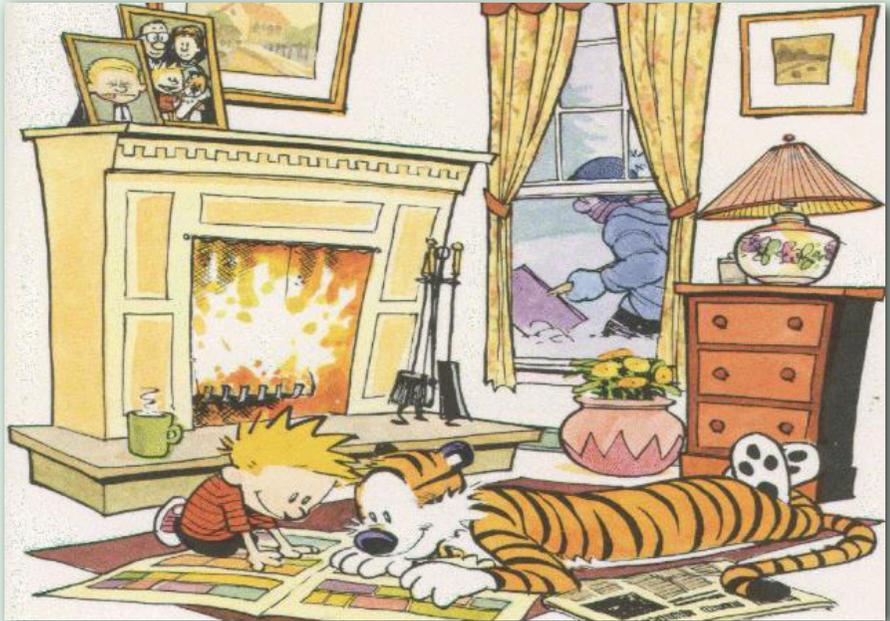
"You know, Jubal, I've always wondered why I didn't give a hoot for paintings or statues — but I thought it was something missing in me, like color blindness."

"Mmm, one does have to learn to look at art, just as you must know French to read a story printed in French. But in general it's up to the artist to use language that can be understood, not hide it in some private code like Pepys and his diary. Most of these jokers don't even want to use language you and I know or can learn ... they would rather sneer at us and be smug, because we 'fail' to see what they are driving at. If indeed they are driving at anything — obscurity is usually the refuge of incompetence.

Ben, would you call me an artist?"

"Huh? Well, I've never thought about it. You write a pretty good stick."

"Thank you. 'Artist' is a word I avoid for the same reasons I hate to be called 'Doctor.' But I am an artist, albeit a minor one. Admittedly most of my stuff is fit to read only once ... and not even once for a busy person who already knows the little I have to say. But I am an honest artist, because what I write is consciously intended to reach the customer — reach him and affect him, if possible with pity and terror ... or, if not, at least to divert the tedium of his hours with a chuckle or an odd idea. But I am never trying to hide it from him in a private language, nor am I seeking the praise of other writers for 'technique' or other balderdash. I want the praise of the cash customer, given in cash because I've reached him — or I don't want anything. Support for the arts — merde! A government-supported artist is an incompetent whore! Damn it, you punched one of my buttons. Let me fill your glass, and you tell me what is on your mind."





Dream

Never lose the child-like wonder. It's what drives us.

Randy Pausch

Dreaming is an act of pure imagination, attesting in all men a creative power, which if it were available in waking, would make every man a Dante or Shakespeare.

H. F. Hedge

<Why should we want to [dream]? As you say, it's meaningless. Random firings of the synapses of the neurons in their brains.>

<They're practicing. They're doing it all the time. Coming up with stories. Making connections. Making sense out of nonsense.>

Xenocide

Everybody has a secret world inside of them. I mean everybody. All of the people in the whole world — no matter how dull and boring they are on the outside. Inside them they've all got unimaginable, magnificent, wonderful, stupid, amazing worlds... Not just one world. Hundreds of them. Thousands, maybe.

"Sandman" by Neil Gaiman

The children learned these new games but unlearned something in the process: they forgot to be happy, how to take pleasure in little things, and, last but not least, how to dream.

"Momo"



Careful with wishes

“But he did not understand the price. Mortals never do. They only see the prize. Their heart’s desire, their dream But the price of getting what you want is getting what you once wanted.”

The Sandman by Neil Gaiman

If a man could have just half of his wishes, he would double his troubles.

Benjamin Franklin

“So you’ve not lit the last four boilers then?”

“No, but we’re making excellent time.”

“Captain, the press knows the size of Titanic, let them marvel at her speed, too. We must give them something new to print. And the maiden voyage of Titanic must make headlines!”

Ismay and Smith in “Titanic”

“You want me to share a lifetime of knowledge with you in a single afternoon? Or even a single year? I will tell you this. Be wary of dreams, Perrin Aybara. Be very wary of dreams.”

Moiraine in “The Wheel of Time”

by Robert Jordan

“If the Seidh are truly a race without hatred, or anger, why do they allow the Morrighu to walk among us, bringing such evil?”

“An interesting question, Connavar, In response, let me say this: You wanted glory, the Morrighu gave it to you. Vorna wanted to be loved and accepted. Now she is. In what way does that make the actions of the Morrighu evil? All our actions, Seidh and human, result in consequences – consequences we do not always welcome. The Morrighu offers gifts. If a man – or woman – chooses to accept one then surely they must also accept the possible consequences? You asked for glory. What if you had asked for true love, or the healing of Rhiamfada, or peace and harmony for your people? Think on that, Connavar. Those who seek the gifts of the Morrighu always ask something for themselves – personal gain, fame, skill with a sword, beautiful women to grace their beds, or handsome men to woo and love them. Always selfish. Beware judging what you do not understand.”

“Sword in the Storm” by David Gemmell





Have a retreat in yourself

“She'll never be beaten,” said Magrat. “You wait till you see her when she's in a tight corner. She's got that way of ... putting part of herself somewhere safe. It's as if ... as if she gives herself to someone else to keep hidden for a while. It's all part of that Borrowing stuff she does.”

“Carpe Jugulum” by Terry Pratchett

The primary purpose of a liberal education is to make one's mind a pleasant place in which to spend one's leisure.

Sydney J. Harris

“Only at night ... alone ... would I open that small door in my mind where I kept the memory of you and listen to your voice, listen to you sing me to sleep. I hope I can come back again ... but I don't know. Until then ... Kosh ... I want to see you again ... just one more time before I go.”

Lyta Alexander in Babylon 5: “Divided Loyalties”

Clarice Starling's memory palace is building as well. It shares some rooms with Dr Lecter's own memory palace – he has discovered her in there several times but her own palace grows on its own. It is full of new things. She can visit her father there. Hannah is at pasture there. Jack Crawford is there, when she chooses to see him bent over his desk.

Hannibal





YOUR PRIVATE
PLACE IT'S
ALWAYS THERE,
WAITING FOR
YOU.

IN YOUR
MIND.

IT'S WHERE YOU
WENT WHEN YOU
WERE A KID AND
THINGS GOT BAD.

IT'S ALWAYS
THERE FOR
YOU.

IT SAVED YOUR
LIFE WHEN THE
MISSION WENT
ALL WRONG

GO. IT'S **EASY**.
YOU CAN **ALWAYS**
DO IT.

IT'S
EASY.



SEPTEMBER
BREEZE.

GENTLE NEW
ENGLAND **SUN**.

DRY **LEAVES**
DANCING,
CRACKLING
LIKE **FIRE**.

HEAVENLY
CALM.



YOU'RE
CLEAR.

"I couldn't have dealt with this completely on my own, and I've had lots of support from friends and family, but I also needed help. I've gotten some, and it's, you know, been good."

Zoey, about her therapy after being kidnapped, in "The West Wing"

Merciful Father,
I have squandered my days
with plans of many things.
This was not among them.

But at this moment,

I beg only to live the next few minutes well.

For all we ought to have thought,
and have not thought;
all we ought to have said,
and have not said;
all we ought to have done,
and have not done;

I pray thee God for forgiveness.

Ahmed Ibn Fahdhan in "The 13th Warrior"

God be between you and harm
in all the empty places
where you must walk.

Sheridan in Babylon 5: "A Distant Star"

Calling Sister Midnight.

I'm an Idiot for you.

*Ishtar, at the beginning of her last dance,
in "Sandman" by Neil Gaiman*

Ich entbinde dich davon weh zu tun.

Dir selbst weh zu tun,

anderen weh zu tun.

The Craft

The gift of time. The gift of life.
The gift of wisdom. The gift of light.
For these things we are thankful.
For these things we pray.
G'Kar in Babylon 5: "By Any Means Necessary"

Joan Eunice slipped off her negligee, melted down onto the rug into meditation pose, soles upward on her thighs, palms upward in her lap. "It goes like this. Om Mani Padme Hum." (Om Math Padme Hum. I should have taught Jake this long ago.)

"I know the phrase. 'The Jewel in the Lotus.' But what does it mean to you, Joan Eunice?"

Winifred had followed Joan's example as quickly as she set it, was bare and in Lotus-and not blushing. She answered, "It means everything and nothing, Mr. Salomon. It is all the good things you know of-bravery and beauty and gentleness and not wanting what you can't have and being happy with what you do have and trees swaying in the wind and fat little babies gurgling when you tickle their feet and anything that makes life good. Love. It always means love. But you don't think about it, you don't think at all, you don't even try not to think. You chant the prayer and just be-until you find yourself floating, all warm and good and relaxed."

"I Will Fear No Evil" by Robert A. Heinlein

Keep your health

Train your body — early on.

"I always loved running ... it was something you could do by yourself, and under your own power. You could go in any direction, fast or slow as you wanted, fighting the wind if you felt like it, seeking out new sights just on the strength of your feet and the courage of your lungs."

Jesse Owens

"Now go back to sleep, Wang-mu. And you, Master Han— your fatigue is showing very clearly. You're useless to us if you lose your health. As Andrew has told me, over and over— we must do all we can do without destroying our ability to keep doing it."

Xenocide

No one in the everything room. I decided not to head for the kitchen end yet; if the others slept a bit longer I could get in my morning tone-up. No violent exercise this morning, mustn't get more whiff than I am—just controlled limbering. Stretch high, then palms to the floor without bending knees—ten is enough. Vertical splits, both legs, then the same to the floor with my forehead to my shin, first right, then left. [...] Hilda joined my morning toning up, and the men joined us the first time they caught us at it.

The Number of the Beast by Robert A. Heinlein



Improve Yourself

The only person you should ever compete with is yourself.
You can't hope for a fairer match.
Todd Ruthman

Know your limits ...
but never stop trying to exceed them.

There is nothing noble about being superior to some other person. The true nobility is in being superior to your previous self.

Hindustani Proverb

“The hardest lesson for an acolyte to learn is that she must always go the limit. Your abilities will take you farther than you imagine. Don't imagine, then. Extend yourself.”

Odrade's in Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

Striving for excellence motivates you;
striving for perfection is demoralizing.
Harriet Braiker

“I aspire sir, to be better than I am.
B4 does not. Nor does Shinzon.”
Data in "Star Trek X"

Be what you are. This is the first
step toward becoming better than
you are.

Julius Charles Hare

The most damaging phrase in the language
is: “It's always been done that way.”

Grace Hopper

Is Everybody Always Trying To Improve Themselves As I Am?

“We must strive to be more than what we are ... It does not matter that we will never reach our ultimate goal. The effort yields its own rewards.”

Data in Star Trek TNG: "The Offspring"



Spend your time in places that nourish you grow

Where you spend time becomes part of you —
be careful where you spend your time.

A man's homeland is wherever he prospers.
Aristophanes

A loving atmosphere in your home is so important. Do all you can to create a tranquil harmonious home.

A person can grow only as much as his horizon allows.
John Powell

It is a mistake to imagine that potentially great men are rare. It is the conditions that permit the promise of greatness to be fulfilled that are rare. What is so difficult to achieve is the cultural background that permits potential greatness to be converted into actual greatness.

Fred Hoyle, Of Man and Galaxies



Concentration & Focus

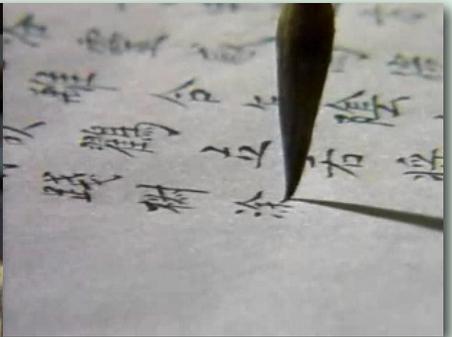
Put your heart, mind, intellect and soul even to your smallest acts.

This is the secret of success.

Swami Sivananda

He stood up and took his sword off the rack. It was long and curved and had been made by the finest sword-maker in the Empire, who was Lord Hong. He'd heard it took twenty years to learn the art, so he had stretched himself a little. It had taken him three weeks. People never concentrated, that was their trouble ...

“Interesting Times” by Terry Pratchett



Learn

“If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.”
Derek Bok, Ex-president of Harvard

He who has imagination without learning
has wings but no feet.

I remembered a time when my grandmother had asked me to explain television to her — the guts, not the funny pictures. There are things which cannot be taught in ten easy lessons, nor popularized for the masses; they take years of skull sweat. This be treason in an age when ignorance has come into its own and one man’s opinion is as good as another’s. But there it is. As Star says, the world is what it is — and doesn’t forgive ignorance.

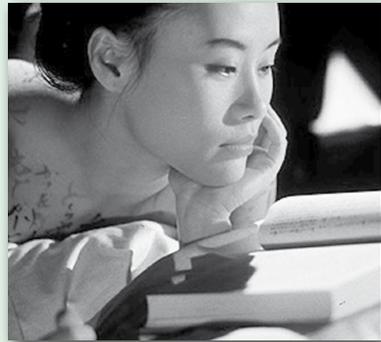
“Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein

Fundamentals. Fundamentals. Fundamentals. You gotta have the fundamentals down, because otherwise the fancy stuff isn't gonna work.

Randy Pausch

“Teaching and imparting of knowledge make sense in an unchanging environment ... But if there is one truth about modern man it is that he lives in an environment that is continually changing. The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn ... how to adapt and change ... who has learned that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security.”

Carl Rogers



Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.

Chinese Proverb

“Mallory, education is the silver bullet. Education is everything. We don’t need little changes. We need gigantic monumental changes. Schools should be palaces. The competition for the best teachers should be fierce. They should be making six-figure salaries. School should be incredibly expensive for government and absolutely free of charge to its citizens, just like national defense. That’s my position. I just haven’t figured out how to do it yet.”

Sam in “The West Wing”



Only the curious will learn and only the resolute overcome the obstacles to learning.
The quest quotient has always excited me more than the intelligence quotient.

Eugene S. Wilson

You can learn new things at any time in your life if you're willing to be a beginner.
If you actually learn to like being a beginner, the whole world opens up for you.

Sher

Self-education is, I firmly believe,
the only kind of education there is.

Isaac Asimov

Apply yourself to the basics
and progress will follow.

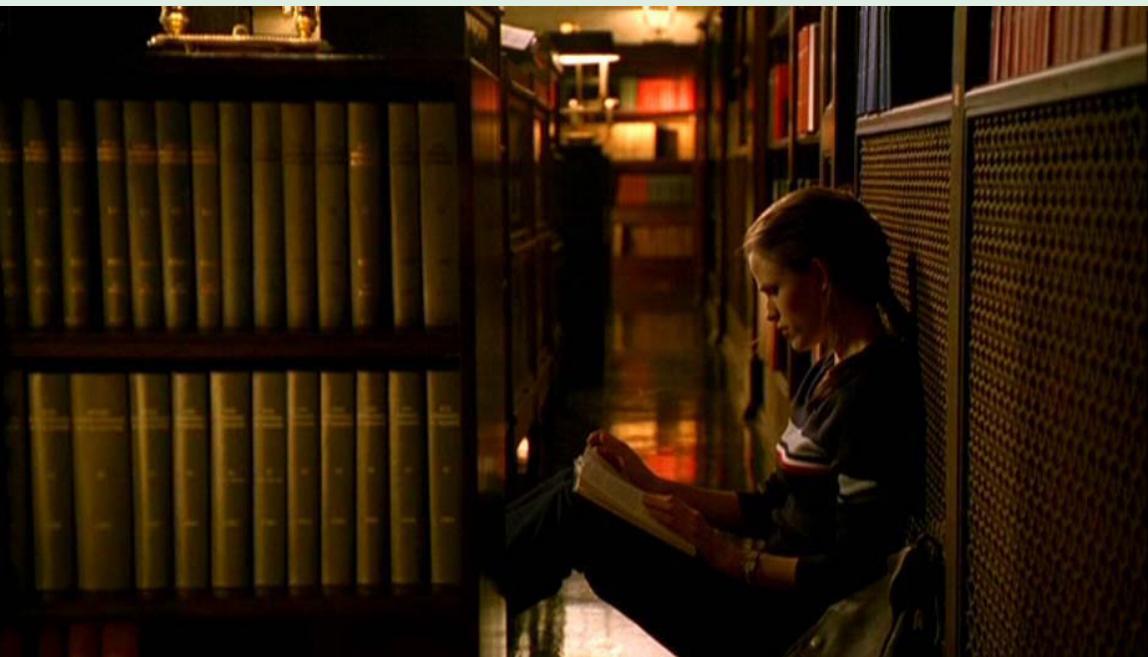
Assiduus usus uni rei deditus et ingenium et artem saepe vincit.

(Constant practice devoted to one subject often outdoes both intelligence and skill.)

Cicero

Many have marked the speed with which Muad'Dib learned the necessities of Arrakis. The Bene Gesserit, of course, know the basis of this speed. For the others, we can say that Muad'Dib learned rapidly because his first training was in how to learn. And the first lesson of all was the basic trust that he could learn. It is shocking to find how many people do not believe they can learn, and how many more believe learning to be difficult. Muad'Dib knew that every experience carries its lesson.

From "The Humanity of Muad'Dib" by the Princess Irulan in "Dune" by Frank Herbert



“It takes long practice, yes. You have to work. Did you think you could snap your fingers, and have it as a gift? What is worth having is worth working for.

“His Dark Materials” by Philip Pullman

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

Michelangelo

An amateur practices until he gets it right.
A professional practices until he never gets it wrong.

Taskmaster said: “Strengthen your talents. Do not flow gently in the current. Swim!
Use it or lose it.”

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but
those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Alvin Toffler

Get over the idea that only children should spend
their time in study. Be a student so long as you
still have something to learn, and this will mean
all your life.

Henry L. Doherty

“I don't know. You've been studying ... really a lot.”

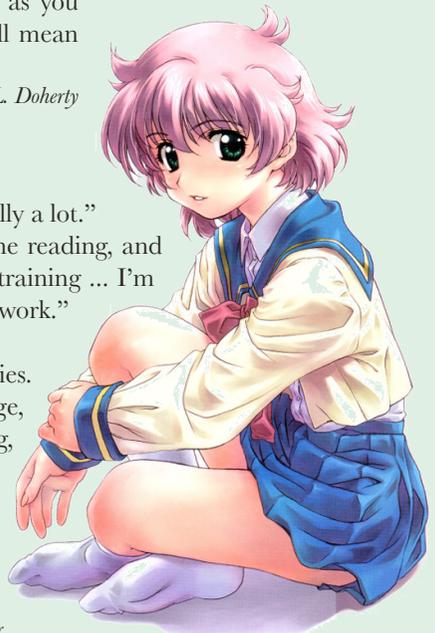
“I'm trying. But they're really piling on the reading, and
Giles fills any free time I have with extra training ... I'm
starting to think this working hard is hard work.”

“Isn't it crazy like that?”

“I thought it was gonna be like in the movies.

You know, inspirational music ... a montage,
me sharpening my pencils, me reading,
writing, falling asleep on a big pile of
books with my glasses all crooked, 'cause
in my montage I have glasses. But real
life is slow, and it's starting to hurt my
occipital lobe.”

Willow and Buffy in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer



There is only one Education, and it has only one goal: the freedom of the mind. Anything that needs an adjective, be it civics education, or socialist education, or Christian education, or whatever-you-like education, is not education, and it has some different goal. The very existence of modified “educations” is testimony to the fact that their proponents cannot bring about what they want in a mind that is free. An “education” that cannot do its work in a free mind, and so must “teach” by homily and precept in the service of these feelings and attitudes and beliefs rather than those, is pure and unmistakable tyranny.

Richard Mitchell, The Underground Grammarian, September 1982

I think everyone should go to college and get a degree and then spend six months as a bartender and six months as a cabdriver. Then they would really be educated.

Al McGuire

The supreme end of education is expert discernment in all things – the power to tell the good from the bad, the genuine from the counterfeit, and to prefer the good and the genuine to the bad and the counterfeit.

Samuel Johnson

To most outsiders, modern mathematics is unknown territory. Its borders are protected by dense thickets of technical terms; its landscapes are a mass of indecipherable equations and incomprehensible concepts. Few realize that the world of modern mathematics is rich with vivid images and provocative ideas.

Ivars Peterson

Anyone who cannot cope with mathematics is not fully human. At best he is a tolerable subhuman who has learned to wear shoes, bathe, and not make messes in the house.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

I was still reading about the evolution of stars when Professor Perry suggested that we go to lunch. We did but I made some notes first about types of mathematics I wanted to study. Astrophysics is fascinating – but you have to talk the language.

“Friday” by Robert A. Heinlein

languages shape the way we think, or don't.

Erik Naggum, comp.lang.lisp

A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, conn a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, die gallantly. Specialization is for insects.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Spend a day in a large library ...
just browsing through the titles ...
wandering by the books and open some
at random.
Just dip into this sea of knowledge and
see what you may find.

The best of my education has come
from the public library ... my tuition
fee is a bus fare and once in a while,
five cents a day for an overdue book.
You don't need to know very much to
start with, if you know the way to the
public library.

Lesley Conger

“It’s not just the things she says. It’s the exercises, too: the way she sits and stares at a rock,
moving only one muscle beside her nose, or a muscle on the back of a finger, or —”

About Alia, a young child born with the memories of her whole genetic line, in “Dune” by Frank Herbert

A smooth sea never made
a skillful mariner.
English proverb

Never let school interfere
with your education.
Mark Twain

What usually happens in the
educational process is that the faculties
are dulled, overloaded, stuffed and
paralyzed so that by the time most
people are mature they have lost their
innate capabilities.



“Educational bureaucracies dull a child’s questing sensitivity.” Odrade explaining,
“The young must be damped down. Never let them know how good they can be.
That brings change. Spend lots of committee time talking about how to deal with
exceptional students. Don’t spend any time dealing with how the conventional
teacher feels threatened by emerging talents and squelches them because of a deep-
seated desire to feel superior and safe in a safe environment.”

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

“Have Space Suit will Travel”

by Robert A. Heinlein

You see stories about boys, poor-but-honest, who go to the top because they're smarter than anyone in the county, maybe the state. But they're not talking about me. I was in the top quarter of my graduating class but they do not give scholarships to M.I.T. for that-not from Centerville High. I am stating a fact; our high school isn't very good. It's great to go to – we're league champions in basketball and our square-dance team is state runner-up and we have a swell sock hop every Wednesday. Lots of school spirit.

But not much studying.

The emphasis is on what our principal, Mr. Hanley, calls “preparation for life” rather than on trigonometry. Maybe it does prepare you for life; it certainly doesn't prepare you for CalTech.

I didn't find this out myself. Sophomore year I brought home a questionnaire cooked up by our group project in “Family Living” in social studies. One question read: “How is your family council organized?”

At dinner I said, “Dad, how is our family council organized?”

Mother said, “Don't disturb your father, dear.”

Dad said, “Eh? Let me see that.”

He read it, then told me to fetch my textbooks. I had not brought them home, so he sent me to school to get them. Fortunately the building was open-rehearsals for the Fall Blow-Out. Dad rarely gave orders but when he did he expected results.

I had a swell course that semester – social study, commercial arithmetic, applied English (the class had picked “slogan writing” which was fun), handicrafts (we were building sets for the Blow-Out), and gym – which was basketball practice for me; I wasn't tall enough for

first team but a reliable substitute gets his varsity letter his senior year. All in all, I was doing well in school and knew it.

Dad read all my textbooks that night; he is a fast reader. In social study I reported that our family was an informal democracy; it got by – the class was arguing whether the chairmanship of a council should rotate or be elective, and whether a grandparent living in the home was eligible. We decided that a grandparent was a member but should not be chairman, then we formed committees to draw up a constitution for an ideal family organization, which we would present to our families as the project's findings.

Dad was around school a good bit the next few days, which worried me – when parents get overactive they are always up to something.

The following Saturday evening Dad called me into his study. He had a stack of textbooks on his desk and a chart of Centerville High School's curriculum, from American Folk Dancing to Life Sciences. Marked on it was my course, not only for that semester but for junior and senior years the way my faculty advisor and I had planned it.

Dad stared at me like a gentle grasshopper and said mildly, “Kip, do you intend to go to college?”

“Huh? Why, certainly, Dad!”

“With what?”

I hesitated. I knew it cost money. While there had been times when dollar bills spilled out of the basket onto the floor, usually it wouldn't take long to count what was in it. “Uh, maybe I'll get a scholarship. Or I could work my way.”

He nodded. “No doubt ... if you want to. Money problems can always be solved by a man not frightened by them. But when I said, ‘With what?’ I was talking about up here.” He tapped his skull.

I simply stared. “Why, I'll graduate from high school, Dad. That'll get me into

college.”

“So it will. Into our State University, or the State Aggie, or State Normal. But, Kip, do you know that they are flunking out 40 per cent of each freshman class?”

“I wouldn’t flunk!”

“Perhaps not. But you will if you tackle any serious subject – engineering, or science, or pre-med. You would, that is to say, if your preparation were based on this.” He waved a hand at the curriculum.

I felt shocked. “Why, Dad, Center is a swell school.” I remembered things they had told us in P.T.A. Auxiliary. “It’s run along the latest, most scientific lines, approved by psychologists, and –”

“- and paying excellent salaries,” he interrupted, “for a staff highly trained in modern pedagogy. Study projects emphasize practical human problems to orient the child in democratic social living, to fit him for the vital, meaningful tests of adult life in our complex modern culture. Excuse me, son; I’ve talked with Mr. Hanley. Mr. Hanley is sincere – and to achieve these noble purposes we are spending more per student than is any other state save California and New York.”

“Well ... what’s wrong with that?”

“What’s a dangling participle?”

I didn’t answer. He went on, “Why did Van Buren fail of re-election? How do you extract the cube root of eighty-seven?”

Van Buren had been a president; that was all I remembered. But I could answer the other one. “If you want a cube root, you look in a table in the back of the book.”

Dad sighed. “Kip, do you think that table was brought down from on high by an archangel?” He shook his head sadly. “It’s my fault, not yours. I should have looked into this years ago-but I had assumed, simply because you liked to read and were quick at figures and

clever with your hands, that you were getting an education.”

“You think I’m not?”

“I know you are not. Son, Centerville High is a delightful place, well equipped, smoothly administered, beautifully kept. Not a ‘blackboard jungle,’ oh, no! – I think you kids love the place. You should. But this –” Dad slapped the curriculum chart angrily. “Twaddle! Beetle tracking! Occupational therapy for morons!”

I didn’t know what to say. Dad sat and brooded. At last he said, “The law declares that you must attend school until you are eighteen or have graduated from high school.”

“Yes, sir.”

“The school you are in is a waste of time. The toughest course we can pick won’t stretch your mind. But it’s either this school, or send you away.”

I said, “Doesn’t that cost a lot of money?”

He ignored my question. “I don’t favor boarding schools, a teenager belongs with his family. Oh, a tough prep school back east can drill you so that you can enter Stanford, or Yale, or any of the best – but you can pick up false standards, too – nutty ideas about money and social position and the right tailor. It took me years to get rid of ones I acquired that way. Your mother and I did not pick a small town for your boyhood unpurposefully. So you’ll stay in Centerville High.”

I looked relieved.

“Nevertheless you intend to go to college. Do you intend to become a professional man? Or will you look for snap courses in more elaborate ways to make bayberry candles? Son, your life is yours, to do with as you wish. But if you have any thought of going to a good university and studying anything of importance, then we must consider how to make best use of your next three years.”

“Why, gosh, Dad, of course I want to go to a good -”

“See me when you’ve thought it over. Good night.”

I did for a week. And, you know, I began to see that Dad was right. Our project in “Family Living” was twaddle. What did those kids know about running a family? Or Miss Finchley? – unmarried and no kids. The class decided unanimously that every child should have a room of his own, and be given an allowance “to teach him to handle money.” Great stuff ... but how about the Quinlan family, nine kids in a five-room house? Let’s not be foolish.

Commercial arithmetic wasn’t silly but it was a waste of time. I read the book through the first week; after that I was bored.

Dad switched me to algebra, Spanish, general science, English grammar and composition; the only thing unchanged was gym. I didn’t have it too tough catching up; even those courses were watered down. Nevertheless, I started to learn, for Dad threw a lot of books at me and said, “Clifford, you would be studying these if you were not in overgrown kindergarten. If you soak up what is in them, you should be able to pass College Entrance Board Examinations. Possibly.”

After that he left me alone; he meant it when he said that it was my choice. I almost bogged down – those books were hard, not the predigested pap I got in school. Anybody who thinks that studying Latin by himself is a snap should try it.

I got discouraged and nearly quit – then I got mad and leaned into it. After a while I found that Latin was making Spanish easier and vice versa. When Miss Hernandez, my Spanish teacher, found out I was studying Latin, she began tutoring me. I not only worked my way through Virgil, I learned to

speaking Spanish like a Mexicano.

Algebra and plane geometry were all the math our school offered; I went ahead on my own with advanced algebra and solid geometry and trigonometry and might have stopped so far as College Boards were concerned – but math is worse than peanuts. Analytical geometry seems pure Greek until you see what they’re driving at – then, if you know algebra, it bursts on you and you race through the rest of the book. Glorious!

I had to sample calculus and when I got interested in electronics I needed vector analysis. General science was the only science course the school had and pretty general it was, too – about Sunday supplement level. But when you read about chemistry and physics you want to do it, too. The barn was mine and I had a chem lab and a darkroom and an electronics bench and, for a while, a ham station. Mother was perturbed when I blew out the windows and set fire to the barn – just a small fire – but Dad was not. He simply suggested that I not manufacture explosives in a frame building.

When I took the College Boards my senior year I passed them.

I wanted to talk to Dad about it. Dad reads everything from *The Anatomy of Melancholy* to *Acta Mathematica* and *Paris-Match* and will sit on a curbstone separating damp newspapers wrapped around garbage in order to see continued-on-page-eight. Dad would haul down a book and we’d look it up. Then he would try four or five more with other opinions. Dad doesn’t hold with the idea that it-must-be-true-or-they-wouldn’t-have-printed-it; he doesn’t consider any opinion sacred – it shocked me the first time he took out a pen and changed something in one of my math books.

I was working after school that semester at Charton's Pharmacy-soda jerk, but also learning about pharmacy. Mr. Charton was too conscientious to let me touch anything but packaged items, but I learned-materia medica and nomenclature and what various antibiotics were for and why you had to be careful. That led into organic chemistry and biochemistry and he lent me Walker, Boyd and Asimov – biochemistry makes atomic physics look simple, but presently it begins to make

sense.

I missed my slipstick. Dad says that anyone who can't use a slide rule is a cultural illiterate and should not be allowed to vote. Mine is a beauty – a K&E 20" Log-log Duplex Decitrig. Dad surprised me with it after I mastered a ten-inch polyphase. We ate potato soup that week – but Dad says you should always budget luxuries first. I knew where it was. Home on my desk.

I've been making a list of the things
they don't teach you at school

They don't teach you how to love
someone.

They don't teach you how to be
famous.

They don't teach you how to be rich, or
how to be poor.

They don't teach you how to walk
away from someone you don't
love any longer.

They don't teach you how to know
what's going on in someone
else's mind.

They don't teach you what to say to
someone who's dying.

They don't teach you anything worth
knowing.

Teach

The best way to become acquainted with a subject is to write a book about it.

Benjamin Disraeli

The mediocre teacher tells.
The good teacher explains.
The superior teacher demonstrates.
The great teacher inspires.

William Arthur Ward

Hermione was checking Harry and Ron's Charms homework for them. She would never let them copy ("How will you learn?"), but by asking her to read it through, they got the right answers anyway.

Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone

Teachers who inspire realize there will always be rocks in the road ahead of us. They will be stumbling blocks or stepping stones; it all depends on how we use them.

"Boys, that was pretty good, but I know you can do better."

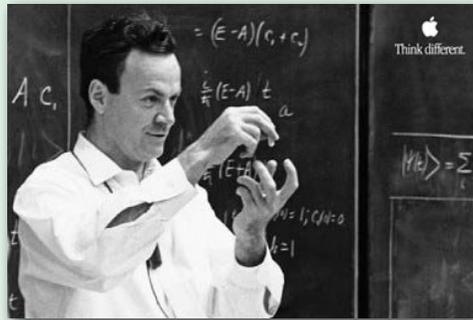
Randy Pausch, when his students handed in a 2-weeks assignment that blew him away and would have gotten them all A's if the course was for a whole semester; comment by his mentor: 'You obviously don't know where the bar should be. You are only doing them a disservice if you're putting it anywhere.'

The best gift an educator can give is to get someone to become self reflective.

Randy Pausch

The lecturer should give the audience full reason to believe that all his powers have been exerted for their pleasure and instruction.

Michael Faraday



The best way to teach somebody something is to have them think they're learning something else.

Randy Pausch



Behind that facade of wisdom, the Bene Gesserit were unconventional.

They often did not think about teaching; they just did it.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.

Vince Lombardi

Talent plus patience
will allow you to master your craft —
and mastery is what gets you your dream.

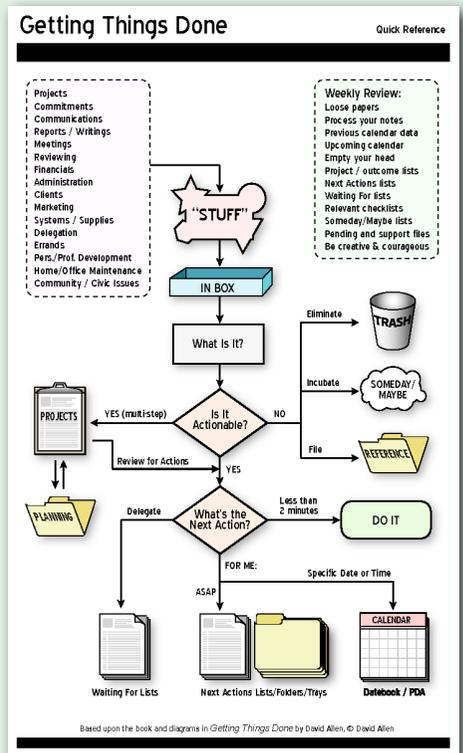
Sher

Jack Kirwan wrote in the National Review that the novel is “about two men and two women in a time machine safari through this and other universes. But describing The Number of the Beast thus is like saying Moby Dick is about a one-legged guy trying to catch a fish.” He goes on to say the Heinlein celebrates the “competent person”.

Wikipedia

Miss Tick sniffed. "You could say this advice is priceless," she said.
"Are you listening?"
"Yes," said Tiffany.
"Good. Now ... if you trust in yourself..."
"Yes?"
"... and believe in your dreams ..."
"Yes?"
"...and follow your star ..." Miss Tick went on.
"Yes?"
"... you'll still get beaten by people who spent their time working hard and learning things and weren't so lazy."

From a Discworld Novel by Terry Pratchett



Be Professional

“Do you know how the ancient Greeks defined happiness? ‘Happiness’, they said, ‘was the exercise of vital powers along lines of excellence in a life affording them scope.’”

William Edgars in Babylon 5: “The Exercise of Vital Powers”

If it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures, like Shakespeare wrote poetry, like Beethoven composed music; sweep streets so well that all the host of Heaven and Earth will have to pause and say, "Here lived a great sweeper, who swept his job well.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Facing The Challenge Of A New Age

Ability is what you're capable of doing.
Motivation determines what you do.
Attitude determines how well you do it.

"You killed more people than anybody in history."

"Be the best at whatever you do, that's what my mother always told me."

Speaker for the Dead

'Ill-preparedness,' he said. 'Carelessness. Lack of concentration. Poor maintenance of tools. Oh, and over-confidence, sir.'

Reasons why Assassins fail at their job, in “Pyramids” by Terry Pratchett

The difference between
mediocrity and excellence is
attention to detail.
Sebastian J. Barbarito

Details make perfection,
and perfection is no detail.
Leonardo da Vinci

Go the extra mile. It's never crowded.

Give people more than they
expect and do it cheerfully.

The difference between ordinary and
extraordinary is that little extra.
Jimmy Johnson

Perfection is achieved, not when there
is nothing more to add, but when there
is nothing left to take away.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Have no fear of perfection –
you'll never reach it.
Salvador Dali

“I am careful not to confuse excellence
with perfection. Excellence I can reach
for; perfection is God's business.”

Michael J. Fox



A whore should be judged by the same criteria as other professionals offering services for pay – such as dentists, lawyers, hairdressers, physicians, plumbers, etc. Is she professionally competent? Does she give good measure? Is she honest with her clients?

It is possible that the percentage of honest and competent whores is higher than that of plumbers and much higher than that of lawyers. And enormously higher than that of professors.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

Conversation would be vastly improved
by the constant use of four simple words:

‘I do not know.’

Andre Maurois

Everybody is ignorant,
only on different subjects.

Will Rogers

McClary was an expert in writing long, complex programs in C. His method was to take a few days to absorb the design, plot out his approach carefully, and then implement his plan in a long stretch of sustained concentration. According to his colleagues, McClary took about three times as long as most programmers to come up with a first version – but his first try usually worked.

[Dr. Bashir has tried in vain to find a medicine for a plague (the Blight) that an aggressive alien empire (the Dominion) spread on a planet]

Bashir: “There’s no cure for the Blight. The Dominion made sure of that. And I was so arrogant I thought I could cure it in a week.”

Jadzia Dax: “Maybe that was arrogant. But it’s even more arrogant to say that there is no cure, just because you couldn’t find it.”

Star Trek DS9

“Punctuality,” said Monte Cristo, “is the politeness of kings, according to one of your sovereigns, I think; but it is not the same with travellers. However, I hope you will excuse the two or three seconds I am behindhand; five hundred leagues are not to be accomplished without some trouble, and especially in France, where, it seems, it is forbidden to beat the postilions.”

“The Count of Monte Cristo” by Alexandre Dumas

“Who’s next?”

*Veronica Franco, after her first client,
in “Dangerous Beauty”*



Be creative

You know what Michelangelo used to say? That the sculptures he made were already there before he started, hidden in the marble. All he need to do was remove the unneeded bits. It wasn't quite that easy with you, Data. But the need to do it, my need to do it, was no different than Michelangelo's need.

Star Trek TNG: "Brothers"

"That painting says you cannot suppress the wild thing, the uniqueness that will occur among humans no matter how much we try to avoid it."

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

Man consists of body, mind and imagination. His body is faulty, his mind untrustworthy, but his imagination has made him remarkable.

John Masefield

Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes.

Art is knowing which ones to keep.

Scott Adams

Some men see things as they are and ask why.
Others dream things that never were and ask
why not.

George Bernard Shaw

I saw the angel in the marble
and carved until I set him free.

Michelangelo

"Progress doesn't come from early risers –
progress is made by lazy men looking for easier ways to do things."

To stimulate creativity, one must develop
the childlike inclination for play and the
childlike desire for recognition.

Albert Einstein

It is better to fail in originality
than to succeed in imitation.

Herman Melville

"We had a sewing-machine experience. [...] It's an old science-class story, People who wanted to invent sewing machines kept failing because they always tried to imitate the motions of hand-sewing, pushing the needle through the fabric and drawing the thread along behind through the eye at the back end of the needle. It seemed obvious. Until somebody first thought of putting the eye in the nose of the needle and using two threads instead of just one. A completely unnatural, indirect approach that when it comes right down to it, I still don't understand."

Xenocide

Be flexible

"I knew an old Illianer woman, once," she said slowly. "When she was young, her mother arranged a marriage for her with a man she had never even met. They do that down in Illian, sometimes. She said she spent the first five years raging against him, and the next five scheming to make his life miserable without his knowing who was to blame. It was only years later, she said, when he died, that she realized he really had been the love of her life."

"I don't see what that has to do with this."

Her look said he obviously was not trying to understand, and her voice became overly patient. "Just because fate has chosen something for you instead of you choosing it for yourself doesn't mean it has to be bad. Even if it's something you are sure you would never have chosen in a hundred years. 'Better ten days of love than years of regretting,'" she quoted.

The Wheel of Time 3 - The Dragon Reborn

"When one door closes another door opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the ones which open for us."

Alexander Graham Bell

"The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong in the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially."

Hemingway

It's good to see Gail understands the basic nature of business: we adapt, or pay the price.

Jim Profit

Insanity is repeating the same actions and expecting different results.

"The Fifth Sacred Thing" by StarHawk

The young man knows the rules, but the old man knows the exceptions.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.

"One works with available materials"

"Podkayne of Mars" by Robert A. Heinlein

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.

Theodore Roosevelt

"No books at all, Rabbi. Oh, they have a Coda but it's just a collection of reminders, sometimes useful, sometimes to be discarded. They always adjust their Coda to current requirements."

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"



"I've found from past experiences that the tighter your plan, the more likely you are to run into something unpredictable."

MacGyver

Be pragmatic

The Patrician was a pragmatist.
He never tried to fix things that worked.
Things that didn't work, however, got broken.

Terry Pratchett

I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.

Edward Everett Hale

A good solution applied with vigor now is better than a perfect solution applied ten minutes later.

General George S. Patton, Jr.

"But it's not a serious experiment with a control—"

"It's a serious experiment, all right, the kind of experiment you perform when you don't give a damn about getting funding, you just need results and you need them now. The kind of experiment you perform when you have no idea what the results will be or even if you'll know how to interpret them, but there are a bunch of crazy pequeninos planning to get in starships and spread a planet-killing disease all over the galaxy so you've got to do something."

Xenocide

It was not a normal wizard hat. Few wizards have ever made much use of the pointy bit, except maybe to keep the odd pair of socks in it. But Ridcully's hat had small cupboards. It had surprises. It had four telescopic legs and a roll of oiled silk in the brim that extended downward to make a small but serviceable tent, and a patent spirit stove just above it. It had inner pockets with three days' supply of iron rations. And the tip unscrewed to dispense an adequate supply of spirituous liquors for use in emergencies, such as when Ridcully was thirsty.

"Lords and Ladies" by Terry Pratchett

If a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing well — unless doing it well takes so long that it isn't worth doing any more. Then you just do it 'good enough'.

"Programming Perl" by Wall and Schwartz





Be prepared

When everything else fails ...
so will the duct tape.
But have it along anyway.

Where one may not go armed,
there it is well to go armed.
Kamchak of the Tuchuks in Nomads of Gor

Place your clothes and weapons
where you can find them in the dark.
*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

Then, as his planet killed him, it occurred to Kynes that his father and all the other scientists were wrong, that the most persistent principles of the universe were accident and error.

"Dune" by Frank Herbert

He's capable, but accident can strike down even the most capable.
"Dune" by Frank Herbert

Hardy took him to the bachelors' pantry, operated the autochef for him, drew coffee for his watch mate and himself, and left. Lazarus consumed his "bite of breakfast" — about three thousand calories of sizzling sausages, eggs, jam, hot breads, coffee with cream, and ancillary items, for he worked on the assumption of always topping off his reserve tanks because you never knew how far you might have to lift before you had another chance to refuel.

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein



"Now listen, 007. I've always tried to teach you two things. Number one, never let them see you bleed."
"And the second?"
"Always have an escape plan."
[Q presses a button, and disappears on a platform]
Q and James Bond in James Bond: "The World Is Not Enough" (1999)

Pessimist by policy, optimist by temperament – it is possible to be both. How? By never taking an unnecessary chance and by minimizing risks you can't avoid. This permits you to play out the game happily, untroubled by the certainty of the outcome.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

"I always hope for the best.
Experience, however, has taught me
to expect the worst."
Garak in Star Trek DS9

"If you plan for the worst,
all surprises are pleasant."
Gaul in "The Wheel of Time" by Robert Jordan

"One thing I learned in combat: Never skip a chance to eat, sleep, or pee; another chance may be a long time coming!"

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls"
by Robert A. Heinlein

While waiting, Odrade made necessary preparations. Open the mind. Shed preconceptions.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"



Jessica placed her palms against her cheeks, began the ritual breathing that stilled emotion and clarified the mind, then bent forward from the waist in the devotional exercise that prepared the body for the mind's demands.

"Dune" by Frank Herbert

She saw a profound clue to Fremen technology in the simple fact: they were perfectionists.

"Dune" by Frank Herbert

Bartlet: "And stay up in my face, okay?"

Sam: "Yes, sir."

Bartlet: I swear to God, the winner of this debate's going to be the next President. Anybody want to be on the losing team?"

All: "No, sir."

Bartlet: "Then let's pump it up. Let's go, Claudia Jean."

C.J.: "Good evening, and welcome to the Presidential debate between President Josiah Bartlet and Governor Robert Ritchie being brought to you from the University of California, San Diego. The format agreed to by both candidates, is as follows: A candidate will have 90-seconds to respond, followed with a 60-second questioning by his opponent, followed by 60-second summation. By virtue of a coin toss, Mr. President, the first question goes to you."

"The West Wing"

If you have eight hours to cut down a tree, it is best to spend six hours sharpening your axe and then two hours cutting down the tree.

Anonymous, on the benefits of having good tools

I was no longer dependent on Jake's clothes; my travel kit, always in my car, once I got at it, supplied necessities from passport to poncho.

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

I marked eleven inches on the floor with two pennies. It turns out that a dollar bill is two and a half inches wide and quarter is a smidgeon under an inch. Shortly I knew the dimensions [of my cell] pretty accurately.

"Have Space Suit will Travel"
by Robert A. Heinlein

When we are afraid we ought not to occupy ourselves with endeavoring to prove that there is no danger, but in strengthening ourselves to go on in spite of the danger.

Mark Rutherford

"There is no such thing as luck; there is only adequate or inadequate preparation to cope with a statistical universe. Do you intend to enter this?"

"Have Space Suit will Travel"
by Robert A. Heinlein

Avoid making irrevocable decisions while tired or hungry.

N.B.: Circumstances can force your hand. So think ahead.

"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

If you find yourself in a fair fight, you didn't plan it properly.

Nick Lappos

"Go for broke" took courage and character that most people didn't have. Don't grab a toothbrush, don't wind the cat-just do it!

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Dr. Keyworth, I'm the Deputy White House Chief of Staff. I oversee 1100 White House employees. I answer directly to Leo McGarry and the President of the United States. Do you think you're talking to the paperboy?" "No." "In your wildest dreams did you imagine that I'd walk in this room without knowing exactly who you are and what you do?"

Josh and Stanley in "The West Wing"



THAT'S
IT? MAN, YOU
DON'T OWN
MUCH STUFF,
DO YOU?

TOO
MANY MATERIAL
POSSESSIONS.
AND THEY START
TO OWN YOU --
I LIKE TO LIVE
LIGHT.

Simplicity and clarity
should be your theme in dress.

"The things you own
end up owning you."
Tyler Durden in Fight Club (1999)

"You can take what you want,
have what you want ...
but nothing is yours."
Angel in "Destiny"

I found that possessions only complicate things.
They're too much of a burden.
Life is easier this way.
Bounce in "Bleach"

As you simplify your life, the laws of the universe will be simpler;
solitude will not be solitude, poverty will not be poverty, nor weakness weakness.
Henry David Thoreau

Besides the noble art of getting things done,
there is the noble art of leaving things undone.
The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials.
Lin Yutang

Lucilla felt the presence of scanning devices, things that did more than provide stimulus for eyes. These looked into flesh, probing for concealed weapons, for the functioning of organs. Does she have strange implants? What about additional organs surgically added to her body? None of those, Madame Spider. We rely on things that come with birth.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

- Invest in high-quality, multi-purpose items.
- Continuously reduce your stuff.
- Do not buy if you can borrow.
- Test new designs to see whether they are better than what you use now.

Be nomadic

“In the course of a long life
a wise man will be prepared
to abandon his baggage several times.”
Old Chinese adage

“Parting with people is a sadness;
a place is only a place.”
Hawat in “Dune” by Frank Herbert

"Where's your money?"

"Diamonds. All Jews need small things, things you can carry and things you can hide, things you can convert easily."

Noble House

Keep a travel kit in the trunk of your car. Keep a separate one in your home. Keep a third one in a long time storage locker near the airport. And do not rely on them even for a second.

A fugitive has three problems
which usually lead to his capture:
money – transportation – shelter
Plan ahead.

Think what you carry and why.

Never make your home in a place. Make a home for yourself inside your own head. You'll find what you need to furnish it – memory, friends you can trust, love of learning, and other such things. That way it will go with you wherever you journey.

Tad Williams

Scytale rubbed his breast, reminding himself of what was hidden there with such skill that not even a scar marked the place. Each Master had carried this resource — a nullentropy capsule preserving the seed cells of a multitude: fellow Masters of the central kehl, Face Dancers, technical specialists and others he knew would be attractive to the women of Shaitan ... and to many weakling powindah! Paul Atreides and his beloved Chani were there. (Oh what that had cost in searching garments of the dead for random cells!) The original Duncan Idaho was there with other Atreides minions — the Mentat Thufir Hawat, Gurney Halleck, the Fremen Naib Stilgar ... enough potential servants and slaves to people a Teilaxu universe.

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”



Leave something behind

The true meaning of life is to plant trees,
under whose shade you do not expect to sit.

Nelson Henderson

Succeed

Success is not a point
but a continuous journey

All the so-called “secrets of success”
will not work unless you do.

Passion – Work – Focus – Push – Ideas (Listen, Observe, Problem Solve, Make
Connections, Ask Questions, Be Curious) – Improve – Serve – Persist

TED Talk by Richard St. John

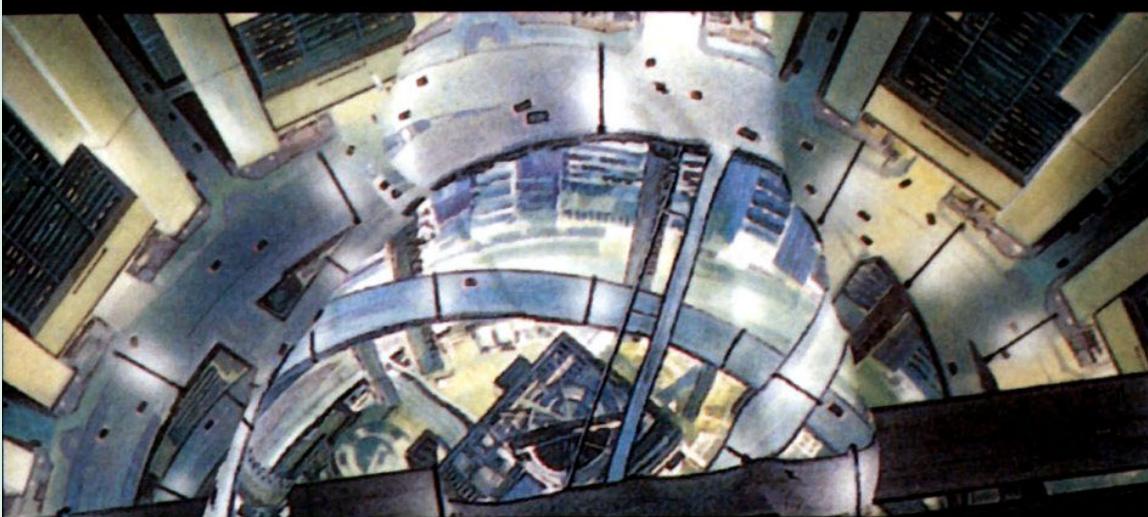
I'm a great believer in luck and I find
the harder I work, the more I have of it.

Thomas Jefferson

'If failure had no penalty
success would not be a prize,'

“Sourcery” by Terry Pratchett

Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.



Here's to the crazy ones.

The misfits.

The rebels.

The troublemakers.

The round pegs in the square holes.

The ones who see things differently.

They're not fond of rules.

And they have no respect for the status quo.

You can praise them, disagree with them, quote them,
disbelieve them, glorify or vilify them.

About the only thing you can't do is ignore them.

Because they change things.

They invent. They imagine. They heal.

They explore. They create. They inspire.

They push the human race forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy.

How else can you stare at an empty canvas and see a work of art?

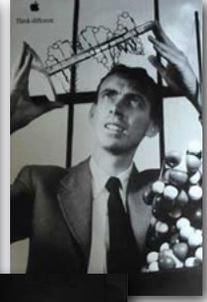
Or sit in silence and hear a song that's never been written?

Or gaze at a red planet and see a laboratory on wheels?

We make tools for these kinds of people.

While some see them as the crazy ones, we see genius.

Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world,
are the ones who do.



What do other people live for?

“I’ve seen things you people wouldn’t believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhäuser gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain. Time to die.”

Roy Batty in “Blade Runner”

“In the last five years, I’ve seen things off-world you can’t even imagine. I’ve stood in the Abendi desert and watched all seven moons go into eclipse. I’ve walked in vaults that have been sealed longer than there’s been a human race, breathing air that’s five million years old. You call that a shortcut, if you will, but I’ve lived. By God, Stephen, I have lived.”

Vance Hendricks to Dr. Franklin in Babylon 5: “Infection”

I do it for the joy it brings,
cause I'm a joyful girl.
Cause the world owes us nothing,
we owe each other the world.

Ani DiFranco

I once asked a Gorean hunter whom I met in Ar why the larl was hunted at all. I have never forgotten his reply. 'Because it is beautiful,' he said, 'and dangerous, and because we are Goreans.'

Priest-Kings of Gor

You're a fool, said the internal editor. Some people have tried to kill you. You're concealing information from the Watch. You're mixing with strange people. You're about to do something that's going to get so far up Mister Vimes's nose it will raise his hat. And why?

Because it makes my blood tingle, he thought. And because I'm not going to be used. By anyone.

"The Truth" by Terry Pratchett

What did I want? I wanted the hurtling moons of Barsroom. I wanted Storisende and Poictesme, and Holmes shaking me awake to tell me, "The game's afoot!" I wanted to float down the Mississippi on a raft and elude a mob in company with the Duke of Bilgewater and Lost Dauphin. I wanted Prester John, and Excalibur held by a moon-white arm out of a silent lake. I wanted to sail with Ulysses and with Tros of Samothrace and to eat the lotus in a land that seemed always afternoon. I wanted the feeling of romance and the sense of wonder I had known as a kid. I wanted the world to be the way they had promised me it was going to be, instead of the tawdry, lousy, fouled-up mess it is. I had had one chance – for ten minutes yesterday afternoon. Helen of Troy, whatever your true name may be – and I had known it – and I had let it slip away. Maybe one chance is all you ever get.

Oscar Gordon in "Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

“We don’t read and write poetry because it’s cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for.”

Dead Poet’s Society

For those who believe in God, most of the big questions are answered. But for those of us who can’t readily accept the God formula, the big answers don’t remain stone-written. We adjust to new conditions and discoveries. We are pliable. Love need not be a command or faith a dictum. I am my own God. We are here to unlearn the teachings of the church, state, and our educational system. We are here to drink beer. We are here to kill war. We are here to laugh at the odds and live our lives so well that Death will tremble to take us.

Charles Bukowski

Sarah Jaydo’s Journal

Why have we come to the stars? Why didn’t we surrender when we had the chance? Are we so blind, that we believe this new world will be different, immune to suffering and crime and violence?

The Unity mission was a feeble candle flickering in a blasted night. We rode this illusion into the sky, and now we will die here, or, perhaps worse, die on Planet. Those of us onboard rode an illusion into the night; those who stayed behind took their chances on a dying world.

As for now, we continue to do what humans have always done. We eat, sleep, make love, hone our skills, pass the time. And deep down we wait for someone, some special human, to rise above it all and make the thousands of years of history, of suffering, all worth it. To enlighten us, by which I mean end our pain, heal our wounds, take away the uncertainty.

But I have seen the sweep of history, and we are no better off now than we have ever been. Just more aware. Planet will be no different.

Unless ...

Prologue from Alpha Centauri, a computer game about mankind’s attempt to leave a dying Earth and begin anew on a planet around Alpha Centauri.

Dora was untroubled by lack of privacy because her sweet lechery was utterly innocent, whereas mine was scarred by the culture I grew up in—a culture psychotic throughout and especially on this subject. Dora did much to heal those scars. But I never achieved her angelic innocence.

I do not mean the innocence of childish ignorance; I mean the true innocence of an intelligent, informed, adult woman who has no evil in her. Dora was as tough as she was innocent, always aware that she was responsible for her own actions. She knew that “the tail goes with the hide, that you can’t be a little bit pregnant, that it is no kindness to hang a man slowly.” She could make a hard decision without dithering, then stand up to the consequences if it turned out that her judgment was faulty. She could apologize to a child, or to a mule. But that was rarely necessary; her self-honesty did not often lead her into faulty decisions.

Nor did she flagellate herself when she made a mistake. She corrected it as best she could, learned from it, did not lie awake over it.

“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

"The point is, Mr. Secretary, I don't want them. This household has no clocks. Nor calendars. Once I had a large income and a larger ulcer; I now have a small income and no ulcer. I stay here."

"But the job needs you."

"The need is not mutual. Do have some more meat loaf."

"Have Space Suit will Travel" by Robert A. Heinlein

"I'm glad I could spend one last Christmas with Jesse. He was a crazy son of a bitch, but I sure loved him."

"I can tell."

"God, did he know how to live! It was full-throttle all the way! We met in Sturgis, back in '78. I was sitting at The Broken Spoke with the biggest bad-ass in town, but Jesse ... he had some balls on him. He walked right up to me, I'll never forget it, and he said, 'If I don't ask you to take a ride with me, I'll regret it the rest of my life.' And that ride lasted 23 years. He always said his 2 favorite things were riding his hog and riding me, and he treated us both like queens."

"You're probably wishing he treated himself as carefully."

"Oh, honey, it just wasn't in his blood. If he were a careful man, he might have lived longer, but ... would he have enjoyed his life as much? Would I have enjoyed his life as much?"

Marilyn and Nate in Six Feet Under: "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year"

"Grandpa Zach was as cantankerous an old coot as you'll ever meet. Hated government, hated lawyers, hated civil servants, hated preachers, hated automobiles, public schools, and telephones, was contemptuous of most editors, most writers, most professors, most of almost anything. But he' overtopped waitresses and porters and would go out of his way to avoid stepping on an insect ..."

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

"I'd rather be his whore than your wife."

Rose in "Titanic"



"Someday I will be queen, but I will always be myself."

Garnet Tale Alexandros in "Final Fantasy IX"

“Perhaps we don’t mean the same thing by choice, Mr. Scoresby. Witches own nothing, so we’re not interested in preserving value or making profits, and as for the choice between one thing and another, when you live for many hundreds of years, you know that every opportunity will come again. We have different needs. You have to repair your balloon and keep it in good condition, and that takes time and trouble, I see that; but for us to fly, all we have to do is tear off a branch of cloud-pine; any will do, and there are plenty more. We don’t feel cold, so we need no warm clothes. We have no means of exchange apart from mutual aid. If a witch needs something, another witch will give it to her. If there is a war to be fought, we don’t consider cost one of the factors in deciding whether or not it is right to fight. Nor do we have any notion of honor, as bears do, for instance. An insult to a bear is a deadly thing. To us ... inconceivable. How could you insult a witch? What would it matter if you did?”

“His Dark Materials” by Philip Pullman

“But with what motive have you learned all this?” inquired Villefort, in astonishment. Monte Cristo smiled.

“Really, sir,” he observed, “I see that in spite of the reputation which you have acquired as a superior man, you look at everything from the material and vulgar view of society, beginning with man, and ending with man — that is to say, in the most restricted, most narrow view which it is possible for human understanding to embrace.”

"Yes, monsieur, I believe so; for until now, no man has found himself in a position similar to mine. The dominions of kings are limited either by mountains or rivers, or a change of manners, or an alteration of language. My kingdom is bounded only by the world, for I am not an Italian, or a Frenchman, or a Hindu, or an American, or a Spaniard — I am a cosmopolite. No country can say it saw my birth. God alone knows what country will see me die. I adopt all customs, speak all languages. You believe me to be a Frenchman, for I speak French with the same facility and purity as yourself. Well, Ali, my Nubian, believes me to be an Arab; Bertuccio, my steward, takes me for a Roman; Haidee, my slave, thinks me a Greek. You may, therefore, comprehend, that being of no country, asking no protection from any government, acknowledging no man as my brother, not one of the scruples that arrest the powerful, or the obstacles which paralyze the weak, paralyzes or arrests me.

I have only two adversaries — I will not say two conquerors, for with perseverance I subdue even them, — they are time and distance. There is a third, and the most terrible — that is my condition as a mortal being. This alone can stop me in my onward career, before I have attained the goal at which I aim, for all the rest I have reduced to mathematical terms. What men call the chances of fate — namely, ruin, change, circumstances — I have fully anticipated, and if any of these should overtake me, yet it will not overwhelm me. Unless I die, I shall always be what I am, and therefore it is that I utter the things you have never heard, even from the mouths of kings — for kings have need, and other persons have fear of you."

“The Count of Monte Cristo” by Alexandre Dumas

The following was written shortly after my arrest...

\\The Conscience of a Hacker\\

by

+++The Mentor+++

Written on January 8, 1986

Another one got caught today, it's all over the papers. "Teenager Arrested in Computer Crime Scandal", "Hacker Arrested after Bank Tampering"... Damn kids. They're all alike.

But did you, in your three-piece psychology and 1950's technobrain, ever take a look behind the eyes of the hacker? Did you ever wonder what made him tick, what forces shaped him, what may have molded him? I am a hacker, enter my world... Mine is a world that begins with school... I'm smarter than most of the other kids, this crap they teach us bores me... Damn underachiever. They're all alike.

I'm in junior high or high school. I've listened to teachers explain for the fifteenth time how to reduce a fraction. I understand it. "No, Ms. Smith, I didn't show my work. I did it in my head..." Damn kid. Probably copied it. They're all alike.

I made a discovery today. I found a computer. Wait a second, this is cool. It does what I want it to. If it makes a mistake, it's because I screwed it up. Not because it doesn't like me... Or feels threatened by me... Or thinks I'm a smart ass... Or doesn't like teaching and shouldn't be here... Damn kid. All he does is play games. They're all alike.

And then it happened... a door opened to a world... rushing through the phone line like heroin through an addict's veins, an electronic pulse is sent out, a refuge from the day-to-day incompetencies is sought... a board is found. "This is it... this is where I belong..." I know everyone here... even if I've never met them, never talked to them, may never hear from them again... I know you all... Damn kid. Tying up the phone line again. They're all alike... You bet your ass we're all alike... we've been spoon-fed baby food at school when we hungered for steak... the bits of meat that you did let slip through were pre-chewed and tasteless. We've been dominated by sadists, or ignored by the apathetic. The few that had something to teach found us will- ing pupils, but those few are like drops of water in the desert.

This is our world now... the world of the electron and the switch, the beauty of the baud. We make use of a service already existing without paying for what could be dirt-cheap if it wasn't run by profiteering gluttons, and you call us criminals. We explore... and you call us criminals. We seek after knowledge... and you call us criminals. We exist without skin color, without nationality, without religious bias... and you call us criminals. You build atomic bombs, you wage wars, you murder, cheat, and lie to us and try to make us believe it's for our own good, yet we're the criminals.

Yes, I am a criminal. My crime is that of curiosity. My crime is that of judging people by what they say and think, not what they look like. My crime is that of outsmarting you, something that you will never forgive me for.

I am a hacker, and this is my manifesto. You may stop this individual, but you can't stop us all... after all, we're all alike.

+++The Mentor+++

"The show must go on" is the oldest tenet of show business. Perhaps it has no philosophical verity, but the things men live by are rarely subject to logical proof. My father had believed it – I had seen him play two acts with a burst appendix and then take his bows before he had let them rush him to a hospital. I could see his face now, looking at me with the contempt of a trouper for a so-called actor who would let an audience down.

"Double Star" by Robert A. Heinlein

As far as the job of President goes, it's rewarding and I've given before this group the definition of happiness for the Greeks. I'll define it again: the full use of your powers along lines of excellence. I find, therefore, that the Presidency provides some happiness.

John F. Kennedy

"He likes to hear people talk. Says it sounds like music to Him. Christ loved to sit around the fire and listen to me and the other guys. Whenever we were going on about unimportant shit, He always had a smile on His face."

Rufus, on Christ, in "Dogma" (1999)

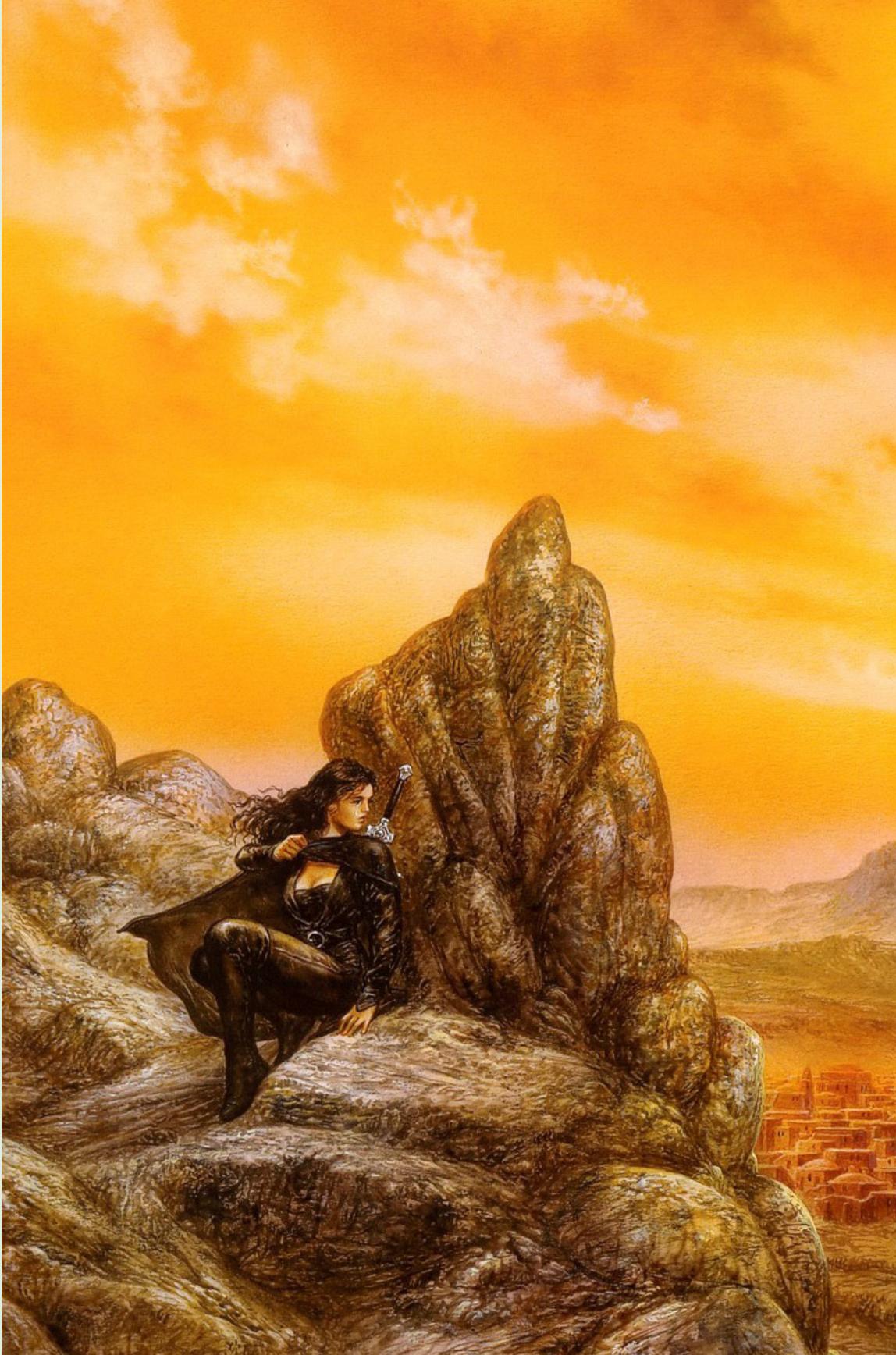
"Lots of people say that they fall in love in the spring. Not me. I always fell in love in the autumn. It is just the most romantic ... sexy ... desperate ... and I'll never see it again. This enemy could kill ... every last person ... on Earth, and it would still be Autumn. But I'm going tomorrow morning to make sure that there's always someone there to feel it."

Vansen to Hawkes in "Space 2063"

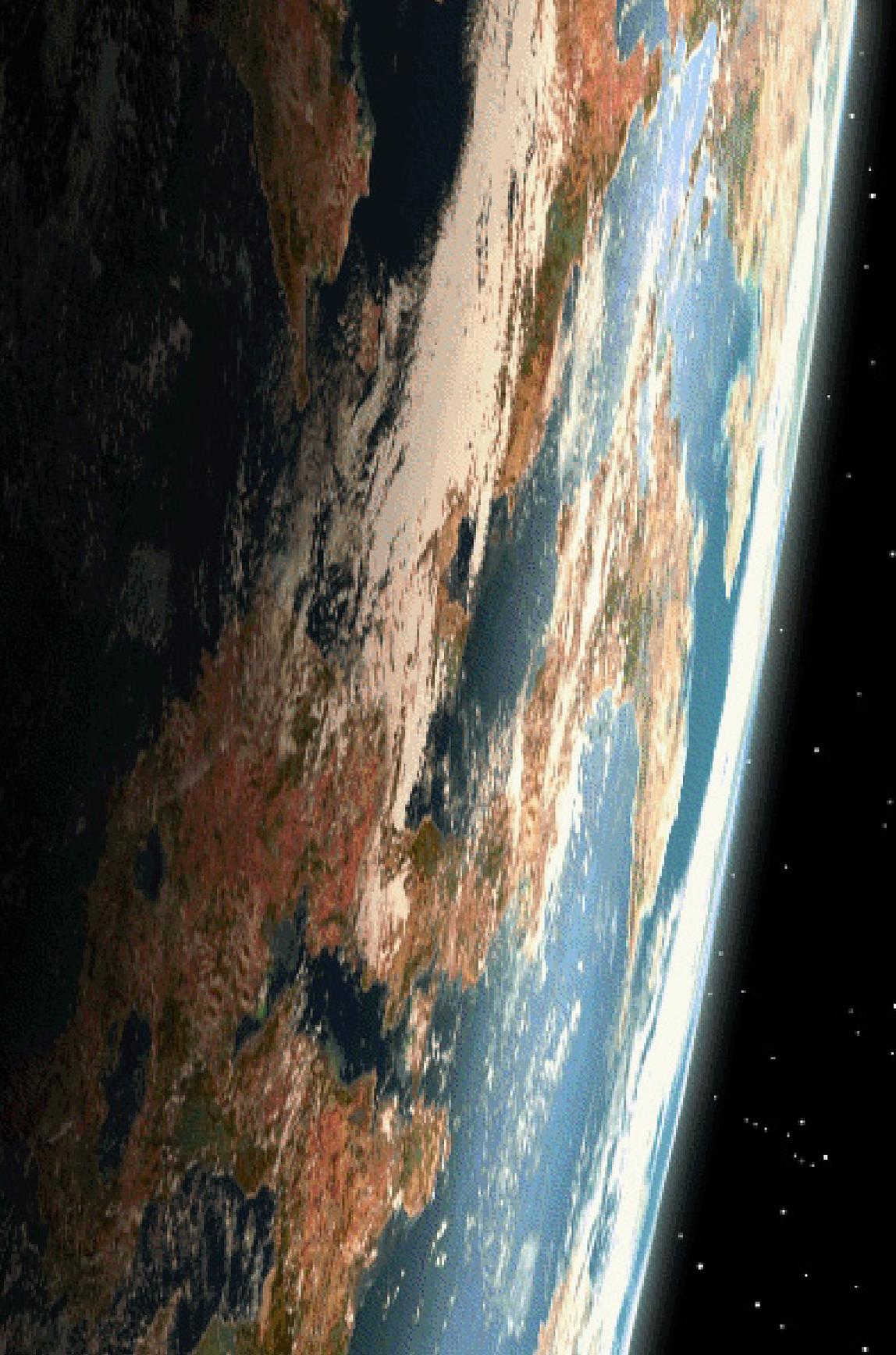
"You are the tiniest speck in an enormous universe."

"Then I might as well go back to sleep."

Lucy and Snoopy in "Peanuts"



YOU & YOUR WORLD



You place in your(?) world

The universe may have a purpose,
but nothing we know suggests that, if so,
this purpose has any similarity to ours.

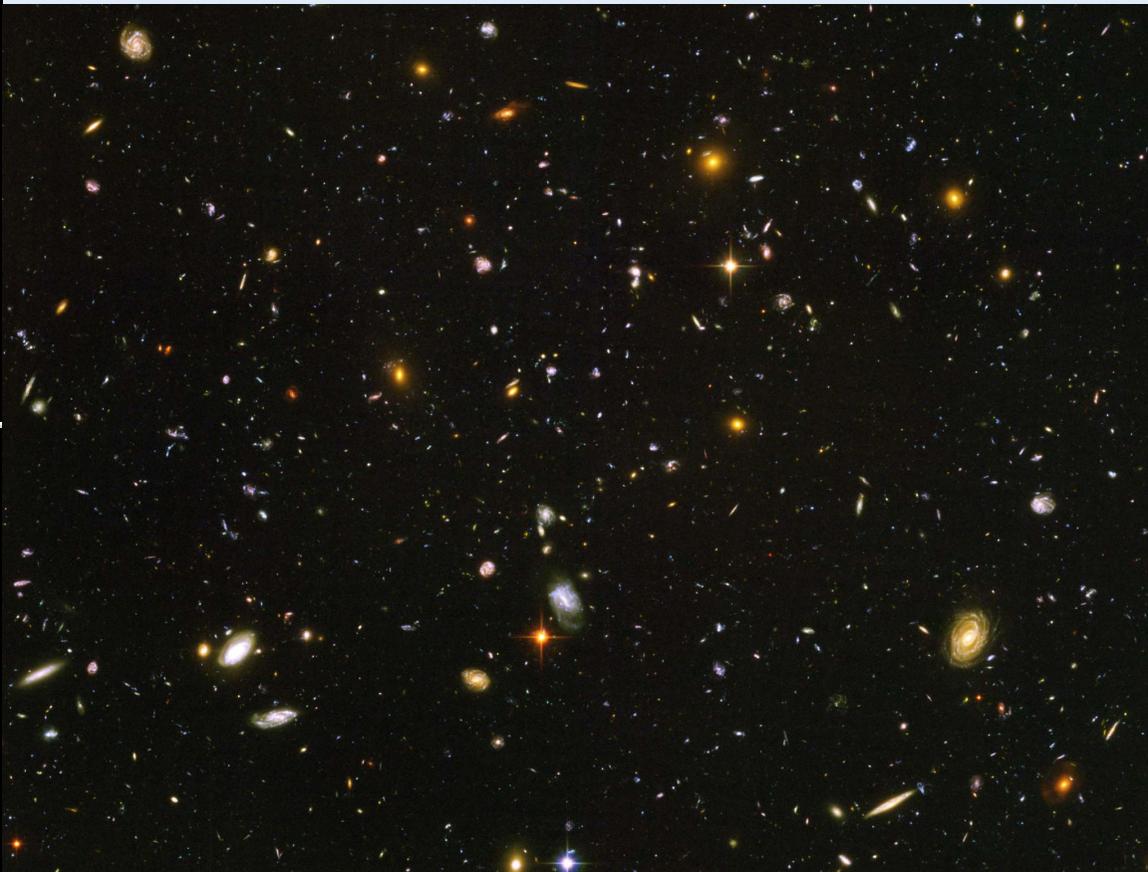
Bertrand Russell

In this universe, we're all just
round pegs in square holes.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

“The thing is, I mean, there's times when you look at the
universe and you think, ‘What about me?’ and you can just
hear the universe replying, ‘Well, what about you?’”

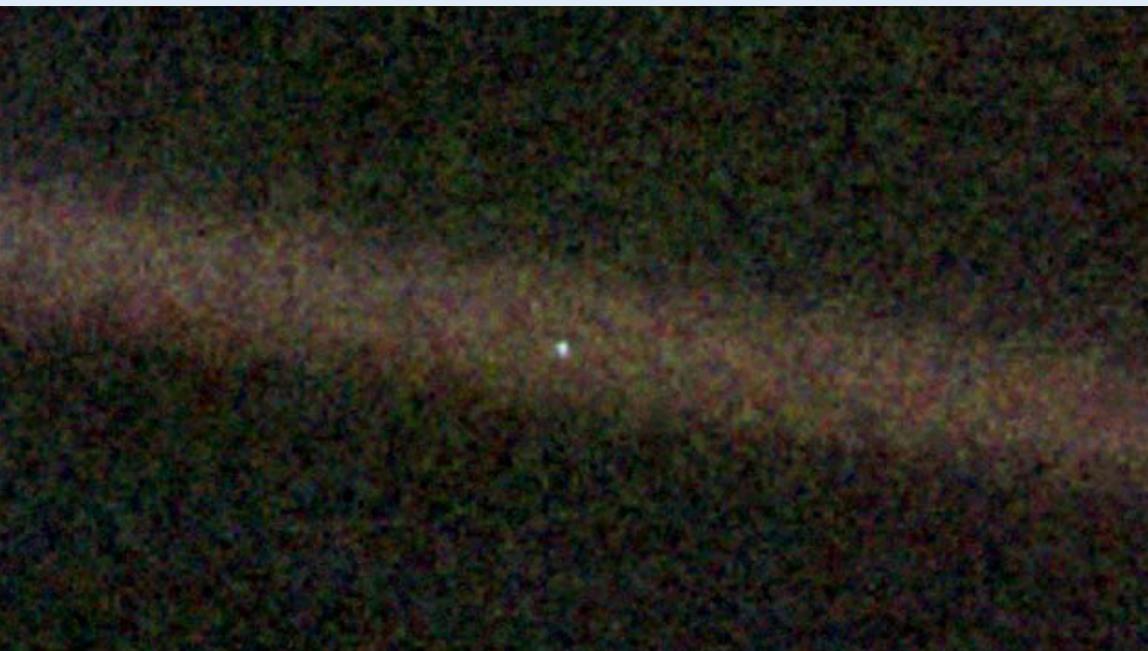
"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett



This world is only a small part of existence

"We succeeded in taking that picture [from deep space], and, if you look at it, you see a dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever lived, lived out their lives. The aggregate of all our joys and sufferings, thousands of confident religions, ideologies and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilizations, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every hopeful child, every mother and father, every inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every superstar, every supreme leader, every saint and sinner in the history of our species, lived there on a mote of dust, suspended in a sunbeam. The earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and in triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of the dot on scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner of the dot. How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds. Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity — in all this vastness — there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves. It is up to us. It's been said that astronomy is a humbling, and I might add, a character-building experience. To my mind, there is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly and compassionately with one another and to preserve and cherish that pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."

Carl Sagan, on October 13, 1994



You are only a part of the world

"And I think you have the same instinctive desire that we all have, the one that gets us in so damn much trouble all the time," said Peter. "You know that you're going to die, and you want to see it all resolved before you do."

"Children of the Mind" by Orson Scott Card

"Before us, all methods of learning were tainted by instinct. We learned how to learn. Before us, instinct-ridden researchers possessed a limited attention span — often no longer than a single lifetime. Projects stretching across fifty or more lifetimes never occurred to them."

Bene Gesserit Creed in "Dune Messiah" by Frank Herbert



The physical world is uncaring

Universe is uncaring,
does neither give you what you want
nor what you need.

The world began without man, and it
will complete itself without him.

Claude Levi-Strauss



"You're only putting off the inevitable,"
it said.

"Suits me."

"Equal Rites" by Terry Pratchett

"You do not beg the sun for mercy."

Maud'dib's Travail from The Stigar

Commentary in "Dune Messiah"

by Frank Herbert

There was no doubt that whoever had shut [the door] wanted it to stay shut. Dozens of nails secured it to the door frame. Planks had been nailed right across. And finally it had, up until this morning, been hidden by a bookcase that had been put in front of it.

"And there's the sign, Ridcully," said the Dean. "You have read it, I assume. You know? The sign which says 'Do not, under any circumstances, open this door?'"

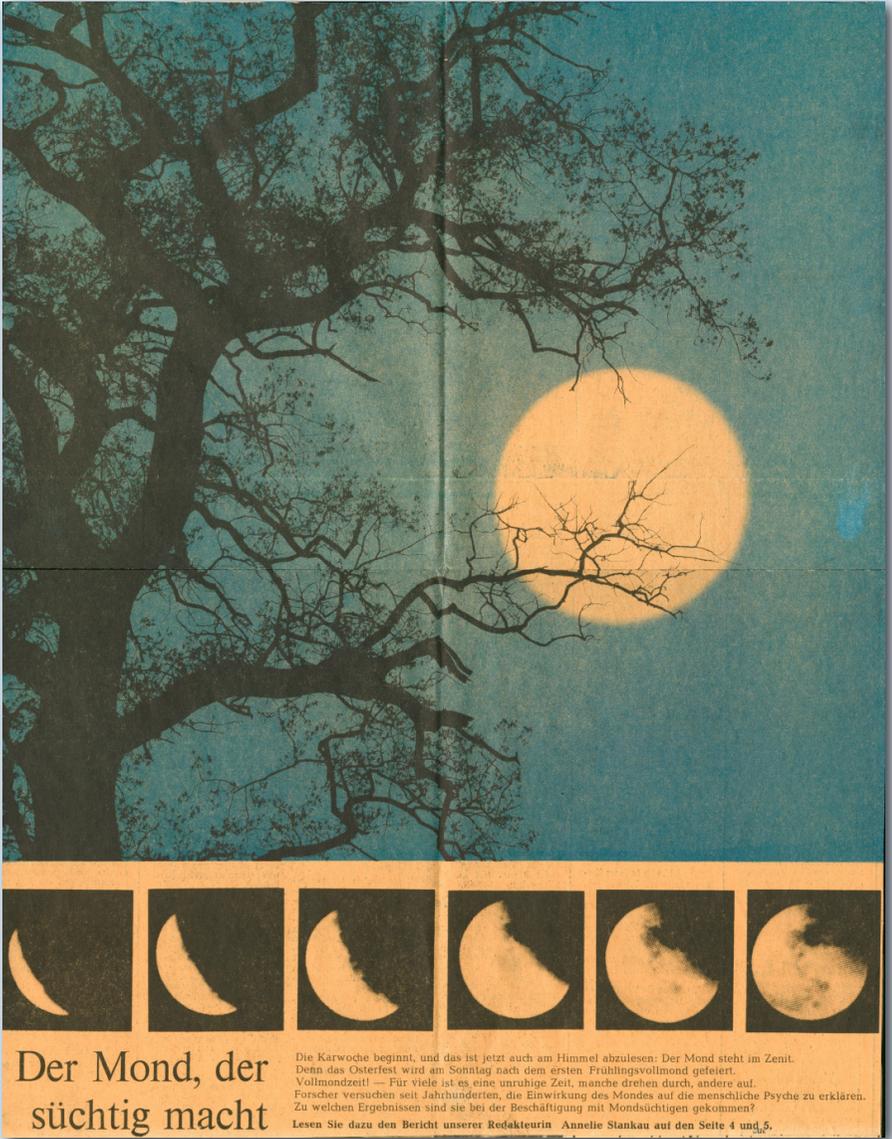
"Of course I've read it," said Ridcully. "Why d'yer think I want it opened?"

[Footnote: This exchange contains almost all you need to know about human civilization. At least, those bits of it that are now under the sea, fenced off or still smoking.]

"Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett



When two galaxies collide, however, the stars that compose them usually do not. This is because galaxies are mostly empty space and, however bright, stars only take up only a small amount of that space. But during the slow, hundred million year collision, one galaxy can rip the other apart gravitationally, and dust and gas common to both galaxies does collide. In the above wreckage, dark dust pillars mark massive molecular clouds, which are being compressed during the galactic encounter, causing the rapid birth of millions of stars.



Der Mond, der süchtig macht

Die Karwoche beginnt, und das ist jetzt auch am Himmel abzulesen: Der Mond steht im Zenit. Denn das Osterfest wird am Sonntag nach dem ersten Frühlingsvollmond gefeiert. Vollmondzeit! — Für viele ist es eine unruhige Zeit, manche drehen durch, andere auf. Forscher versuchen seit Jahrhunderten, die Einwirkung des Mondes auf die menschliche Psyche zu erklären. Zu welchen Ergebnissen sind sie bei der Beschäftigung mit Mondsüchtigen gekommen? Lesen Sie dazu den Bericht unserer Redakteurin Annelie Stankau auf den Seite 4 und 5.

Life didn't promise to be wonderful.

For the first time, the first, I laid my heart open
to the benign indifference of the universe.

Albert Camus

The Nature of Life

“Life breaks free.
Life expands to new territories.
Painfully, perhaps even dangerously.
But life finds a way.”
Malcolm in “Jurassic Park” by Michael Crichton

“What’s evolving out there [in the universe after they launched many exploration ships thousands of years ago]?” Tamalane demanded. A question they could not answer. Ask what Infinity might produce and the only answer possible was, “Anything.” Any good, any evil; any god, any devil.

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

“The molecules of your body are the same molecules that make up this station and the nebula outside, that burn inside the stars themselves. We are starstuff, we are the universe made manifest, trying to figure itself out. As we have both learned, sometimes the universe requires a change of perspective.”

Deleem to Sheridan in Babylon 5: “A Distant Star”





Realities of Life

In three words I can sum up
everything I've learned about life:

It goes on.

Robert Frost

The wisdom of the ages
distilled in one sentence:

This too shall pass.

TANSTAAFL*

*There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch

"The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress" by Robert A. Heinlein

Life is about change,
sometimes it's painful,
sometimes it's beautiful,
but most of the time it's both.

Lana in Smallville: "Metamorphosis"

If you're in a bad situation,
don't worry it'll change.
If you're in a good situation,
don't worry it'll change.

John A. Simone, Sr.

"If you don't do anything that will hurt
anyone, you will end by hurting everyone."

Fast, Cheap, Good
Choose any two.

Life is the art of drawing without an eraser.

John Gardner

"Reality is a complex,
non-linear system."

John Peterson

Beware of the relaxed guard. Mistakes often happen when the real danger is either thought to be over or nearly over. I have a strong feeling that the next great war, even a nuclear war, will begin this way.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

"Life is like arriving late for a movie, having to figure out what was going on without bothering everybody with a lot of questions, and then being unexpectedly called away before you find out how it ends."

Joseph Campbell, Creative Mythology

Almost everything in life is easier
to get into than out of.
Agnes' Law

"What I have created I can destroy."
That fallacy many a master falls prey to.
Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

"We're all bound by fate, aren't
we, in some way or another,"
Noble House

In real life, there is no "they."
Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

Life is like a blanket too short. You pull it up and your toes rebel, you yank it down and shivers meander about your shoulder; but cheerful folks manage to draw their knees up and pass a very comfortable night.

Marion Howard

If someone offers you a breath mint, accept it.
"Life's Little Treasure Book", on wisdom, by H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

"You're always telling that space is big, that it's an endless frontier filled with infinite wonders." "It's true." "Well if that's the case, you would think it would be more than enough room to allow people to leave each other alone." "It just doesn't work that way. It should, but it doesn't."

Joseph Sisko and Capt. Sisko in Star Trek DS9: "A Time To Stand"

"Why does any advanced civilization seek to destroy a less advanced one? Because the land is strategically valuable, because there are resources that can be cultivated and exploited, but most of all, simply because they can."

G'Kar in Babylon 5: "And Now For a Word"

"I call it 'Gupta's Law of Convenient Anomalies' – if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.
Gupta in "Tomorrow Never Dies" (1997)

"Son, she is yours. You may find that having is not so pleasing a thing as wanting. This is not logical, but it is often true."
Spock in Star Trek TOS: "Amok Time"

Part of the problem lay in the fact that Gay Deceiver was a one-man girl; her doors unlocked only to her master's voice or to his thumbprint, or to a tapping code if he were shy both voice and right thumb; Zeb tended to plan ahead — "Outwitting Murphy's Law," he called it, "Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong."
(Grandma called it "The Butter-Side Down Rule.")

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein



Shape your world

Man must learn to rely upon himself. Reading bibles will not protect him from the blasts of winter, but houses, fires, and clothing will. To prevent famine, one plow is worth a million sermons, and even patent medicines will cure more diseases than all the prayers uttered since the beginning of the world.

“The Gods” by Robert G. Ingersoll, 1872

From the strictest humanitarian viewpoint, any attempt to stop the processes by which over-crowded cities purge themselves is not a kindness.

The Boss in “Friday” by Robert A. Heinlein

“I remember my father once told me that nature is very powerful, but sometimes even nature needs help.”

“Shadowrun - Who Hunts The Hunter”

There are endless ways in which mankind interferes with nature, and in most ways it's not that bad. Who wants to see his child die of a virus, or become a cripple due to an accident? Who wants to die through a broken appendix? Who wants to spend his time fighting headaches, or toothaches, or any other kind of blasting pain?

Let's face it, nature is a bitch – she is undirected, cruel and lays no worth on a single life. For her and her force of evolution, life will go on, no matter how hard we suffer on the way.

Mankind does make mistakes, but at least we are trying to make things better which will probably not become better on their own.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash



Mankind's Future

“Is it worth it? Should we just pull back, forget the whole thing as a bad idea and take care of our own problems at home?”

“No. We have to stay here and there’s a simple reason why. Ask ten different scientists about the environment, population control, genetics and you’ll get ten different answers, but there’s one thing every scientist on the planet agrees on. Whether it happens in a hundred years or a thousand years or a million years, eventually our Sun will grow cold and go out. When that happens, it won’t just take us. It’ll take Marilyn Monroe and Lao-Tzu and Einstein and Morobuto and Buddy Holly and Aristophenes ... and all of this ... all of this was for nothing unless we go to the stars.”

Mary Ann Cramer interviews Cmdr. Sinclair in Babylon 5: “Infection”

What was most significant about the lunar voyage was not that men set foot on the moon but that they set eye on the earth.

Norman Cousins



“One day, soon, man will be able to harness incredible energies, energies that could ultimately hurl us to other worlds in ... in some sort of space-ship. And the men who reach out into space will be able to find ways to feed the hungry millions of the world and to cure their diseases. Those are the days worth living for!”

Edith Keeler, giving a speech at the 21st Street Mission, in Star Trek TOS: “City on the Edge of Forever.”



I am sorry to say that there is too much point to the wisecrack that life is extinct on other planets because their scientists were more advanced than ours.

John F. Kennedy, speech, 11 December 1959

“It is said that the future is always born in pain. The history of war is the history of pain. If we are wise, what is born of that pain matures into the promise of a better world, because we learn that we can no longer afford the mistakes of the past.”

G'Kar in Babylon 5: "In the Beginning"

“Worlds governed by artificial intelligence
often learned a hard lesson:
Logic Doesn't Care.”

*Yin-man Wei, "This Present Darkness:
A History of the Interregnum", CY 11956
Andromeda*

Our concern is not how to worship
in the catacombs but how to remain
human in the skyscrapers.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

Die Lösung für die Menschheit liegt in der richtigen Erziehung der
Jugend, nicht in der Heilung von Neurotikern.

Alexander Sutherland Neil, schottischer Pädagoge (1883-1973)

“You have misunderstood the purpose of this examination. You speak of ‘justice.’ I know what you think you mean. But no two races have ever agreed on the meaning of that term, no matter how they say it. It is not a concept I deal with here. This is not a court of justice.” [...] “You would call it a ‘Security Council.’ Or you might call it a committee of vigilantes. It does not matter what you call it; my sole purpose is to examine your race and see if you threaten our survival. If you do, I will now dispose of you. The only certain way to avert a grave danger is to remove it while it is small. Things that I have learned about you suggest a possibility that you may someday threaten the security of Three Galaxies. I will now determine the facts.”

“Have Space Suit will Travel” by Robert A. Heinlein

The Hierarchy of Foreignness. Utlannings are strangers from our own world. Framlings are strangers of our own species, but from another world. Ramen are strangers of another species, but capable of communication with us, capable of co-existence with humanity. Last are varelse — an alien life form that's capable of destroying all of humanity yet which we cannot possibly communicate with, an alien species that we cannot live with. If an alien species seems bent on destroying us and we can't communicate with them, can't understand them, if there's no possibility of turning them away from their course peacefully, then we are justified in any action necessary to save ourselves, including the complete destruction of the other species.

Xenocide

Five billion years from now, maybe to the day, the sun burns ninety percent of its hydrogen. A balance is destroyed. More energy is created than released. Quickly, in a few million years, the sun radiates all of its potential power. The star swells. Mercury, Venus, the Earth ... disappear. Swallowed. The sun truly, finally, touches the sky. Life vanishes eons ago.

Evil

“Why does there have to be evil?”

“I think it has something to do with free will.”

Kevin and the Supreme Being in “Time Bandits”

Evil is an interpretation of an behavior, not the behavior itself. In most of the cases the agent has a different goal than I have, making him my antagonist or enemy, but he is no more ‘evil’ to me than I am ‘evil’ to him.

Definition of Good and Evil:

Evil pursues a single goal at the cost of all other objectives, including human life, free will, integrity and pain. Conversely good has to take the consequences of actions into account, it has respect for life, making the decision process much more difficult. Being evil is much easier.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

In at least one respect Barstow was a wise man; he knew that another man could oppose him and not be a villain. Nevertheless he protested, "My people are being persecuted."

"Your people," Ford said forcefully, "are a fraction of a tenth of one per cent of all the people ... and I must find a solution for all! I've called on you to find out if you have any suggestions toward a solution for everyone. Do you?"

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

“Never attribute to malice that
which can be adequately explained by stupidity.”

“Logic of Empire” by Robert A. Heinlein

The greatest crimes are caused by surfeit, not by want.

“Politics” by Aristotle



You are right on target when you say that mad scientists have a total disregard for the well-being of others. We don't want to spread evil; we just see no point in bothering to spread good.

Richard M. Mathews

"We have no intention of doing anything so prosaic as 'winning'. For us, there is no fight. We go on, no matter what. Our firm has always been here in one form or another; the Inquisition, the Khmer Rouge – we were here the first time a caveman clubbed his neighbour and watched in fascination as his brains oozed out in the dirt. We're in the hearts and minds of every living human being and that, friend, is what's making things so difficult for you. The senior partners are evil and powerful beyond imagination, and you can try to fight them, but the source of their power ... that's beyond all of us. The world doesn't work in spite of evil, Angel. It works with us. It works because of us. When you locked those cellar doors and left me to die, you reached your Shanshu. In that moment, with that one act, you were as close to your own humanity as you'll ever be. If there wasn't evil in every single one of them out there, why, they wouldn't be people. They'd all be angels."

Holland Manners, of Wolfram & Hart, to Angel in Angel: "Reprise"

"Evil? An interesting concept. When you have walked this world for ten thousand years you begin to see matters differently. The fox eats the partridge chicks. For the fox it is a delightful breakfast. For the mother partridge it is an evil calamity. It all becomes merely a case of which perspective one takes. The partridge or the fox."

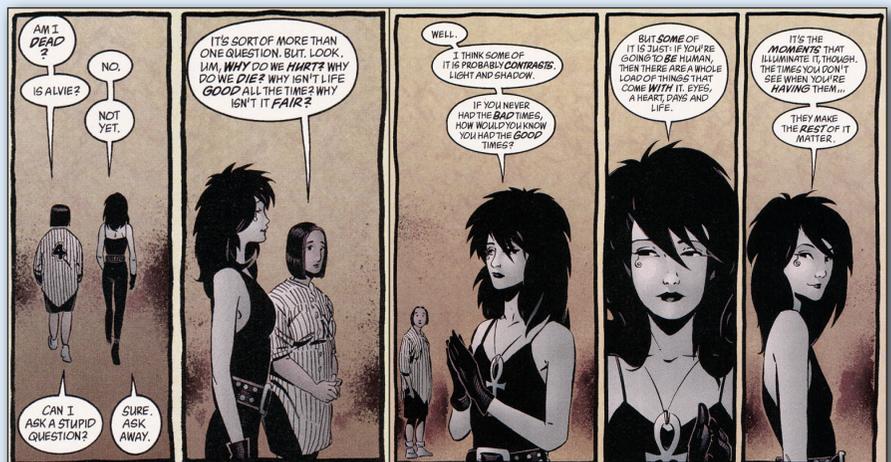
"More than a thousand children were slaughtered in the Perdii valleys," said Conn, "because they had no value in the slave markets in Stone."

"In my life," replied the Thadga, "I have seen tens of millions die. I will see you die, Connavar, and your sons and their sons. How many men have you killed, and deprived the world of their sons? How many children became orphans because of your blade? You think those children see you as good or evil? It is in my experience that the race of Man does little that is good, and much that is self-serving and, ultimately, evil."

"Sword in the Storm" by David Gemmell

"Good and evil, there never is one without the other."

Merlin



Time

I don't have a TV,
which makes me a freak,
but veeceery productive.

Jennifer Lee



Secret to success: Stay away from TV.
"I haven't watched TV for 20 years. At 5
hours a day, this works out to 36,500 hours.
Need I say more?"

"Studmuffins of Science" Calendar

I turned off my internet while working on the book.
Not surfing the web afforded me so much time.

Saira Rao in Authors@Google



When people say to me: "How do you do so many things?" I often answer them,
without meaning to be cruel: "How do you do so little?" It seems to me that people
have vast potential. Most people can do extraordinary things if they have the
confidence or take the risks. Yet most people don't. They sit in front of the telly and
treat life as if it goes on forever.

Philip Adams



Life is worth living, because

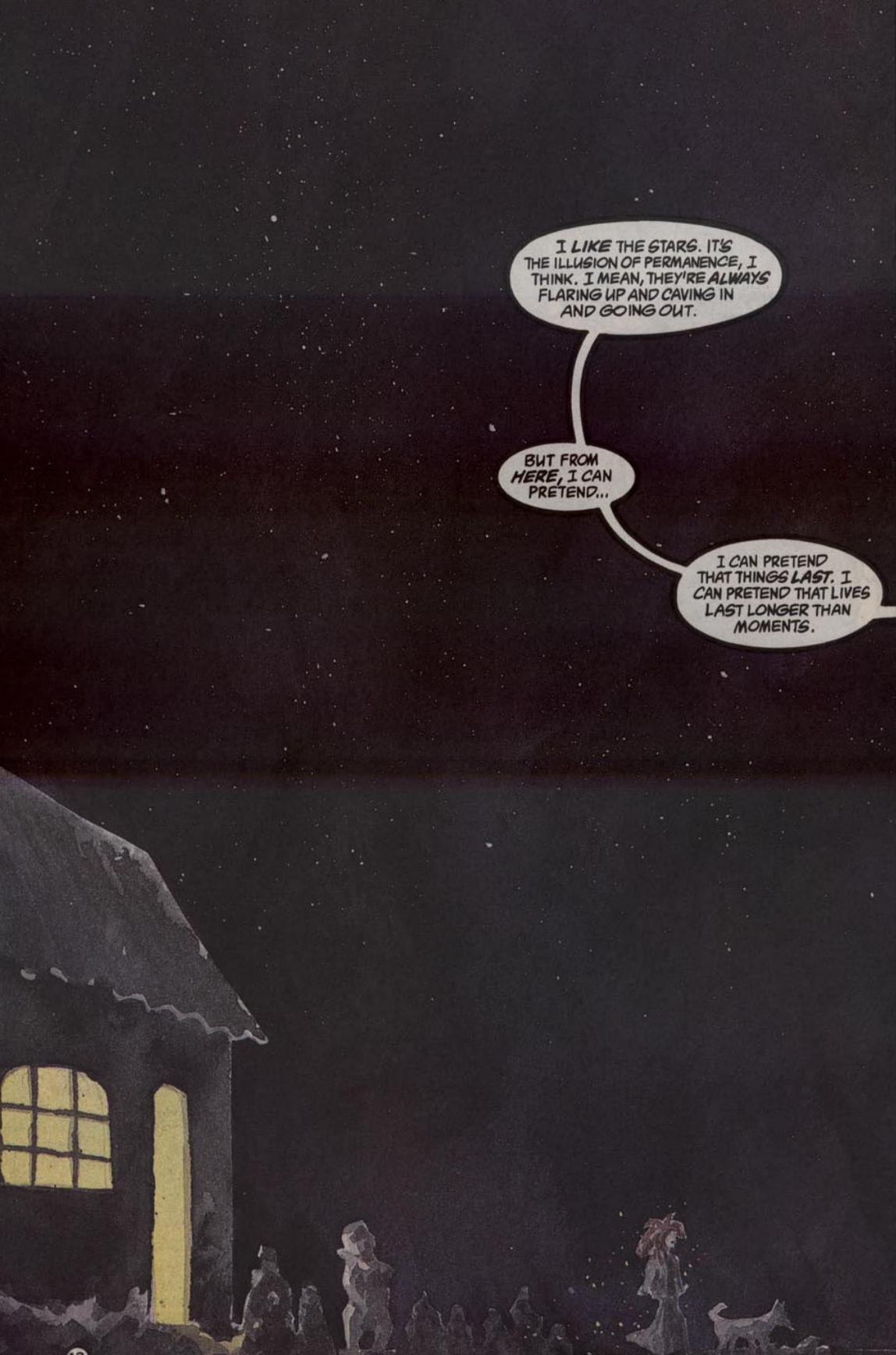
- past was good (in the past that counts and you are still alive)
- present is fun (not always but many simple activities can and the boring and painful ones pass)
- future is worth creating by deciding the present what you want and working to increase the chances that it occurs (life is not deterministic but you can change your chances and act accordingly when an opportunity (that you made possible) occurs)

the other parts exist but they do not help you in living so why focus on them?

Based on Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory



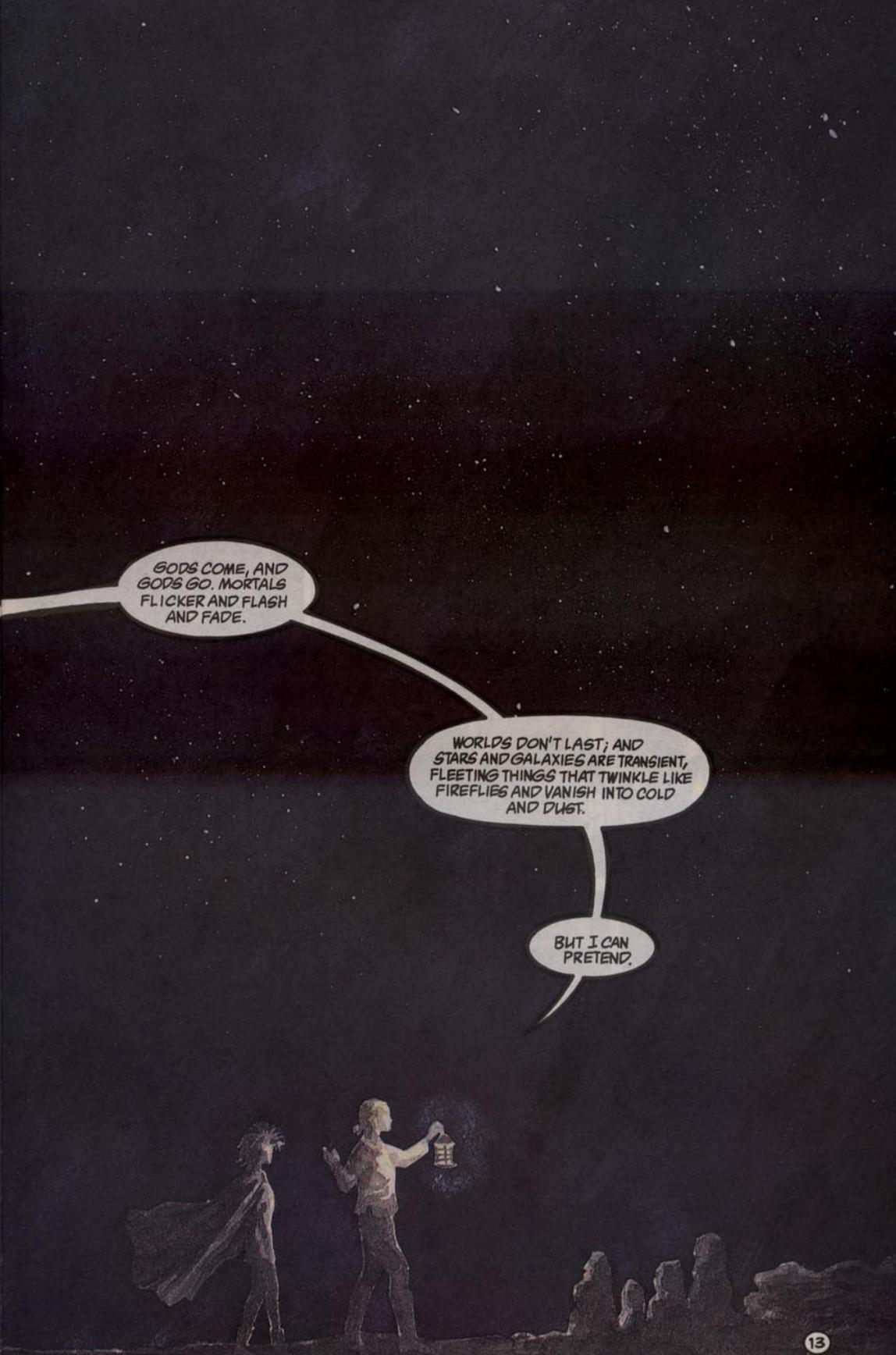


A dark, starry night sky dominates the upper two-thirds of the page. In the bottom left corner, a portion of a dark building is visible, featuring a window with a yellow glow and a doorway. In the bottom right, several small, dark, stylized figures are scattered across the ground. Three speech bubbles are connected by lines, containing text.

I LIKE THE STARS. IT'S
THE ILLUSION OF PERMANENCE, I
THINK. I MEAN, THEY'RE ALWAYS
FLARING UP AND CAVING IN
AND GOING OUT.

BUT FROM
HERE, I CAN
PRETEND...

I CAN PRETEND
THAT THINGS LAST. I
CAN PRETEND THAT LIVES
LAST LONGER THAN
MOMENTS.



GODS COME, AND
GODS GO. MORTALS
FLICKER AND FLASH
AND FADE.

WORLDS DON'T LAST; AND
STARS AND GALAXIES ARE TRANSIENT,
FLEETING THINGS THAT TWINKLE LIKE
FIREFLIES AND VANISH INTO COLD
AND DUST.

BUT I CAN
PRETEND.

work

The graveyards are full of indispensable men.

Charles De Gaulle

Work – Love – Play

Do what you must, but remember that everyone will leave this earth with items still on their to-do list and no one went to the grave wishing they spent another hour at the office.

"People First, Then Technology" by P.G. Daly

"Don't be disappointed, Aunt Hilda. Pop has to work; it's his nature. Me, too. Work is necessary to us. Without it, we're lost." "Well ... yes. But working because you want to is the best sort of play."

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

I do enjoy my work. But I am afraid I've used it as an excuse to avoid the rest of my life.

Star Trek Quotations

One of the symptoms of an approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one's work is terribly important.

Bertrand Russell

"great people to work with, doing work that is important and that matters [to me]"

reasons for a job by Alan Webber

"make lots of money"

"enjoy the work"

"operate within the law"

choose any two

Brian Anderson

You change jobs,
but you keep your career.

Don't hurt your career
by choosing the wrong jobs.

"A man who has risked his life knows that careers are worthless, and a man who will not risk his career has a worthless life."

Children of the Mind

Jobs are only pebbles and pearls
in the chain of your career.

There is a difference between a job and a career —
and both are not necessarily correlated.

Procrastination is like
masturbation. At first it feels
good, but in the end you're only
screwing yourself.

In the business world, everyone is paid in
two coins: cash and experience. Take the
experience first; the cash will come later.

Harold Geneen

Don't waste time learning the 'tricks
of the trade.' Instead, learn the trade.

James Charlton or H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

There are twelve hours in the day,
and above fifty in the night.

Marie de Rabutin-Chantal

If he [Tom Sawyer] had been a great and wise philosopher, like the writer of this book, he would now have comprehended that Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do and Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.

Mark Twain

Hard work spotlights the character of people: some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all.

Sam Ewing

Leisure tends to corrupt, and absolute leisure corrupts absolutely.

Edgar A. Shoaff

The whole point of getting things done is knowing what to leave undone.

Stella Adler
- *Lady Stella Reading*

The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency.

Bill Gates

"Businesses used to be like Christianity; if you were faithful and obedient, you could obtain bliss in the afterlife of retirement. Now its more of a reincarnation model. If a worker learns enough in his current job, he can progress to a higher level of employment elsewhere."

Dogbert in a Dilbert Comic

"I just want to grow in my job, do something meaningful, do more than earn a paycheck until I die."

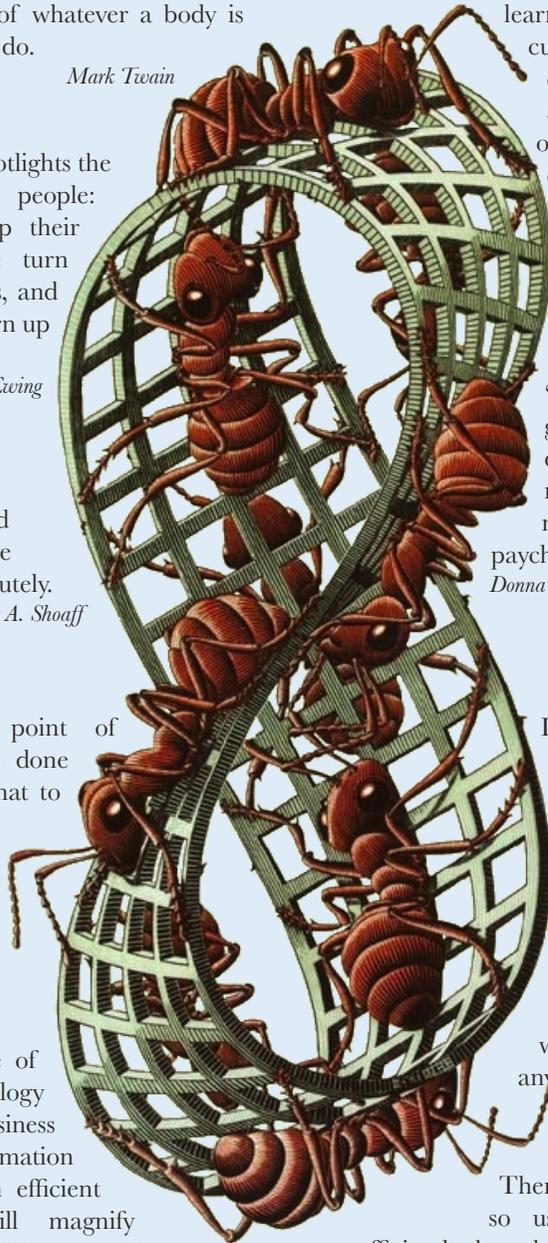
Donna in "The West Wing"

If you want to do everything, you end up doing nothing.

He who waits to do a great deal all at once will never do anything.

There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.

Peter Drucker



Experience taught me a few things.

One is to listen to your gut, no matter how good something sounds on paper.

The second is that you're generally better off sticking with what you know.

And the third is that sometimes your best investments are the ones you don't make.

Donald Trump

Adding staff to a late project makes it later.

An employer once said, 'What if I train my people and they leave.'

I say, what if you don't train them ... and they stay ...

Don't try to tell the customer what he wants. If you want to be smart, be smart in the shower. Then get out, go to work and serve the customer!

Gene Buckley, President, Sikorsky Aircraft

"It's not personal, Sonny.

It's strictly business."

Michael in "The Godfather" (1972)

"It's not personal."

"Not for you, but for me it is."

Quotes taken from actual work performance evaluations

"His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity."

"Since my last report, this employee has reached rock bottom and shows signs of starting to dig."

"This associate is really not so much of a has-been, but more of a definitely won't be."

"When she opens her mouth, it seems that this is only to change whichever foot was previously in there."

"He would be out of his depth in a parking lot puddle."

"Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap."

"He has a knack for making strangers immediately."

"When his I.Q. reaches 50 we should sell."

"Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming."

"Some drink from the fountain of knowledge; he only gargled."

"If you give him a penny for his thoughts, you'd get change."

"If you stand close enough to him, you can hear the ocean."

There has grown up in the minds of certain groups in this country the notion that because a man or a corporation has made a profit out of the public for a number of years, the government and the courts are charged with the duty of guaranteeing such profit in the future, even in the face of changing circumstances and contrary public interest. This strange doctrine is not supported by statute nor common law. Neither individuals nor corporations have any right to come into court and ask that the clock of history be stopped, or turned back, for their private benefit.

The Judge in "Life-Line" by Robert A. Heinlein

A bargain is something you can not use
at a price you can not resist.

Why do some people act as if making money offended their delicate minds? I am out for a legitimate profit, and not ashamed of it; the fact that people will pay money for my goods and services shows that my work is useful.

"Magic Inc." by Robert A. Heinlein



Money

Beware of little expenses;
a small leak will sink a great ship.
Benjamin Franklin

It's cheaper to bribe a stock boy
than the manager.

Anything free is worth what you pay for it.
*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

We can tell our values by looking at
our checkbook stubs.
Gloria Steinem

When a fellow says, "It ain't the money but the principle of the thing,"
it's the money.
Kin Hubbard

It's good to have money and the things
that money can buy, but it's good, too,
to check up once in a while and make
sure that you haven't lost the things that
money can't buy.
George Horace Lorimer

He who dies with the most toys
is still dead.
Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

The trouble with being poor
is that it takes up all your time.
Willem de Kooning

For every talent that poverty has
stimulated it has blighted a hundred.
John Gardner

"I make three assortments in fortune — first-rate, second-rate, and third-rate fortunes. I call those first-rate which are composed of treasures one possesses under one's hand, such as mines, lands, and funded property, in such states as France, Austria, and England, provided these treasures and property form a total of about a hundred millions; I call those second-rate fortunes, that are gained by manufacturing enterprises, joint-stock companies, viceroynalties, and principalities, not drawing more than 1,500,000 francs, the whole forming a capital of about fifty millions; finally, I call those third-rate fortunes, which are composed of a fluctuating capital, dependent upon the will of others, or upon chances which a bankruptcy involves or a false telegram shakes, such as banks, speculations of the day — in fact, all operations under the influence of greater or less mischances, the whole bringing in a real or fictitious capital of about fifteen millions."

The Count in "The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas

Empty pockets never held anyone back.
Only empty heads and empty hearts can do that.
Norman Vincent Peale

It's a kind of spiritual snobbery
that makes people think they
can be happy without money.
Albert Camus

Money problems can always be solved
by a man not frightened by them.

Every man is rich or poor according to
the proportion between his desires and
his enjoyments.

Samuel Johnson

So I kept quiet. I had been almost ruined by too much
money, it had grown me up a bit. I followed the rule of Their
Wisdoms: Leave well enough alone.

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

Luxury: The lust for comfort, that
stealthily thing that enters the house as
a guest, and then becomes a host, and
then a master.

"The Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran, 1923

"Whoever said money can't buy
happiness isn't shopping in the right
places."

Nancy Reagan

Wealth can be very empty when you don't have someone to share it with. But by the
time I realized that, no one would have me ... except men who wanted my money
more than I did.

Aunt Josephine

"Listen, please! When I said, 'I do,' I
resigned as Pop's manager. When you
said, 'I do,' the load landed on you. It
has to be that way, Aunt Hilda. Pop
won't do it; he has other things to think
about, things that take genius. Mama did
it for years, then I learned how, and now
it's your job. Because it can't be farmed
out. Do you understand accountancy?"
"Well, I understand it, I took a course
in it. Have to understand it, or the
government will skin you alive. But I
don't do it, I have accountants for that
— and smart shysters to keep it inside
the law."

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

Never let the revenooers know
anything. Pay cash, keep your lips
closed, put nothing through banks that
does not appear later in tax returns —
pay taxes greater than your apparent
standard of living and declare income
accordingly. We had been audited
three times since Mama died; each
time the government returned a small
"overpayment" — I was building a
reputation of being stupid and honest.

*"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A.
Heinlein*

Regression to middle

You want to repeat an experience that was excellent. But excellent experiences are rare — everything must be perfect. This is seldom the case and the chance that even one tiny bit is different (i.e., worse) is high during the next trial. So, whenever you want to repeat something because it was very good, do not accept a similarly perfect experience.

The Best

... is always the best for you.

To be a fashionable woman is to know yourself, know what you represent, and know what works for you. To be “in fashion” could be a disaster on 90 percent of women. You are not a page out of Vogue.

Media

The media can paint any picture in any color.

Series developer Mark Evanier revealed that Eric's contrary nature was mandated by parents groups and consultants to push the then dominant pro-social moral for cartoons of "The group is always right ... the complainer is always wrong."

Dungeons & Dragons (TV series)

Computer Games

What do you gain by shuffling bits and bytes on a computer that is programmed to be difficult but beatable?

Computers

Computers are more efficient
than human beings. Not better.

Star Trek Quotations

Computers are bicycles for the mind.

Steve Jobs

"as a fairish mechanic, an amateur electron pusher, and as a bloke who has herded unlikely junk through the sky, I never worry about theory as long as machinery does what it is supposed to do. I worry when a machine turns and bites me. That's why I specialize in fail-safes and backups and triple redundancy. I try never to get a machine sore at me. There's no theory for that but every engineer knows it."

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

Technical Progress

Technology should not master your life.

Scientific and technological progress themselves are value-neutral. They are just very good at doing what they do. If you want to do selfish, greedy, intolerant and violent things, scientific technology will provide you with by far the most efficient way of doing so. But if you want to do good, to solve the world's problems, to progress in the best value-laden sense, once again, there is no better means to those ends than the scientific way.

Richard Dawkins

when altering ones mind becomes as easy as programming a computer
what does it mean to be human?

ghost in the shell



YOU & OTHERS



Other People

Love all, trust a few, do wrong to none.

William Shakespeare

Be good at something;
it makes you valuable.

Randy Pausch

When strangers meet,
great allowances should be made
for differences of custom and training.
Lady Jessica from Wisdom of Arrakis in "Heretics of Dune"

Have something to bring
to the table, because
that will make you more
welcomed.

Randy Pausch

Anybody who is 25 or 30 years old has physical
scars from all sorts of things, from tuberculosis to
polio. It's the same with the mind.

Moses R. Kaufman

Never appeal to a man's "better
nature." He may not have one.
Invoking his self-interest gives you
more leverage.

*From the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time
Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

It may help to understand human
affairs to be clear that most of the
great triumphs and tragedies of
history are caused, not by people being
fundamentally good or fundamentally
evil, but by people being fundamentally
people.

Terry Pratchett

I don't trust a man who talks about
ethics when he is picking my pocket.
But if he is acting in his own self-
interest and says so, I have usually
been able to work out some way to do
business with him.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein*

People have one thing in common:
they are all different.

Humans have always feared what they
do not understand.

"The Universe speaks in many languages but only one voice. A language which is not Narn or Human or Centauri or Gaium or Minbari. It speaks in the language of hope. It speaks in the language of trust. It speaks in the language of strength and the language of compassion. It is the language of the heart and of the language of the soul; but always it is the same voice; it is the voice of our ancestors speaking through us, and the voice of our inheritors waiting to be born; it is the small still voice said says: "We are one, no matter the blood, no matter the skin, no matter the world, no matter the star. We are one, no matter the pain, no matter the darkness, no matter the loss, no matter the fear. We are one, here, gathered together in common cause we agree to recognize this singular truth and this singular rule, that we must be kind to one another because each voice enriches us and enobles us, and each voice lost diminishes us. We are the voice of the universe, the soul of creation, the fire that will light the way to a better future. We are one."

G'Kar in Babylon 5: "The Paragon of Animals"

I have learnt silence from the talkative, toleration from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet strange, I am ungrateful to these teachers.

Kahlil Gibran

The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.

William James (1842-1910)

“And you don’t trust Psi Corps?”

“No. Do you?”

“Telepaths are gifted and cursed in ways I can never hope to understand. They are still human beings, good, bad, or indifferent. No. I trust in individuals, not organizations.”

Sheridan and Ivanova in Babylon 5: “Spider in the Web”

Chuck zeroed in on the ringleader, the first guy to nod, first one to raise his hand. A round, fleshy guy, his head shaved and shiny under the light.

"Shutter Island" by Dennis Lehane

Necessary Conditions for Contact to Reduce Intergroup Conflict

1. Equal status among participants both within and outside the contact situation.
2. Cooperative rather than competitive interaction.
3. Institutional support for the contact (e.g., the authorities should support contact).
4. Contact should involve relatively high levels of intimacy (e.g., one-on-one interactions among individual members of the two groups).
5. The outcomes of the contact should be positive.
6. Interaction with similar competence other.
7. Interaction with nonstereotypic other.
8. Similarity in beliefs and values.
9. Contact with a variety of group members in a variety of situations.





2010

Trust

"It is better to have faith in everybody and be deceived occasionally than to mistrust everybody and be deceived almost constantly."

Christian D. Larson

"One must trust, I find.

The art lies in knowing whom to trust."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Trust but lock the door.

She knew how to trust people ... a rare quality, revealing a character far above average.

Cardinal Jean Francois de Retz

The only way to make a man trustworthy is to trust him.

Henry L. Stimson

In the aftermath of betrayal, we often have to struggle to maintain our grip on reality. survival requires a source of self-respect, self-awareness, and self-honesty. We have to find a balance point before reaching out again.

Trial

That's the great law: Never trust another — man, woman or child — if you want to stay alive and safe and out of enemy clutches.

(regarding spies) in Noble House

"You know what's sad about people like you, Lilah? It all comes down to fear."

"Fascinating. Now that we've got that settled ..."

"You're too scared to believe in anything because you're too scared to hope. You won't even open your eyes to the possibility."

Cordelia and Lilah in Angel: "Calvary"

"With all trust comes the possibility of betrayal."

"Then perhaps it is better not to trust."

Picard and Data in Star Trek TNG: "Legacy"

"He's no flatterer," said Ela. "He doesn't tell us what we want. He tells us what we know is true. He didn't win our affection, Mother, he won our trust."

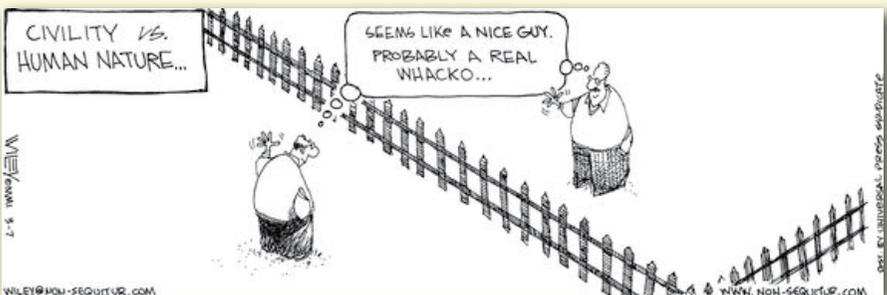
Speaker for the Dead

"Check it. Make sure it's the right thing."

"I trust you."

"One thing has nothin' to do with the other — remember that Léon."

Tony and Léon in "Léon"



Participate

Every community has it's downsides.
Don't leave it out of an emotional response.

The Future is what we make of it -
and decisions are made by those who show up.

The West Wing

Miss Susan was a slightly built young woman, dressed severely all in black. Her hair stood out around her head like an aura, white-blond with one black streak. But the most striking thing about her was... was everything, Lobsang realized, everything from her expression to the way she stood. Some people fade into the background. Miss Susan faded into the foreground. She stood out. Everything she stood in front of became nothing more than background.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

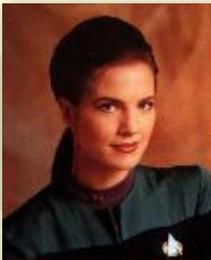
Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some people move our souls to dance. They awaken us to a new understanding with the passing whisper of their wisdom. Some people make the sky more beautiful to gaze upon. They stay in our lives for awhile, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same.

Some never participate. Life happens to them. They get by on little more than dumb persistence and resist with anger or violence all things that might lift them out of resentment-filled illusions of security.

*Alma Mavis Taraza in Dune Vol. 6:
"Chapterhouse Dune"*

I could not, at any age, be content to take my place by the fireside and simply look on. Life was meant to be lived. Curiosity must be kept alive. One must never, for whatever reason, turn his back on life.

Eleanor Roosevelt



"Speak up for yourself while you're here, ok?"
Jadzia Dax in Star Trek DS9: "Playing God"

Be Bold

The nameless are like dust with no one to offer flowers.
Only those with names are honored.
"Record of Lodoss War"

The bold are the only ones who are there ...
and decisions are made by those who show up.

Respect

Respect authority while questioning it.
Randy Pausch

The true measure of a man is how he treats someone
who can do him absolutely no good.
Ann Landers

"I am an elitist, but I have respect for people who don't measure up."
Josh in "The West Wing"

"Real respect takes longer than official respect."
"Ender's Game"

"Let's stick some arsenic into President Bartlet's drinking water and see if he delegates responsibility to the World Bank then." 'President Bartlet'. You referred to me and to the office with respect. You're a class act.

President Bartlet in "The West Wing"

Measuring Will

"Mmm ... boys, being a staff rating, I've served with a lot of high brass. When you are right and a general is wrong, there is only one way to get him to change his mind. You shut up and don't argue. You let the facts speak for themselves and give him time to figure out a logical reason for reversing himself."

"Time for the Stars" by Robert A. Heinlein

He had asked Hagen one final question. "Does this man have real balls?"

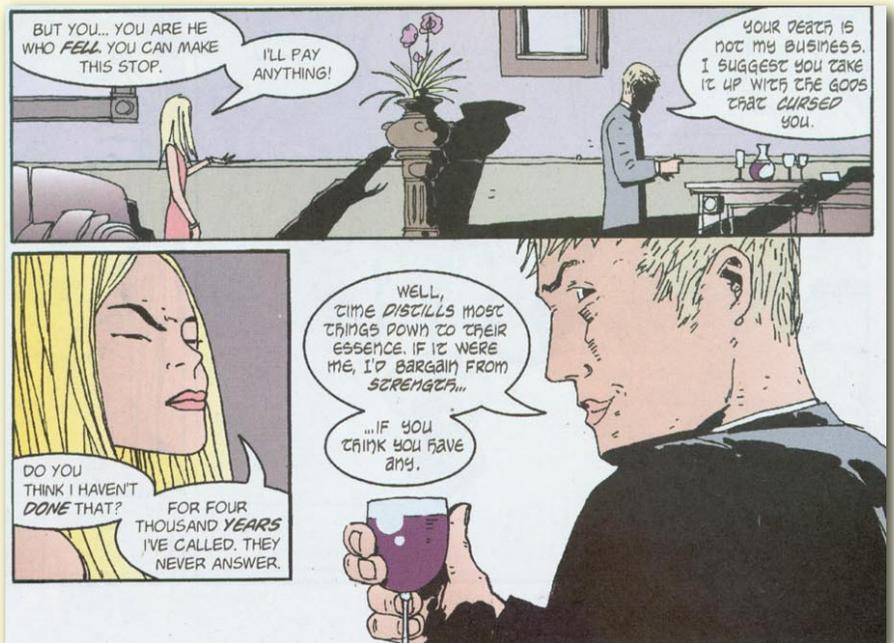
Hagen considered exactly what the Don meant by this question. Over the years he had learned that the Don's values were so different from those of most people that his words also could have a different meaning. Did Woltz have character? Did he have a strong will? He most certainly did, but that was not what the Don was asking. Did the movie producer have the courage not to be bluffed? Did he have the willingness to suffer heavy financial loss delay on his movies would mean, the scandal of his big star exposed as a user of heroin? Again the answer was yes. But again this was not what the Don meant.

Finally Hagen translated the question properly in his mind. Did Jack Woltz have the balls to risk everything, to run the chance of losing all on a matter of principle, on a matter of honor; for revenge?

Hagen smiled. He did it rarely but now he could not resist jesting with the Don. "You're asking if he is a Sicilian." The Don nodded his head pleasantly, acknowledging the flattering witticism and its truth.

"No," Hagen said.

Godfather



openness

The shortest distance between
two people is a smile.

Be open-minded,
but not so open-minded
that your brains fall out.
Stephen A. Kallis, Jr.

Smile — and you'll have reason to smile.

“That's an awful lot of caveats and
addendums there, miss.”

“As I stated, I just want to be clear.”
Mal and Inara in Firefly: Out of Gas

Say what you feel, what you want, what
you expect — because nobody can
accomodate you if they do not know
this, and people who are only pleasing
themselves in interactions profit from a
situation where no-one states their desires.

Britannus [shocked]: “Caesar, this is not proper.”

Theodotus [outraged]: “How?”

Caesar [recovering his self-possession]: “Pardon him Theodotus: he is a barbarian,
and thinks that the customs of his tribe and island are the laws of nature.”

“Caesar and Cleopatra, Act II” by George Bernard Shaw

I have always tried to keep an open
mind ... not to judge someone else's
culture by my own.
Star Trek Quotations

When I meet people from other cultures
I know that they too want happiness
and do not want suffering, this allows
me to see them as brothers and sisters.
Tenzin Gyatso

“Oscar, by your standards — the way you have been raised — I am a bitch.” “Oh,
never! A princess.” “A bitch. But I am not of your country and I was reared by
another code. By my standards, and they seem good to me, I am a moral woman.
Now ... am I still your darling?”

“Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein

You don't judge people for their
thoughts in general, so don't judge
my for my particular fantasies.

One half of the world cannot
understand the pleasures of the other.
Jane Austen (1775-1817)

My favorite thing about the Internet
is that you get to go into the private
world of real creeps without having
to smell them.

Penn Jillett

“A creature that can't be killed wouldn't
think killing was right or wrong. They'd
simply have no concept of it.”

The Sphere



Charisma

Shine and burn for something ... enjoy your life, follow your goals as hard and as devoted as you can. People who have charisma smile, enjoy life, they transfer this ador, this ecstasy to others.

Grace is the absence of everything that indicates pain or difficulty, hesitation or incongruity.

William Hazlitt

Let there be magic in your smile and firmness in your handshake.

Will's part, he admired the massive power of Lord Faa's presence, power tempered by courtesy, and he thought that that would be a good way to behave when he himself was old; John Faa was a shelter and a strong refuge.

"His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman

Lord Asriel was already dominating the room, and although he was careful to be courteous to the Master in the Master's own territory, it was clear where the power lay.

"His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman

I never ad-libbed at all on those parts he corrected, though I often did on the rest – when you get rolling there is often a better, more alive way to say a thing. I began to notice the nature of his corrections; they were almost always eliminations of qualifiers – make it blunter, let 'em like it or lump it!

"Double Star" by Robert A. Heinlein

On what would have been his twenty-second move Scormus of Ar, saying nothing, rose to his feet. He stood beside the board, and then, with one finger, delicately, tipped his Ubar. He set the clocks on their side, stopping the flow of sand, turned, and left the stage.

Beasts of Gor

His hair was slightly grizzled — unusual in that group — and his face looked space tanned. Mary Sperling had noticed him and had wondered who he was — his live face and gusty laugh had interested her.

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

Never ever sound needy.

"You could be a great witch. You could be anything. Anything you want. Come into the circle. Let me show you."

The girl takes a few steps forward, and then hesitates. There is something about the woman's tone. The smile is pleasant and friendly, but there is something in the voice too desperate, too urgent, too hungry."

"Lords and Ladies" by Terry Pratchett

A smile costs nothing but gives much. It enriches those who receive without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he cannot get along without it and none is so poor that he cannot be made rich by it. Yet a smile cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away. Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give.

Take care that the face that looks out from the mirror in the morning is a pleasant face. You may not see it again during the day, but others will.

A smile is the light in the window of your face that tells people you're at home.

We're all hookers. What matters is dignity.

Mike Farren

'OK.' Carrot still didn't look around. 'We'll hold the city together through the rest of the night, I think. Everyone's seen sense.'

No they haven't, said Angua in the privacy of her own head. They've seen you. It's like hypnotism. People live your vision. You-dream, just like Big Fido, only he dreamed a nightmare and you dream for everyone. You really think everyone is basically nice. Just for a moment, while they are near you, everyone else believes it too.

From a Discworld-Novel by Terry Pratchett



Leadership

“A king is a man strong of character and conviction who leads by example and truly cares for the sufferings of his people, not a brute who rules simply because he is the strongest.”

“Icewind Dale” by R.A. Salvatore

Because these fools always look up for power. People above you, they never want to share power with you. Why you look to them? They give you nothing. People below you, you give them hope, you give them respect, *they* give you power, cause they don't think they have any, so they don't mind giving it up.

Ender's Shadow

Bartlet represents, in many ways, an “ideal liberal president,” endowed with a fierce intellect, great (though not infallible) personal integrity and toughness, but tempered with essential compassion for the less fortunate and a sense of humor.

You don't have to hold a position in order to be a leader.

“The College Blue Book” by Anthony J. D'Angelo

“The key to Wolfram and Hart: don't let them make you play their game. You got to make them play yours.”

Lindsey in Angel

“Go to the north. The decisive battle will be fought there.”

“Why didn't you build a fence there?”

“A good fort needs a gap. The enemy must be lured in. So we can attack them. If we only defend, we lose the war.”

The Seven Samurai

For Bean, the assignment was merely to think of the unthinkable — stupid ploys that might be used against them, and ways to counter them; equally stupid innovations they might introduce in order to sow confusion among the other armies and, Bean suspected, get them sidetracked into imitating completely nonessential strategies. Since few of the other commanders understood why Dragon Army was winning, they kept imitating the nonce tactics used in a particular battle instead of seeing the underlying method Ender used in training and organizing his army. As Napoleon said, the only thing a commander ever truly controls is his own army — training, morale, trust, initiative, command and, to a lesser degree, supply, placement, movement, loyalty, and courage in battle. What the enemy will do and what chance will bring, those defy all planning. The commander must be able to change his plans abruptly when obstacles or opportunities appear. If his army isn't ready and willing to respond to his will, his cleverness comes to nothing.

Ender's Shadow

“Having once received His Majesty’s commission to be general of his forces, there are certain commands of His Majesty which, acting in that capacity, I am unable to accept.”

Sun Tzu

Lack of respect has to be earned.

Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

A leader leads by example,
whether he intends to or not.

“Maximus, I would like to inspect the Felix Regiment at dawn. Please arrange it.”

“I can’t do that.”

“Excuse me?”

“My men have been fighting for five solid days. They’re too busy dying to go on dress parade.”

Commodus and Maximus in “Gladiator”

“... I can make an army to take Tar Valon. So long as you know the taking will be bloody and long. But these are my conditions. First the command is mine. You tell me what I do, but I decide how. You give commands to me, and I give them to the soldiers under me, not you. Not unless I have agreed to it first. I assign men, I promote them, and I discipline them. Not you. Second, if I tell you it can’t be done, you will consider what I say. I don’t ask to usurp your authority – yet I do not want to waste men because you do not understand war. Third, if you begin this, you will stay the course. I will be putting my head in a noose, and every man who follows along with me, and should you decide half a year from now that Elaida as Amyrlin is preferable to war, you will pull that noose tight for everyone of us who can be hunted down. The nations may stay out of civil war in the Tower, but they’ll not let us live if you abandon us. Elaida is see to that.”

Gareth Bryne in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.

Albert Schweitzer

The job of a leader is not only to make decisions but also to make sense.

Alan Webber

Command must always look confident, he thought. All that faith riding on your shoulders while you sit in the critical seat and never show it.

Dune by Frank Herbert

I don’t expect executives to be creative but I do expect them to have courage.

Rita Mae Brown

You can’t lead anyone else further than you have gone yourself.

Gene Mauch

“My youngest daughter’s got a big mouth.” [A lengthy silence falls between them. Bartlet looks uncomfortable.]

“No, she doesn’t, sir. She wanted me to be on the lookout for certain physical signs so I could tell the First Lady.” [Several moments pass while Bartlet absorbs this information. He sighs.]

“We won’t discuss this any more for the time being. It’ll be public soon enough. And the more conversations you have with me, the more lawyers you’re gonna have to talk to, and they bill in an hour what you take home in a week, so we won’t discuss it except to say this you’re gonna be subpoenaed. I’m confident in your loyalty to me. I’m confident in your love for me. If you lie to protect me, if you lie just once, if you lie just a little, if you lie ‘cause you can’t stand what’s happening to me and the people making it happen, if you ever, ever lie ...” [Charlie finally looks over at Bartlet.] “... you’re finished with me, you understand?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Say you understand.”

“I understand, sir.”

Bartlet and Charlie in “The West Wing”

We distinguish the excellent man from the common man by saying that the former is the one who makes great demands on himself, and the latter who makes no demands on himself.

José Ortega y Gasset

“When a man is convinced he is gonna die tomorrow, he probably gonna find a way to make it happen.”

Guinan in Star Trek TNG:

“The Best of Both Worlds Part 2”

When the bosses talk about improving productivity,
they are never talking about themselves.

Vansen: “Saratoga, this is Demios at nineteen hundred hours. We report signs of other survivors on the planet ...”

Hawkes: “Tell them we need supplies.”

Vansen: “... none have come forward to the airfield ...”

Hawkes: “Enough foot powder or shoe laces, we need food! [grabs the radio] Listen to me! I know you left us here to die ... This radio is dead.”

Vansen and Hawkes, abandoned on an enemy planet without support or food, Vansen keeps her group alive by giving them something to do: transmit a status report every day at the same time until help arrives, while hiding the fact that the radio broke days ago, in “Space 2063”

The development of ‘Balance Of Power’ reminds me of the use of paratroops in WW2. After much trial and error, the strategists eventually learned that the real value of paratroops lay in their powers to motivate regular troops to fight to rescue the paras. It’s difficult to inspire soldiers to risk their lives to win a patch of ground, but when they know that their comrades are just ahead, surrounded by the enemy, counting on the regular troops to save them, the regular troops will fight with unparalleled determination. Paratroops, then, allow the commander to set a clear and tough goal for his troops to reach. Using paratroops is like putting yourself in a deep hole to see if you can dig yourself out of it.

Chris Crawford, “Balance Of Power”

“What kills me is that I know that I’m right. I just wish I could get them to see it.”

“That, my friend, is the key to leadership – not only knowing you’re right, but convincing everyone else. If you can do that, the world’s your oyster.”

Clark and Lex in “Smallville”

“To lead, is neither to push nor to pull.”

Leane in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

A chief is a man who assumes responsibility. He says “I was beaten,” he does not say “My men were beaten.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

“She asked me to tell her what it is to rule,” Paul said. “And I said that one commands. And she said I had some unlearning to do.” She hit a mark there right enough, Hawat thought. He nodded for Paul to continue. “She said a ruler must learn to persuade and not to compel. She said he must lay the best coffee hearth to attract the finest men.” “How’d she figure your father attracted men like Duncan and Gurney?” Hawat asked. Paul shrugged. “Then she said a good ruler has to learn his world’s language, that it’s different for every world. And I thought she meant they didn’t speak Galach on Arrakis, but she said that wasn’t it at all. She said she meant the language of the rocks and growing things, the language you don’t hear just with your ears. And I said that’s what Dr. Yueh calls the Mystery of Life.”

Dune by Frank Herbert

“The Captain once told me: ‘The person is expendable, the job is not.’
We keep going.”

Ivanova to Marcus in Babylon 5: “The Face of the Enemy”

“I’m only gonna say this once. The guys you send to create those diversions are gonna die.”

“Yes they are. You try not to get anybody killed you wind up getting everybody killed. Get ready to move out.”

Gunn and Wesley in Angel Episode #44: “There’s No Place Like Phtz Glrb”

“To be a good soldier you must love the army. To be a good commander you must be able to order the death of the thing you love.”

General Lee in “Gettysburg”

"A general can take care of the living
or weep for the dead,
but he cannot do both."

Wheel of Time

“The one who I choose will be the best man to rule Egypt. I owe that to my fathers, not to my sons.”

Sethi in “The Ten Commandments”

As far as we can look back into history, the downfall of any nation can be traced from the moment that nation became timid about spending its best blood.

Frederick Russell Burnham

“The whole theory of warfare is calculated risk,” the Duke said, “but when it comes to risking your own family, the element of calculation gets submerged in ... other things.”

Duke Leto Atrides in “Dune” by Frank Herbert

And Kynes, returning the stare, found himself troubled by a fact he had observed here: This Duke was concerned more over the men that he was over the spice. He risked his own life and that of his son to save the men. He passed off the loss of a spice crawler with a gesture. The threat to men's lives had him in a rage. A leader such as that would command fanatic loyalty. He would be difficult to defeat. Against his own will and all previous judgments, Kynes admitted to himself: I like this Duke.

Dune by Frank Herbert

The worst sin a general can commit, worse than blundering, worse than losing, worse than anything, is to desert the men who depend on him."

Wheel of Time

His mother's words had provoked another train of thought in Paul—a duke's concern for all the people they'd lost this night. People are the true strength of a Great House, Paul thought.

Dune by Frank Herbert

"There are those among my young men who have reached the age of wild spirits," he said. "They must be eased through this period. I must leave no great reasons around for them to challenge me. Because I would have to maim and kill among them. This is not the proper course for a leader if it can be avoided with honor. A leader, you see, is one of the things that distinguishes a mob from a people. He maintains the level of individuals. Too few individuals, and a people reverts to a mob."

Dune by Frank Herbert

The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it.

Teddy Roosevelt

"Somebody once said that in looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don't have the first, the other two will kill you. You think about it; it's true. If you hire somebody without the first, you really want them to be dumb and lazy."

Warren Buffet

Leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders.

Tom Peters

Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.

George S. Patton

"Give as few orders as possible," his father had told him ... once ... long ago. "Once you've given orders on a subject, you must always give orders on that subject."

Dune by Frank Herbert

"When we Shienarans ride, every man knows who is next in line if the man in command falls. A chain unbroken right down to the last man left. That way, you see, even if he is the last man, he is not just a straggler running and trying to stay alive. He has the command, and duty calls him to do what must be done."

Ingvar in "The Wheel of Time" by Robert Jordan

“We’re all broken — every single one of us — and yet we pretend that we’re not. We all live lives of imperfection and yet we cling to the fantasy that there’s a perfect life and that our leaders should embody it, but if we expect our leaders to live on some higher moral plane than the rest of us, well, we’re just asking to be deceived... Don’t vote for us because you think we’re perfect. Don’t vote for us because of what we might be able to do for you only. Vote for the person who shares your ideals, your hopes, your dreams. Vote for the person who most embodies what you believe we need to keep our nation strong and free.”

Santos in “The West Wing”

“Never become more popular than the boss, unless you intend to sack him.”

Baron Vladimir Harkonnen in “Dune” (2000)

Bean knew his enthusiasm was probably giving Wiggin credit for more than he had actually planned, but he was still full of the glow of victory. And besides, what he was saying was true — Wiggin was no Napoleon, holding on to the reins of control so tightly that none of his commanders was capable of brilliant independent command. Crazy Tom had performed well under pressure. He had made the right decisions — including the decision to listen to his smallest, most useless-looking soldier. And Crazy Tom had done that because Wiggin had set the example by listening to his toon leaders. You learn, you analyze, you choose, you act.

Ender’s Shadow

For the one thing that stood out as this empirical way of running an empire grew up was that the answer to most problems was: Don’t do anything. Always King Log, never King Stork — “Live and let live.” “Let well enough alone.” “Time is the best physician.” “Let sleeping dogs lie.” “Leave them alone and they’ll come home, wagging their tails behind them.”

“Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein

Don’t underestimate the value of Doing Nothing, of just going along, listening to all the things you can’t hear, and not bothering.

Pooh’s Little Instruction Book, inspired by A. A. Milne

The executive exists to make sensible exceptions to general rules.

Elting E. Morison

But she did no official entertaining and felt no obligation to attend social affairs. She did not hold press conferences, make speeches, receive delegations of Girl Scouts, lay cornerstones, proclaim special “Days,” make ceremonial appearances, sign papers, deny rumors, nor any of the time-gnawing things that sovereigns and VIPs do on Earth. She consulted individuals, often summoning them from other universes, and she had at her disposal all the news from everywhere, organized in a system that had been developed over centuries. It was through this system that she decided what problems to consider. One chronic complaint was that the Imperium ignored “vital questions” — and so it did. Her Wisdom passed judgment only on problems she selected; the bedrock of the system was that most problems solved themselves.

“Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein

Politics and Government

Job description of the government

- Secure the future of the human race.
- Secure knowledge and character education.
- Advance knowledge and technology.
- Protect the environment.

Love your country,
but never trust its government.
Robert A. Heinlein.

The most important political office
is that of the private citizen.
Louis Brandeis

“There is no such thing as a dirty game. But you sometimes run into dirty players.”
“I don’t see the difference.” “There is a world of difference. Quiroga is a third-rater
and a stooge-in my opinion, a stooge for villains. But there is nothing third-rate
about John Joseph Bonforte and he has never, ever been a stooge for anyone. As a
follower, he believed in the cause; as the leader, he has led from conviction!”

Discussion about politics and politicians in “Double Star” by Robert A. Heinlein



There is solemn satisfaction in
doing the best you can for eight
billion people. Perhaps their lives
have no cosmic significance, but
they have feelings. They can hurt.
“Double Star” by Robert A. Heinlein

Westerwelle brachte es einmal auf die
simple Formel: “Meine Politik fördert
die Fleißigen, schützt die Schwachen
und bestraft die Faulen. Es gibt kein
Recht auf staatlich bezahlte Faulheit.”

A politician thinks of the next election;
a statesman thinks of the next
generation.
James Freeman Clarke, Sermon

Her mother had lectured her often on
how a nation was led as well as how it
was governed, two very different things,
but both necessary. And sometimes
things had to be done for both that
were worse than unpleasant, although
the price of not doing them was worse
still.

Wheel of Time

“The Founding Fathers didn’t set up a
government based on trust. They could
have designed a government based on
trust in our ability to govern fairly but
they knew that power corrupts so they
invented checks and balances. That was
genius.”

Vinick in “The West Wing”

All societies are based on rules to protect pregnant women and young children. All else is surplusage, excrescence, adornment, luxury, or folly which can – and must – be dumped in emergency to preserve this prime function. As racial survival is the only universal morality, no other basic is possible. Attempts to formulate a “perfect society” on any foundation other than “Women and children first!” is not only witless, it is automatically genocidal. Nevertheless, starry-eyed idealists (all of them male) have tried endlessly – and no doubt will keep on trying.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

“The national budget must be balanced. The public debt must be reduced; the arrogance of the authorities must be moderated and controlled. Payments to foreign governments must be reduced, if the nation doesn’t want to go bankrupt. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero, 55 BC (106-43 BC)

People, not commercial organizations or chains of command, are what makes great civilizations work. Every civilization depends upon the quality of the individuals it produces. If you over-organize humans, over-legalize them, suppress their urge to greatness — they cannot work and their civilization collapses.

*A letter to CHOAM Attributed to the Preacher
Children of Dune (1976)*

All governments suffer a recurring problem: Power attracts pathological personalities. It is not that power corrupts but that it is magnetic to the corruptible. Such people have a tendency to become drunk on violence, a condition to which they are quickly addicted.

*Missionaria Protectiva, Text QIV (decto)
in Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”*

Too bad all the people who know how to run the country are busy driving taxi cabs and cutting hair.

George Burns

Cheops’ Law: Nothing ever get built on schedule or within budget.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein*

Ideas instead of ideologies.
Pragmatism instead of polemic.

The people will take a certain amount of reform, then they want a rest. But the reforms stay. People don’t really want change, any change at all-and xenophobia is very deep-rooted. But we progress, as we must-if we are to go out to the stars. Again and again I have asked myself: “What would Bonforte do?” I am not sure that my answers have always been right (although I am sure that I am the best-read student in his works in the System). But I have tried to stay in character in his role. A long time ago someone – Voltaire? – someone said, “If Satan should ever replace God he would find it necessary to assume the attributes of Divinity.”

“Double Star” by Robert A. Heinlein

Josh: "What I did wrong wasn't breaking my word. It was making a promise I couldn't keep in the first place."

Man: "I'm educated, I work as hard as anybody and this isn't the first time I've lost my job. Where does it end? Am I gonna be working at a video rental counter next to some high-school dropout?"

Josh: "Ten years ago, I worked for this Senate candidate. He had this idea that health care, pensions, even vacation time ought to be portable, that it should follow you from job to job, cause everyone was gonna work 15 jobs in a lifetime. Might as well fly in the teeth of it. And we talked him out of it. We told him he was scaring the bejeesus out of people. Who wants to know about 15 jobs? Maybe we should have done that, I don't know."

Woman: "What do you know, Mr. Lyman?"

Josh: "We can't save your jobs. We are gonna create more in the long run, but we can't save your jobs. It's the short run we gotta figure out. The world's moving faster, we can't stop it. I wish we could. We are gonna do more to prepare you. We have to."

[He gets up to leave. The woman stands up and speaks to him.]

Woman: "Is that a promise?"

Josh: "No, but we're gonna try."

"The West Wing"

"The Lend-Lease Act." "Yeah. Simply put, a loan of arms to Russia and Britain, with the understanding that they'd pay us back when the war was over. And he said this, he said, "If your neighbor's house is on fire, you don't haggle over the price of your garden hose." Frank Kelly in South Carolina wouldn't ... There are too many things in the world we can't do. Mexico's on fire. Why help them? Because we can."

Donna and Josh in "The West Wing"

Political tags – such as royalist, communist, democrat, populist, fascist, liberal, conservative, and so forth – are never basic criteria. The human race divides politically into those who want people to be controlled and those who have no such desire. The former are idealists acting from the highest motives for the greatest good of the greatest number. The latter are surly curmudgeons, suspicious and lacking in altruism. But they are more comfortable neighbors than the other sort.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

We anarchists do not want to emancipate the people; we want the people to emancipate themselves.

Errico Malatesta, l'Agitazione, 18 June 1897

People, if given the choice between anarchy and dictatorship, will always choose dictatorship because anarchy is the worst dictatorship of all.

Eric Sevareid

Many politicians are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim.

Thomas Macaulay

"So what difference is there between our voters and wielders of franchise in the past? Under our system every voter and officeholder is a man who has demonstrated through voluntary and difficult service that he places the welfare of the group ahead of personal advantage. And that is the one practical difference. He may fail in wisdom, he may lapse in civic virtue. But his average performance is enormously better than that of any other class of rulers in history."

Major Reid in "Starship Troopers" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Sir, why not go – well, got to the limit? Require everyone to serve and let everybody vote?" "Young man, can you restore my eyesight?" "Sir? Why, no, sir!" "You would find it much easier than to instill moral virtue – social responsibility – into a person who doesn't have it, doesn't want it, and resents having the burden thrust on him. This is why we make it so hard to enroll, so easy to resign. Social responsibility above the level of family, or at most of tribe, requires imagination – devotion, loyalty, all the higher virtues – which a man must develop himself; if he has them forced down him, he will vomit them out. Conscript armies have been tried in the past. Look up in the library the psychiatric report on brainwashed prisoners in the so-called "Korean War", circa 1950 – the Mayor Report.

"Starship Troopers" by Robert A. Heinlein

'Democracy.' A curious delusion — as if adding zeros could produce a sum.

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

"The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter."

Winston Churchill

Democracy can't work. Mathematicians, peasants, and animals, that's all there is — so democracy, a theory based on the assumption that mathematicians and peasants are equal, can never work. Wisdom is not additive; its maximum is that of the wisest man in a given group.

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

"None. Especially as you are not. Wherever you go, you will make yourself felt, you won't be one of the herd. I respect you, and I don't respect many. Never people as a whole, I could never be a democrat at heart. To claim to 'respect' and even to 'love' the great mass with their yaps at one end and smelly feet at the other requires the fatuous, uncritical, saccharine, blind, sentimental slobbishness found in some nursery supervisors, most spaniel dogs, and all missionaries. It isn't a political system, it's a disease. But be of good cheer; your American politicians are immune to this disease ... and your customs allow the non-zero elbow room."

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

"But a democratic form of government is okay, as long as it doesn't work. Any social organization does well enough if it isn't rigid. The framework doesn't matter as long as there is enough looseness to permit that one man in a multitude to display his genius. Most so-called social scientists seem to think that organization is everything. It is almost nothing—except when it is a straitjacket. It is the incidence of heroes that counts, not the pattern of zeros." He added, "Your country has a system free enough to let its heroes work at their trade. It should last a long time — unless its looseness is destroyed from inside."

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

But the intent has always been moralistic: to provide stable and benevolent government. All systems seek to achieve this by limiting franchise to those who are believed to have the wisdom to use it justly. I repeat all systems; even the so-called “unlimited democracies” excluded from franchise not less than one quarter of their populations by age, birth, poll tax, criminal record, or other. I have never been able to see how a thirty-year-old moron can vote more wisely than a fifteen-year-old genius ... but that was the age of the “divine right of the common man”. The sovereign franchise has been bestowed by all sorts of rules – place of birth, family of birth, race, sex, property, education, age, religion, et cetera. All these systems worked and none of them well. All were regarded as tyrannical by many, all eventually collapsed or were overthrown.

“Starship Troopers” by Robert A. Heinlein

If you are part of a society that votes, then do so. There may be no candidates and no measures you want to vote for ... but there are certain to be ones you want to vote against. In case of doubt, vote against. By this rule you will rarely go wrong.

If this is too blind for your taste, consult some well-meaning fool (there is always one around) and ask his advice. Then vote the other way. This enables you to be a good citizen (if such is your wish) without spending the enormous amount of time on it that truly intelligent exercise of franchise requires.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

“I was watching a television program before, with a kind of roving moderator who spoke to a seated panel of young women who were having some sort of problem with their boyfriends – apparently, because the boyfriends had all slept with the girlfriends’ mothers. And they brought the boyfriends out, and they fought, right there on television. Toby, tell me: these people don’t vote, do they?”

President Bartlet in “The West Wing”

“I know. The fact is the opponents of the treaty are on both sides of the isle. You’ve got to respect them, Toby. They’re politicians and they’re flying in the face of overwhelming public opinion.” “I have to respect senators for defying 82% of American people?” “Can I tell you something, honestly? This is one of those situations where I couldn’t give a damn what the people think. The complexities of a global arms treaty, the technological, the military, the diplomatic nuances, it’s staggering, Toby. 82% of the people cannot possibly be expected to reach an informed decision. [beat] You want to call a session anyway?”

Bartlet and Toby in “The West Wing”

What is supposed to happen in a democracy is that each sovereign citizen will always vote in the public interest for the safety and welfare of all. But what does happen is that he votes his own self-interest as he sees it ...

Jubal Harshaw in “Stranger In A Strange Land” by Robert A. Heinlein

If one man offers you democracy and another offers you a bag of grain, at what stage of starvation will you prefer the grain to the vote?

Bertrand Russell



war

War is not violence and killing, pure and simple; war is controlled violence, for a purpose. The purpose of war is to support your government's decisions by force. The purpose is never to kill the enemy just to be killing him but to make him do what you want him to do. Not killing ... but controlled and purposeful violence.

Sgt. Zim in "Starship Troopers" by Robert A. Heinlein

"My mother says that violence never settles anything."

"So. I'm sure the city fathers of Carthage would be glad to know that. Why doesn't your mother tell them so? Or why don't you?"

"You're making fun of me! Everybody knows that Carthage was destroyed!"

"You seemed to be unaware of it, since you do know it, wouldn't you say that violence had settled their destinies rather thoroughly? However, I was not making fun on you personally; I was heaping scorn on an inexcusably silly idea – a practice I shall always follow. Anyone who clings to the historically untrue – and thoroughly immoral – doctrine that 'violence never settles anything' I would advise to conjure up the ghosts of Napoleon Bonaparte and of the Duke of Wellington and let them debate it. The ghost of Hitler could referee, and the jury might well be the Dodo, the Great Auk, and the Passenger Pigeon. Violence, naked force, has settled more issues in history than has any other factor, and the contrary opinion is wishful thinking at its worst. Breed that forget this basic truth have always paid for it with their lives and freedoms."

"Starship Troopers" by Robert A. Heinlein



"The guy across the street is beating up a pregnant woman. You don't go over and try and stop it?" "Guy across the street is beating up anybody, I like to think I go over and try to stop it, but we're not talking about the President going to Asia or the President going to Rwanda or the President going to Qumar. We're talking about the President sending other people's kids to do that." "That's always what we're talking about, and in addition to being somebody's kids, they're soldiers and sailors, and if we're about freedom from tyranny, then we're about freedom from tyranny, and if we're not, we should shut up." "I'm not indifferent to that, but knuckleheaded self-destruction is never going to burn itself out,

you really want to send your kids across the street into the fire?" "Want to? No. Should I? Yes." "Why? And don't give me a lefty answer." "A lefty answer is all I've got." "Why are you sending your kids across the street?" "Cause those are somebody's kids, too."

C. J. and Toby in "The West Wing"



Once and for all the idea of glorious victories won by the glorious army must be wiped out. Neither side is glorious. On either side they're just frightened men messing their pants and they all want the same thing – not to lie under the earth, but to walk upon it – without crutches.

Peter Weiss

“You still think it’s beautiful to die for your country. The first bombardment taught us better. When it comes to dying for country, it’s better not to die at all.”

Paul Baumer in “All Quiet on the Western Front” (1930)

People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf.

Attributed to both George Orwell and Winston Churchill

It is the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press. It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech. It is the soldier, not the campus organizer, who has given us the freedom to demonstrate. It is the soldier, who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag.

Charles M. Province

480 B.C.

KING LEONIDAS OF SPARTA AND HIS PERSONAL GUARD OF THREE HUNDRED MEN READY THEMSELVES FOR BATTLE. THE FATE OF HUMANITY IS AT STAKE.

OUT OF PERSIA THUNDERS THE MIGHTIEST MILITARY FORCE EVER ASSEMBLED. THE EARTH SHUDDERS WITH THE IMPACT OF ITS MARCH. IT DRINKS THE RIVERS DRY. IT DEVOURS LIVESTOCK LIKE SOME HUNGRY, ANGRY GOD.

IT PAUSES, POISED TO VANQUISH TINY GREECE, TO CRUSH HER IMPERTINENT INVENTION OF DEMOCRACY AND EXTINGUISH THE ONLY LIGHT OF REASON IN THE WORLD.

THE SPARTANS ARE OUTNUMBERED A HUNDRED THOUSAND TO ONE-- BUT LEONIDAS HAS CHOSEN HIS BATTLE SITE WITH CARE: THE MOUNTAIN PASS CALLED *HOT GATES*. FUNNELED INTO THIS NARROW CORRIDOR, THE PERSIANS FIND THEIR NUMBERS *USELESS*. THE SPARTANS HOLD THEIR GROUND JUST LONG ENOUGH FOR SLUMBERING GREECE TO WAKE AND RALLY HER SONS FOR WAR.

THE HOPE OF CIVILIZATION IS KEPT ALIVE BY SPARTAN *COURAGE*-- AND A CAREFUL CHOICE OF *WHERE TO FIGHT*.



Shoot the dictator and prevent the war? But the dictator is merely the tip of the whole festering boil of social pus from which dictators emerge; shoot one, and there'll be another one along in a minute. Shoot him too? Why not shoot everyone and invade Poland? In fifty years', thirty years', ten years' time the world will be very nearly back on its old course. History always has a great weight of inertia. Almost always ...

“Lords and Ladies” by Terry Pratchett

“You see,” said Crowley, his voice leaden with fatalistic gloom, “it doesn’t really work that simply. You think wars get started because some old duke gets shot, or someone cuts off someone’s ear, or someone’s sited their missiles in the wrong place. It’s not like that. That’s just, well, just reasons, which haven’t got anything to do with it. What really causes wars is two sides that can’t stand the sight of one another and the pressure builds up and up and then anything will cause it. Anything at all.”

“Good Omens” by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman

When war is declared,
truth is the first casualty.

“Falsehood in Wartime” by Arthur Ponsonby, 1928

All wars are fought for the sake
of getting money.

Plato



“Conquest is easy. Control is not.”

Kirk in Star Trek TOS: “Mirror, Mirror”

It is easier to lead men to combat, stirring up their passions, than to restrain them and direct them toward the patient labors of peace.

André Gide, Journals, 13 September 1938



And when you have conquered the world, what are you going to do with it?





Not state has the inherent right to survive through conscript troops and, in the long run, not state ever has. Roman matrons used to say to their sons: “Come back with your shield, or on it.” Later on, this custom declined. So did Rome.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Murphy’s Military Laws:

The most dangerous thing in the combat zone is an officer with a map.

Bad intelligence kills good soldiers.

Andromeda

The object of war is not to die for your country
but to make the other bastard die for his.

General George Patton (1885-1945)

no surrender,
no retreat,
no survivors

“Anytime you lose a war, you just ...
you just wait a few years, and you’ll
hear from everyone who thought that
we could’ve won if they had done the
fighting.”

“Except, of course, Captain, we
didn’t lose the war. The Minbari did
surrender.”

“Of course.”

*Sheridan and Cynthia Torqueman in
Babylon 5: “And Now For a Word”*

“You know that it’s my first duty of a
prisoner to try to escape?”

“It’s my first duty as a guard to shot you,
if you try.”

“Peace isn’t merely the absence of
conflict, but the presence of justice.”
President Marshall in “Air Force One” (1997)



Keep your borders and your distance

Center is such a hash of cultures, races, customs, and styles
that it has few rules. The one invariant custom was:

'Don't impose your customs on me.'

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

Think for yourselves
and let others enjoy the privilege to do so, too.

Voltaire

Do not let others influence
you in the way you are.

"Of course I'm right!" she retorted. "I'm always right."

"Goodness me! The handy-dandy pocket encyclopedia."

She blushed. "I can't help being a genius."

Which left her wide open and I was about to rub her nose in it – when I saw how unhappy she looked.

I remembered hearing Dad say: "Some people insist that 'mediocre' is better than 'best.' They delight in clipping wings because they themselves can't fly. They despise brains because they have none. Pfah!"

"Have Space Suit will Travel" by Robert A. Heinlein

William wondered why he always disliked people who said 'no offence meant'. Maybe it was because they found it easier to say 'no offence meant' than actually refrain from giving offence.

"The Truth" by Terry Pratchett

He thought: the worst thing about Vorbis isn't that he's evil, but that he makes good people do evil. He turns people into things like himself. You can't help it. You catch it off him.

"Small Gods" by Terry Pratchett

The correct way to punctuate a sentence that starts: "Of course it is none of my business but -" is to place a period after the word "but." Don't use excessive force in supplying such moron with a period. Cutting his throat is only a momentary pleasure and is bound to get you talked about.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

Thing that got me was not her list of things she hated, since she was obviously crazy as a Cyborg, but fact that always somebody agreed with her prohibitions. Must be a yearning deep in human heart to stop other people from doing as they please. Rules, laws—always for other fellow. A murky part of us, something we had before we came down out of trees, and failed to shuck when we stood up. Because not one of those people said: "Please pass this so that I won't be able to do something I know I should stop." Nyet, tovarishchee, was always something they hated to see neighbors doing. Stop them "for their own good"—not because speaker claimed to be harmed by it.

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" by Robert A. Heinlein

When someone asks you a question you don't want to answer, smile and ask, "Why do you want to know?"

The real problem of leisure time is how to keep others from using yours.

Arthur Lacey

"You're listening to me, but you're not understanding me."

"No, I'm disagreeing with you. That doesn't mean I'm not listening to you, or understanding what you're saying. I'm doing all three at the same time."

Josh and Toby in "The West Wing"

Treat everyone with politeness, even those who are rude to you — not because they are nice, but because you are.

"If you want to ask about my business, ask. You'll get the same reply I always give: Your business is yours, and I will make it mine because you ask. My business is mine, and no one needs to make it their own."

From a "Dragonlance" Novel

"You seem to know a lot about that world."

"I wasn't born a shepherd, Mal."

"You'll have to tell me about that someday."

[pause] "No, I don't."

Capt. Reynolds and Shepherd Book in "Firefly"

"It took you long enough to answer your phone."

"It's my phone, Mr. Secretary. Sometimes I don't answer it at all."

Secretary General Douglas and Jubal Harshaw in "Stranger in a Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein

Joan, who had never known acute physical fear in her life, feared just one thing ... the corrosive, dirty emotions of the poor in spirit. Malice, envy, spite the snide insults of twisted, petty minds; these things could hurt her, just by being in her presence, even if she were not the direct object of the attack. She was not yet sufficiently mature to have acquired a smooth armor of indifference to the opinions of the unworthy.

Lost Legacy

"It is contrary to our customs to permit scientific knowledge to be held as a monopoly for the few. When concealing such knowledge strikes at life itself, the action becomes treason to the race. As a citizen, I call on the Administration to act forcefully in this matter and I remind them that the situation is not one which could possibly have been foreseen by the wise men who drew up the Covenant and codified our basic customs. Any custom is man-made and is therefore a finite attempt to describe an infinity of relationships. It follows as the night from day that any custom necessarily has its exceptions. To be bound by them in the face of new—"

Lazarus pressed the hold button. "Had enough of that guy?"

"Yes, I had already heard it." The stranger sighed. "I have rarely heard such complete lack of semantic rigor. It surprises me—Dr. Oscarsen has done sound work in the past."

"Reached his dotage," Lazarus stated, as he told the machine to try again. "Wants what he wants when he wants it- and thinks that constitutes a natural law."

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

“That’s a lie.”

“Yes, it is. What’s your point?”

Bester and Sinclair in Babylon 5: “Mind War”

“Personal questions don’t bother me.

I just lie.”

Richard Fish in Ally McBeal

I’m scared to death that trying so hard to be the pretty girl
makes me the stupid girl.

I’m waiting for the day when the smart girl
realizes she IS the pretty girl.

I am the pretty girl
and I hate that smart girls assume I’m stupid.

PostSecret Postcard and two answers

“Just one question. Why?” “Why not?” “It’s not an answer.” “Oh, yes it is. It’s
simply not an answer you like or the answer you expect. There’s a difference.”

Sakai and G’Kar in Babylon 5: “Mind War”

<Forbid them? When have humans ever obeyed?>

<We never forbid where we do not also have the power to prevent.>

Xenocide

Do not confuse “duty with what other people expect of you; they are utterly different. Duty is a debt you owe to yourself to fulfill obligations you have assumed voluntarily. Paying that debt can entail anything from years of patient work to instant willingness to die. Difficult it may be, but the reward is self-respect.

But there is no reward at all for doing what other people expect of you, and to do so is not merely difficult, but impossible. It is easier to deal with a footpad than it is with the leech who wants “just a few minutes of your time, please – this won’t take long.” Time is your total capital, and the minutes of your life are painfully few. If you allow yourself to fall into the vice of agreeing to such requests, they quickly snowball to the point where these parasites will use up 100 percent of your time – and squawk for more!

So learn to say No – and to be rude about it when necessary.

Otherwise you will not have time to carry out your duty, or to do your own work, and certainly no time for love and happiness. The termites will nibble away your life and leave none of it for you.

(This rule does not mean that you must not do a favor for a friend, or even a stranger. But let the choice be yours. Don’t do it because it is “expected” of you.)

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Do not Transfer Beyond the Limits

Do not transfer things beyond their limits (e.g., your anger from work on your family life, your lack of time due to private commitments on your work commitments). You inflict unnecessary pain on others whose life is hard enough (“Never!” “Sure!”) and there is simply no justification for blending the different relationships. Your relationship with your children is not your relationship to your coworkers and your relationship to those who hurt you not the relationship to people in general.

She was not, herself, hugely in favour of motherhood in general. Obviously it was necessary, but it wasn't exactly difficult. Even cats managed it. But women acted as if they'd been given a medal that entitled them to boss people around. It was as if, just because they'd got the label which said 'mother', everyone else got a tiny part of the label that said 'child' ...

“Carpe Jugulum” by Terry Pratchett

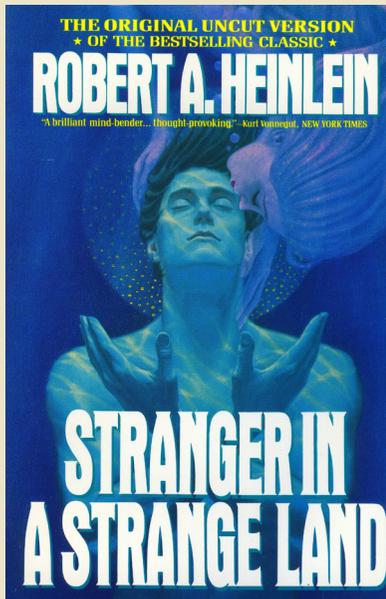
“Is it cause of you?”

“What?”

“You knew about monsters and stuff. You could have brought this with you.”

“I didn’t bring anything with me. And I didn’t ask you to come to me with your problems. I just wanted to be left alone. If you can’t deal, then don’t lay it off on me.”

Lily and Buffy in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer: “Anne”



She tossed one [peanut] to a medium sized monk[ey]; before he could eat it a much larger male was on him and not only stole his peanut but gave him a beating, then left. The little fellow made no attempt to pursue his tormentor; he squatted at the scene of the crime, pounded his knuckles against the concrete floor, and chattered his helpless rage. Mike watched it solemnly. Suddenly the mistreated monkey rushed to the side of the cage, picked a monkey still smaller, bowled it over and gave it a drubbing worse than the one he had suffered-after which he seemed quite relaxed. The third monk crawled away, still whimpering, and found shelter in the arm of a female who had a still smaller one, a baby, on her back. The other monkeys paid no attention to any of it.

“Stranger in a Strange Land” by Robert A. Heinlein

Let “quid pro quo” be your guide

The rule for taking part in conversations is: You let me in by introducing me to the circle, I let you in in return.

The rule for taking part in social life is: You assist me by reaching my agenda, I assist you by reaching yours.

It's either quid pro quo or it is nothing you should spend your time with.

Help a man when he is in trouble
and he will remember you
when he is in trouble again.

Beware of altruism. It is based on self-deception, the root of all evil.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein*

“I'd rather she'd used me for sex.
Using me for my mind really bothered me.”
Carl Jacobs

When you let the tiger out of the cage,
don't expect gratitude from the tiger.
Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

If tempted by something that feels
“altruistic,” examine your motives and
root out that self-deception. Then, if
you still want to do it, wallow in it!

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein*

Loyalty is a two-way street.
Randy Pausch

I am strong for women's rights but was never taken in by unisex nonsense. I don't yearn to be equal; Sharpie is as unequal as possible, with all the perks and bonuses and special privileges that come from being one of the superior sex. If a man fails to hold a door for me, I fail to see him and step on his instep. I feel no shame in making lavish use of the strongest muscles, namely male ones (but my own strongest muscle is dedicated to the service of men — noblesse oblige).

“The Number of the Beast” by Robert A. Heinlein

You have to keep your balance for yourself

Never let the hand you hold, hold you down.

Life among the People had made the beggar boy conscious of money in a sense that alms never could — books must balance and debts must be paid.

"Citizen of the Galaxy" by Robert A. Heinlein

Chinese law. You get a present,
you give one back a little more valuable.
You have a favor done ...

Noble House

"Don't get angry, get even."

Noble House

Do not live for other people
unless they live for you.

"I've got to set up a mail drop for Father Schultz." "Why, dear?" "If we can swing past Macy's, I'll get Naomi's clothes and wig packed, and then I'll mail them. They've been grinding on my conscience." "On your what?" "On the bookkeeping system I use in place of one."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Gifts

"Mike dear, a present ought not to be very expensive – unless you are trying to get a girl to marry you, or something. Especially 'something'. But a present should show that you thought about it and considered that person's tastes. Something he would enjoy but probably would not buy for himself."

"Stranger In A Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein

And she wondered what other society would have such a natural regard for her privacy and comfort that the giver would intrude only enough to deposit the gift and not inflict her with the donor? Respect and love had sent the gift — with only a slight tinge of fear.

"Dune" by Frank Herbert

The price is a little too high for me – and I don't like who I'd have to thank.

Star Trek TNG



Know the Rules of Interaction

Sometime during the night he seemed to hear Grandmother's impatient voice: " — then think it over! If you don't understand it, and the laws under which it will be executed, then don't sign it! — no matter how much profit may appear to be in store. Too lazy and too eager can ruin a trader."

"Citizen of the Galaxy" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Nakedness is often seen but never looked at."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Speak softly and carry a big stick;
you will go far.

Teddy Roosevelt

Small minds talk about people,
moderate minds talk about events,
and great minds talk about ideas.

The three legs of the agreement-tripod are desire, data and doubt. Accuracy and honesty have nothing to do with it. [...] Desire brings the participants together. Data sets the limits of their dialogue. Doubt frames their questions.

Leto Atrides II to Siona

Games

If you must play, decide upon three things at the start:
the rules of the game, the stakes, and the quitting time.

Chinese Proverb

There is a very easy way to return
from a casino with a small fortune: go
there with a large one.

Jack Yellon

There is no such thing as “social
gambling.” Either you are there to cut
the other bloke’s heart out and eat it –
or you’re a sucker. If you don’t like this
choice – don’t gamble.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein*

If winning isn’t everything, why do they keep score?

Vince Lombardi

“Have you ever played before?” asked Temenides.

“Occasionally,” said the player.

“Do you understand the moves of the pieces?” asked Temenides.

“Somewhat,” said the player.

“That is an absurd move,” said Temenides.

“I believe it is a legal move,” said the player.

“I have never seen anything like it,” said Temenides. “It violates all the orthodox principles of opening play.”

“Orthodoxy is not invariably equivalent to soundness,” said the player. “Your great master, Centius of Cos, should have taught you that. Does it not blossom from the root of heresy? Is it not true that today’s orthodoxy is commonly little more than yesterday’s heresy triumphant?”

“You are mad,” said Temenides.

“Similarly,” said the player, “the more orthodox your play the more predictable it will be, and thus the more easily exploited.”

Players of Gor

Emotional Defense

A wise man could not be insulted, since truth could not
insult and untruth was not worthy of notice.

"Citizen of the Galaxy" by Robert A. Heinlein

"An insult is like a drink; it affects one only if accepted.
And pride is too heavy baggage for my journey; I have none."

Star in "Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

"I said that if people tell you your
mother is not prime minister
anymore, you just turn around and
say, 'So what? How often has your
mother been prime minister?'"

*Benazir Bhutto, Former Pakistani Prime
Minister reg. the advice she gave her children*

If the enemy within cannot kill us,
then the enemy without can do us no harm.

African Proverb

Thanks for the worst sex of my life.

"I appreciate the flattery
but I prefer honesty."

Andromeda: "Conduit to Destiny"

Be advised that all flatterers live at the
expense of those who listen to them.

Jean de La Fontaine

All in all, I'm glad I'm me,
and not him.

Flattery rarely fails, and never does if it's sincere.

Ender's Shadow

"I want you to carry a letter for me," Elayne said before Nynaeve could speak. "To my mother, in Caemlyn." She smiled, making a dimple in her cheek. "I would appreciate it so very much, Mat." The morning light through the windows seemed to pick out highlights in her hair. I wonder if she likes to dance. He pushed the thought right out of his head. "That does not sound too very hard, but it's a long trip. What do I get out of it?" From the look on her face, he did not think that dimple had failed her very often. She drew herself up, slim and proud. He could almost see a throne behind her. "Are you a loyal subject of Andor? Do you not wish to serve the Lion Throne, and your Daughter-Heir?" Mat snickered. "I told you that would not work either," Egwene said. "Not with him." Elayne had a wry twist to her mouth. "I thought it worth a try. It always works on the Guards, in Caemlyn. You said if I smiled —" She cut off short, very obviously not looking at him. What did you say, Egwene, he thought, furious. That I'm a fool for any girl who smiles at me? He kept his outward calm, though, and managed to maintain his grin.

Wheel of Time

Defend Yourself

"Never start a fight. But always finish it."
Motto of Sheridan in "Babylon 5"

"Never fight. But if you have to,
fight quick, hard, and above all: win."

"Nobody takes power. They're given power by the rest of us, because we are stupid or afraid or both."

*William Edgars in Babylon 5:
"The Exercise of Vital Powers"*

He was one of those people who would recoil from an assault on strength, but attack weakness without mercy.

No! If I gave in, if I admitted I had to dicker with him for my prison rations, he would own me. I'd wait on him hand and foot, do anything he told me, just to eat. I let him see my tin dagger. "I'll fight you for it."

"Have Space Suit will Travel" by Robert A. Heinlein



"Well, tell your friend that in my experience, money-hungry thugs are like stray dogs. You feed them once, they're at your back door every night asking for more."
Lex in "Smallville"

"You'll use it [Perrin's axe], boy, and as long as you hate using it, you would use it more wisely than most men would. Wait. If ever you don't hate it any longer, then will be the time to throw it as far as you can and run the other way."

Elyas Machera in "The Wheel of Time" by Robert Jordan

The meanest teacher or professor is just an ugly fish in a small aquarium ... one day you leave the closed space of school, college or university and you ask yourself: "How could this bastard have so much power over me?"

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

Der Mächtige hat nur solange Macht, wie sie ihm von anderen gegeben wird. Und so kann aus dem mächtigen schwarzmagischen Satanisten ganz schnell der bedauernswerte, kranke Asoziale mit der unglücklichen Kindheit werden.

Internet Page

A confidence man or woman will hit you where you are most vulnerable: Your *Greed* for money, fame or status, your *Love* for your family and the future of your loved ones, your *Insecurity* about yourself. They are very confident in playing with our emotions, preventing us from thinking about the situation and coming to the one conclusion: *If it sounds too good to be true, it most likely is.*

Enemies strengthen you. Allies weaken.
The Stolen Journals God Emperor of Dune

“He’s too strong.”
“They’re always too strong.”
“Damn it, John. There’s always too many of them and not enough of us. What am I supposed to do?”
“Fight them without becoming them.”

*Ivanova and Sheridan
in Babylon 5: “Dust to Dust”*

‘Well, we’re home,’ he said.

‘Yes,’ said Angua, and she thought: you do know how to do nasty, don’t you? But you use it like a claw; it slides out when you need it, and when you don’t there’s no sign that it’s there.

“The Fifth Elephant” by Terry Pratchett

A soldier’s first battlefield
is always his own mind.
Admiral Constanza Stark, C.I. 9762

Sometimes you **have** to commit to a fight even when you’re weak. You **don’t** wait till you **know** you’re tougher. You **make** yourself tougher by whatever means you can, and then you strike by surprise, you sneak up, you backstab, you blindside, you cheat, you lie, you do whatever it takes to make sure that you come out on top.

Ender’s Shadow

This would not have a happy ending.
So Ender decided he’d rather not be the unhappiest at the end.
“Ender’s Game”

"In his fight with two boys who threatened his life he made sure they could never threaten him again. That's how war is fought, in case any of you have foolish ideas to the contrary. You don't fight with minimum force, you fight with maximum force at endurable cost. You don't just pink your enemy, you don't even bloody him, you destroy his capability to fight back. It's the strategy you use with diseases. You don't try to find a drug that kills ninety-nine percent of the bacteria or viruses. If you do that, all you've accomplished is to create a new drug-resistant strain. You have to kill a hundred percent."

Wang-mu tried to think of an argument against this. "Is disease really a valid analogy?"

"What is your analogy?" answered Peter. "A wrestling match? Fight to wear down your opponent's resistance? That's fine— if your opponent is playing by the same rules. But if you stand there ready to wrestle and he pulls out a knife or a gun, what then? Or is it a tennis match? Keep score until your opponent sets off the bomb under your feet? There aren't any rules. In war."

Children of the Mind

"Fairness is a wonderful attribute, Major Anderson. It has nothing to do with war."
"Ender's Game"

Look like the innocent flower,
but be the serpent under it.
"Macbeth" by William Shakespeare

"Always leave a way out, unless you really want to find out
how hard a man can fight when he's nothing to lose ..."
Matrim Cauthon in "The Wheel of Time" by Robert Jordan

You're never more alive
than the first time
someone puts a gun
to your favorite head
and asks you to dance.
*Major Korgo Korgar,
"Last of the Lancers", AFC 32
Andromeda*

Vimes had learned early on in his career that the graveyards were full of people who'd read the Marquis of Fantailler. The whole idea of fighting was to stop the other bloke hitting you as soon as possible. It wasn't to earn marks. Vimes had often fought in circumstances where being able to use the hands freely was a luxury, but it was amazing how a well-placed elbow could make a point, possibly assisted by a knee.

"The Fifth Elephant" by Terry Pratchett

"If there's a beast in men, it meets its match in women too."
Little Red Riding Hoods mother in "The Company of Wolves"

"No, sir. Pop got it for me — black market — when I started working nights. He said he would rather hire shysters to get me acquitted — or maybe probation — than to have to go down to the morgue to identify my body. Haven't had to use it; in Logan I hardly need it. Zebadiah, Pop has gone to a great deal of trouble to get me the best possible training in selfdefense. He's just as highly trained — that's why I keep him out of fist fights. Because it would be a massacre. He and Mama decided this when I was a baby. Pop says cops and courts no longer protect citizens, so citizens must protect themselves."

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

We had killed about a dozen of them right around us, plus maybe half that many who had fled — and had shot all who fled, I think. How? How can a 60-lb. dog armed only with teeth take on, knock down, and hold prisoner an armed man? Ans: By all-out attack.

I think we arrived as they were changing the guard at that spot known to be a Gate — and had we arrived even with swords sheathed we would have been cut down. As it was, we killed a slew before most of them knew a fight was on. They were routed, demoralized, and we slaughtered the rest, including those who tried to bug out. Karate and many serious forms of combat (boxing isn't serious, nor anything with rules) — all these work that same way: go-for-broke, all-out attack with no wind up. These are not so much skills as an attitude.

I had time to examine our late foes; one was faced toward me with his belly open. "Iglis" I would call them, but of the economy model. No beauty and no belly buttons and not much brain—presumably constructed to do one thing: fight, and try to stay alive. Which describes us, too — but we did it faster.

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

Something Vimes had learned as a young guard drifted up from memory. If you have to look along the shaft of an arrow from the wrong end, if a man has you entirely at his mercy, then hope like hell that man is an evil man. Because the evil like power, power over people, and they want to see you in fear. They want you to know you're going to die. So they'll talk. They'll gloat. They'll watch you squirm. They'll put off the moment of murder like another man will put off a good cigar. So hope like hell your captor is an evil man. A good man will kill you with hardly a word.

From a Discworld novel by Terry Pratchett

“Nimble fingers and nimble wits will take you a good deal further than a sword and muscles. Sharp eyes help as well ...”

Faile in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

Get a shot of fast. This upsets him long enough to let you make your second shot perfect.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Still, if you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed, if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not so costly, you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance for survival. There may be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no chance of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves.

Winston Churchill

“How beautifully you dance,” Feyd-Rautha said. He’s a talker, Paul thought. There’s another weakness. He grows uneasy in the face of silence.

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace.

George Washington

"Since the schoolyard," Nachring said, "I would bet neither of you has ever walked away from physical conflict. That's not to suggest you enjoyed it, only that retreat wasn't something you considered an option. Yes?"

"Shutter Island" by Dennis Lehane



Kynes sat back, thinking about the water-fat flesh he had felt beneath the stillsuits. They wore shield belts over their robes, slow pellet stunners at the waist, coin-sized emergency transmitters on cords around their necks. Both the Duke and his son carried knives in wrist sheathes and the sheathes appeared well worn. The people struck Kynes as a strange combination of softness and armed strength. There was a poise to them totally unlike the Harkonnens.

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

Daily Hazards

Always keep in mind that your immediate surroundings are not the world. You will leave school, change jobs, move somewhere else, in the course of your life.

High school students should understand that high school and its cliques and social standings aren't the real world.

"South Park" creator Matt Stone, who attended Columbine High School and was an outside in school.

"You've got to stand up to him, Neville!" said Ron. "He's used to walking all over people, but that's no reason to lie down in front of him and make it easier."

"Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone"

"If you're a little different, some kids can make your life an absolute hell."

Jean Vasquez, a student who twice tried to commit suicide while in middle school.

"If Dusty will leave you alone, you let him alone. If he won't ... well, use your judgment, bearing in mind that you are responsible for your actions — but remember that I don't expect any man to be a doormat. That's all."

"Time for the Stars" by Robert A. Heinlein

And he'd learned that the object of a school fight was not to gain points for style but to force your enemy to give in, which meant hurting him more than he was hurting you. He knew that you had to be willing to hurt someone else, too, and he'd found out that not many people were, when it came to it; but he knew that he was.

"His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman

Mobbing comes slowly, like a poison — you begin to dislike work and you don't know why, your performance suffers and you don't know why, your self-esteem falls and you don't know why. And then you realize it and your resources are gone and you are too weak to do anything against it by yourself. So, get help.

"Lana, I know what it's like to feel vulnerable." "You?" "Trust me. Eccentric bald kids sit pretty low on the prep school totem pole. I was bullied for years, till one day I decided I had enough." "What'd you do?" "One of my father's chauffeurs was an ex-Navy SEAL. I convinced him to teach me to fight. Let's just say the next time I was cornered the guy ended up needing serious dental work." "I could never hurt anybody." "It's not about hurting people. It's about reclaiming your sense of control over your life. Isn't that what you want?" "I can't even get the bag to move. I don't see how I'm supposed to take on a guy who's twice my size." "Lana, getting the upper hand isn't about size. It's about decisiveness and speed. You have to commit."

Lex and Lana in "Smallville"

“Attend, students, this is a classic archetype in action. The strong man or ‘bully’, as the humans call it, essentially a coward whose only skill is convincing others to do what he’s afraid to do himself.”

“Notice the lack of technique, no follow through. Another flaw in this particular personality type ... all muscle, no brain.”

Sech Turval and Sech Durhan, analyzing a bully who fights one of their pupils, in Babylon 5: “Learning Curve”



[In two days with the ability to read minds, Buffy hears that a someone thinks of killing all the students. During the search for the future murderer, she sees a student (Jonathan) on the top of the school tower. Cut to: Jonathan slides the bolt home, the gun's ready to fire. Buffy smashes through a boarded up tower window behind him landing in a crouch. He spins surprised and holds the rifle pointing at her.]

Jonathan: "Get away from me!"

[Buffy slowly stands up.]

Buffy: "Ok Jonathan, you wanna point that somewhere else?"

[He points the rifle slightly to the side.]

Jonathan: "Don't you try and stop me!"

Buffy [puts her hands up but takes a step forward]: "No, no no stopping. Just here for view. Hey, look, City Hall."

Jonathan [frazzled and sweating]: "Go away!"

Buffy: "Never gonna happen."

Jonathan: "You think I won't use this?"

Buffy: "I don't know Jonathan." [takes a step forward] "I just--"

Jonathan [Lurches back from her, aims the gun straight at her]: "Stop doing that!"

Buffy: "Doing what?"

Jonathan: "Stop saying my name like we're friends! We're not friends! You all think I'm an idiot! A short idiot!"

Buffy [matter-of-factly]: "I don't. I don't think about you much at all. Nobody here really does. Bugs you, doesn't it. You have all this pain, and all these feelings and nobody's really paying attention."

Jonathan: "You think I just want attention?"

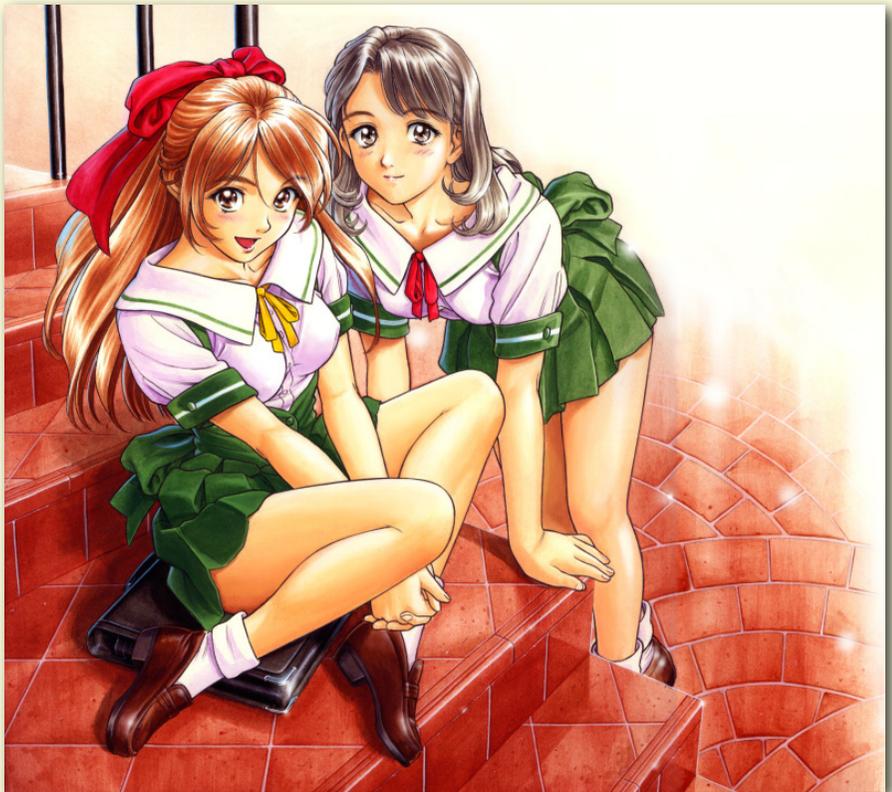
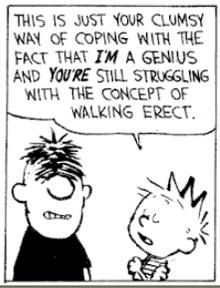
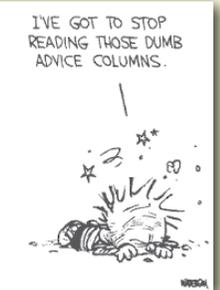
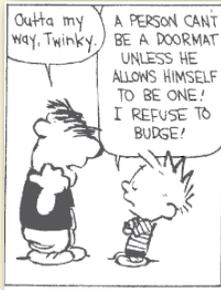
Buffy: "No. I think you're up in the clock tower with a high-powered rifle because you wanna blend in. Believe it or not, Jonathan, I understand about the pain."

Jonathan: "Oh right. Cuz the burden of being beautiful and athletic, that's a crippler."

Buffy: "You know what? I was wrong. You are an idiot. My life happens to, on occasion, suck beyond the telling of it. Sometimes more than I can handle. And it's not just mine. Every single person down there is ignoring your pain because they're too busy with their own. ... The beautiful ones. The popular ones. The guys that pick on you. Everyone. ... If you could hear what they were feeling. The loneliness. The confusion. It looks quiet down there. It's not. It's deafening."

Buffy - The Vampire Slayer: "Earshot"





Why Nerds Are Unpopular

If you're too cool for school, you're probably not very smart. Some of us would rather build rockets than friendships.

When we were in junior high school, my friend Rich and I made a map of the school lunch tables according to popularity. This was easy to do because kids only ate lunch with others of about the same popularity. We graded them from A to E. The A tables contained football players and cheerleaders and so on. The E tables contained the kids with Down syndrome.

We sat at a D table, as low as you could get without looking physically different. We were not being especially candid to give ourselves a D. Everyone in the school knew exactly how popular everyone else was.

I know a lot of people who were nerds in school, and they all tell the same story: There is a strong correlation between being smart and being a nerd, and an even stronger inverse correlation between being a nerd and being popular. Being smart seems to make you unpopular.

Why? The answer, I think, is that most smart kids don't really want to be popular.

If someone had told me that at the time, I would have laughed at him. Being unpopular in school makes kids miserable, some so miserable that they commit suicide. Telling me that I didn't want to be popular would have seemed like telling someone dying of thirst in a desert that he didn't want a glass of water. Of course I wanted to be popular.

But, in fact, I didn't – not enough. There was something else I wanted more: to be smart. Not simply to do well in school, though that counted for something, but to design beautiful rockets, or to write well, or to understand how to program computers. In general, to make great things.

At the time, I didn't try to separate my wants and weigh them against one another. If I had, I would have seen that being smart was more important. If someone had offered me the chance to be the most popular kid in school, but only at the price of being of average intelligence (humor me here), I wouldn't have taken it.

And that, I think, is the root of the problem. Nerds serve two masters. They want to be popular, certainly, but they want even more to be smart. And popularity is not something you can do in your spare time, not in the fiercely competitive environment of an American secondary school.

Leon Battista Alberti, arguably the archetype of the Renaissance man, writes that “no art, however minor, demands less than total dedication if you want to excel in it.” I wonder if anyone in the world works harder at anything than American school kids work at popularity. Navy SEALs and neurosurgery residents seem like slackers by comparison. They occasionally take vacations; some even have hobbies. A teenager may work at being popular every waking hour, 365 days a year.

The main reason nerds are unpopular is that they have other things to think about. Their attention is drawn to books or the natural world, not fashions and parties. They're like someone trying to play soccer while balancing a glass of water on his head. Other players who can focus their whole attention on the game beat them effortlessly and wonder why they seem so incapable.

Nerds would find their unpopularity more bearable if it merely caused them to be ignored. Unfortunately, to be unpopular in school is to be actively persecuted.

Why? It's part of the mechanism of popularity. Popularity is only partially about individual attractiveness. It's more about alliances. To become more popular, you

need to do things that bring you close to other popular people, and nothing brings people closer than a common enemy. Attacking an outsider makes them all insiders. If it's any consolation to the nerds, it's nothing personal. The group of kids who band together to pick on you are doing the same thing, and for the same reason, as a bunch of guys who get together and go hunting. They don't actually hate you. They just need something to chase.

It's no wonder, then, that smart kids tend to be unhappy in middle school and high school. Their other interests leave them little attention to spare for popularity, and since popularity is a zero-sum game, this in turn makes them targets for the whole school. And the strange thing is, this nightmare scenario happens without any conscious malice, merely because of the shape of the situation.

Excerpted from Hackers & Painters, a book of essays on computers by Paul Graham.



[Josie, undercover reporter at a prom after some jocks tried to hurt her friend (Aldys) as a joke] “I don't care about being the prom queen. I am twenty five years old.” [Looks of confusion and teenage disgust. Rob is pissed. Sam looks shocked.] “I'm here as an undercover reporter for the Sun Times for God's sake and I've been beating my brains out trying to impress you.” [She tears off her crown, and chucks it. She's on a roll.] “I want to tell you something. You people- Guy, Gibby, the rest of you who have been keeping the geeks down through the ages. You will spend your lives trying to figure out ways to keep others down, because it makes you feel more important. And you will miss out on so much.” [indicating Aldys] “Why her, huh? What did she ever do to you? Let me tell you something about this girl. She is unbelievable. I was new here, and she befriended me- no questions asked. But you people, you were my friends only after my brother, Rob ...” [She points out Rob in the crowd. He's mortified.] “... posed as a student and told you to like me. But y'know—I have to thank you. I got to go to an amazing prom. I got to be prom queen. I got to be cool. It felt good.” [beat] “But not as good as being myself.” [turns to crowd] “And to all of you— there's a big world out there. Bigger than prom. Bigger than high school. When you get there, it won't matter if you were prom queen or the quarterback or the biggest nerd in school. What matters is that you don't regret who you were, who you are – What if Steven Spielberg had quit the audio/visual club because it wasn't 'cool'? What if Rosie O'Donnell had stopped cracking jokes because someone told her they were stupid? What if Michael Jordan never went back to basketball after he got cut from his high school team?. ... In this room right now, there could be a future Nobel Prize winner, a Supreme Court Justice, an amazing Mom. Find out who you are and don't be afraid of it. ... And if you'll all excuse me, I have some business to take care of.”

“Never been kissed”

You make the world fair and just

"No, the world isn't fair and just,
but we can make it so."

"Sheep deserve to be led!"

But let us not rail about justice
as long as we have arms and the freedom to use them.

Duke Leto Dune

Liberty doesn't work as well in
practice as it does in speeches.

Will Rogers

It is often easier to become outraged
by injustice half a world away than by
oppression and discrimination half a
block from home.

Carl T. Rowan

"You know, I used to think it was awful that life was so unfair. Then I thought, wouldn't it be much worse if life were fair, and all the terrible things that happen to us come because we actually deserve them? So, now I take great comfort in the general hostility and unfairness of the universe."

Marcus to Franklin in Babylon 5: "A Late Delivery from Avalon"

Past the seeker as he prayed came
the crippled and the beggar and the
beaten. And seeing them ... he cried,
"Great God, how is it that a loving
creator can see such things and yet do
nothing about them?" God said, "I did
do something. I made you."

The Empire's got something worse
than whips all right. It's got obedience.
Whips in the soul. They obey anyone
who tells them what to do. Freedom
just means being told what to do by
someone different.

Interesting Times

My definition of a free society
is a society where it is safe to be
unpopular.

Adlai Stevenson, speech, Detroit, 1952

Commandment #1 of any truly
civilized society is this:
Let people be different.

"There are just two rules of
governance in a free society: Mind
your own business. Keep your hands
to yourself."

P.J. O'Rourke

The truest measure of a society is
how it treats its elderly, its pets,
and its prisoners.

Keeper of the Way Vision of Faith VII

C.T. 9891

Andromeda

Say not, “I have found the truth,” but rather, “I have found a truth.” Say not, “I have found the path of the soul.” Say rather, “I have met the soul walking upon my path.” For the soul walks upon all paths. The soul walks not upon a line, neither does it grow like a reed. The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals.

Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet, 1923

“In the past we had little to do with other races. Evolution teaches us that we must fight that which is different in order secure land, food, and mates for ourselves, but we must reach a point when the nobility of intellect asserts itself and says: No. We need not be afraid of those who are different, we can embrace that difference and learn from it.”

G'Kar in Babylon 5: “The Ragged Edge”

“We are not evil. We don't harm or seduce people. We are not dangerous. We are ordinary people like you. We have families, jobs, hopes, and dreams. We are not a cult. This religion is not a joke. We are not what you think we are from looking at T.V. We are real. We laugh, we cry. We are serious. We have a sense of humor. You don't have to be afraid of us. We don't want to convert you. And please don't try to convert us. Just give us the same right we give you—to live in peace. We are much more similar to you than you think.”

Neo Pagan

All that is necessary for the forces of evil to win in this world is for enough good men to do nothing.

Edmund Burke

“A wrongdoer is often a man that has left something undone, not always he that has done something.”

Marcus Aurelius

“The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it.”

Albert Einstein

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.

Bishop Desmond Tutu

The average man is a conformist, accepting miseries and disasters with the stoicism of a cow standing in the rain.

Colin Wilson

“Lily, this is something you're just gonna have to deal with.”

“But he didn't do anything wrong. Why would this happen to him?”

“That's not the point. These things happen all the time. You can't just close your eyes and hope that they're gonna go away.”

Buffy and Lily in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer: “Anne”

Most civilization is based on cowardice. It's so easy to civilize by teaching cowardice. You water down the standards which would lead to bravery. You restrain the will. You regulate the appetites. You fence in the horizons. You make a law for every movement. You deny the existence of chaos. You teach even the children to breathe slowly. You tame.

The Stolen Journals God Emperor of Dune (1981)

And what is a good citizen? Simply one who never says, does or thinks anything that is unusual. Schools are maintained in order to bring this uniformity up to the highest possible point. A school is a hopper into which children are heaved while they are still young and tender; therein they are pressed into certain standard shapes and covered from head to heels with official rubber-stamps.

H. L. Mencken

Here is my advice as we begin the century that will lead to 2081. First, guard the freedom of ideas at all costs. Be alert that dictators have always played on the natural human tendency to blame others and to oversimplify. And don't regard yourself as a guardian of freedom unless you respect and preserve the rights of people you disagree with to free, public, unhampered expression.

Gerard K. O'Neill, 2081

Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?

[Who is to guard the guards
themselves?]

Iuvenalis, Saturae

When any government, or any church for that matter, undertakes to say to its subjects, 'This you may not read, this you must not see, this you are forbidden to know,' the end result is tyranny and oppression, no matter how holy the motives. Mighty little force is needed to control a man whose mind has been hoodwinked; contrariwise, no amount of force can control a free man, a man whose mind is free. No, not the rack, not fission bombs, not anything — you can't conquer a free man; the most you can do is kill him.

The populist authoritarianism that is the downside of political correctness means that anyone, sometimes it seems like everyone, can proclaim their grievance and have it acknowledged. The victim culture, every sufferer grasping for their own Holocaust, ensures that anyone who feels offended can call for moderation, for dilution, and in the end, as is all too often the case, for censorship. And censorship, that by-product of fear — stemming as it does not from some positive agenda, but from the desire to escape our own terrors and superstitions by imposing them on others — must surely be resisted.

Jonathon Green, "Did You Say 'Offensive?'"

If we do not believe in freedom of speech for those we despise we do not believe in it at all.

Noam Chomsky

With the first link, the chain is forged. The first speech censored, the first thought forbidden, the first freedom denied, chains us all irrevocably.

Captain Picard, quoting Judge Aaron Satie, in Star Trek TNG: "The Drumhead"

A censor is not trying to stop pornography or obscenity. A censor is trying to stop ideas. The artist should never be punished for someone else's irresponsibility as a parent or inability to grasp a concept.

Scott Griffin, about censorship in comic books

"[I]t's not just the books under fire now that worry me. It is the books that will never be written. The books that will never be read. And all due to the fear of censorship. As always, young readers will be the real losers."

Judy Blume

"It's not to control, but to protect the citizens of Singapore. In our society, you can state your views, but they have to be correct."

Ernie Hai, co-ordinator of the Singapore Government Internet Project

Censorship is telling a man he can't have a steak just because a baby can't chew it.

Mark Twain

To limit the press is to insult a nation; to prohibit reading of certain books is to declare the inhabitants to be either fools or slaves.

Claude-Adrien Helvétius

"It's nothing but an encyclopedia of perversions. One man killed his wife after reading them."

"It's a fiction, not a moral treatise."

Coulmier and The Marquis de Sade in "Quills"

In a state-run society the government promises you security. But it's a false promise predicated on the idea that the opposite of security is risk. Nothing could be further from the truth. The opposite of security is insecurity, and the only way to overcome insecurity is to take risks. The gentle government that promises to hold your hand as you cross the street refuses to let go on the other side.

Theodore Forstmann

"People don't like to be meddled with. We tell them what to do, what to think, don't run, don't walk. We're in their homes and in their heads and we haven't the right. We're meddlesome."

Young River in "Firefly"

In the United States today, there is a pervasive tendency to treat children as adults, and adults as children. The options of children are thus steadily expanded, while those of adults are progressively constricted. The result is unruly children and childish adults.

Thomas Szasz

"Jane thinks it was a mistake for me to tell you, because now you'll be interpreting everything he says in light of what Jane and I already think we know."

"Tell Jane that the only people who ever prize purity of ignorance are those who profit from a monopoly on knowledge."

Children of the Mind

"Up until now everything around here has been, well, pleasant. Recently certain things have become unpleasant. Now, it seems to me that the first thing we have to do is to separate out the things that are pleasant from the things that are unpleasant."

Pleasantville

The goal of sexual repression is to produce an individual who is adjusted to the authoritarian order and will submit to it in spite of all misery and degradation.

"Mass Psychology of Fascism" by Wilhelm Reich

"Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent... The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well meaning but without understanding."

Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis

Good intentions will always be pleaded for every assumption of authority. It is hardly too strong to say that the Constitution was made to guard the people against the dangers of good intentions. There are men in all ages who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters.

Daniel Webster

"However, I know, as the prime lesson of my profession, that good intentions are the source of more folly than all other causes put together."

Star, Empress of the Twenty Universes, in "Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

Goodness without wisdom
always accomplished evil.

"Stranger In A Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Oho! You misunderstood me, nephew. We don't kill the poor beasties. Killing a dinosaur is about as sporting as shooting a cow. And not as good meat. A dinosaur more than a year old is tough and tasteless. I did try them, years back, when some thought was being given to using dinosaur meat to quench a famine on time line seven. But the logistics were dreadful and, when you come right down to it, there is little justice in killing stupid lizards to feed stupid people; they had earned their famine."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all other countries because you were born in it.

George Bernard Shaw

It is not easy to see how the more extreme forms of nationalism can long survive when men have seen the Earth in its true perspective as a single small globe against the stars.

Arthur C. Clarke

The people I distrust most are those who want to improve our lives but have only one course of action.

Frank Herbert

If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.

“On Liberty” by John Stuart Mill, 1859

The plague of mankind is the fear and rejection of diversity: monotheism, monarchy, monogamy and, in our age, monomedicine. The belief that there is only one right way to live, only one right way to regulate religious, political, sexual, medical affairs is the root cause of the greatest threat to man: members of his own species, bent on ensuring his salvation, security, and sanity.

Thomas Szasz

Bureaucracy destroys initiative. There is little that bureaucrats hate more than innovation, especially innovation that produces better results than the old routines. Improvements always make those at the top of the heap look inept. Who enjoys appearing inept?

A Guide to Trial and Error in Government, Bene Gesserit Archive Heretics of Dune (1984)

In a mature society, “civil servant” is semantically equal to “civil master.”

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Rules build up fortifications behind which small minds create satrapies. A perilous state of affairs in the best of times, disastrous during crises.

Bene Gesserit Coda in Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”



What are the marks of a sick culture? It is a bad sign when the people of a country stop identifying themselves with the country and start identifying with a group. A racial group. Or a religion. Or a language. Anything, as long as it isn't the whole population.

"Friday" by Robert A. Heinlein

The Emperor [to the Senate]: "We shall change into the first Galactic Empire, for a safe and secure society."

[Senate fills with enormous applause]
Senator Amidala [to Bail]: "This is how liberty dies. With thunderous applause."

Star Wars Episode III - Revenge of the Sith (2005)

The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference, and undernourishment.

Robert M. Hutchins, Great Books, 1954

"Do you know how to unite the people behind you, Child Carridin? The quickest way? Loose a lion – a rabid lion – in the streets. And when panic grips the people, once it has turned their bowels to water, calmly tell them you will deal with it. Then you kill it, and order them to hang the carcass up where everyone can see. Before they have time to think, you give another order, and it will be obeyed. And if you continue to give orders, they will continue to obey, for you will be the one who saved them, and who better to lead?"

Pedron Niall in "The Wheel of Time" by Robert Jordan

"Why of course the people don't want war ... But after all it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship ... Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger."

Hermann Goering, during the Nürnberg Trials after World War II

By the oldest trick in the political book — the whipping up of a panic, in which any dissenting voice could be dismissed as "soft" or even "traitorous" — powers had been ceded by the people that would never be returned.

[about the Roman Empire]



Watch democracy end.



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

Margaret Mead

There is no reason why good cannot triumph as often as evil. The triumph of anything is a matter of organization. If there are such things as angels, I hope they are organised along the lines of the Mafia.

“The Sirens of Titan” by Kurt Vonnegut

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope ... and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Robert F. Kennedy

**WE'RE ALL
IN CHARGE!**

“We hold these truths to be self-evident,’ they said, ‘that all men are created equal.’ Strange as it may seem, that was the first time in history that anyone had ever bothered to write that down. Decisions are made by those who show up.”

President Bartlet in “The West Wing”

No matter how exotic human civilization becomes, no matter the developments of life and society nor the complexity of the machine / human interface, there always come interludes of lonely power when the course of humankind, the very future of humankind, depends upon the relatively simple actions of single individuals.

From The Thielaxu Godbuk in “Dune Messiah” by Frank Herbert

“Look at you. You’re a Boy King. You’re a foot smarter than the smartest kid in the class. You’re blessed with inspiration. You must know this by now. You must have sensed it. Look, if you think we’re wrong ... if you think Mr. Hopkins should honestly get paid more than Mrs. Chadwick, then I respect that. But if you think we’re right and you won’t speak up because you can’t be bothered, then God, Jed, I don’t even want to know you.”

Mrs. Landingham to a young Jed Bartlet, the later President of the USA, in “The West Wing”

“What you did to me was unbelievable, Connor. But then I got stuck in a hell dimension by my girlfriend one time for a hundred years, so three months under the ocean actually gave me perspective. Kind of a M. C. Esher perspective but I did get time to think. About us, about the world. Nothing in the world is the way it ought to be. It’s harsh, and cruel. But that’s why there’s us. Champions. It doesn’t matter where we come from, what we’ve done or suffered, or even if we make a difference. We live as though the world was what it should be, to show it what it can be. You’re not a part of that yet. I hope you will be. [Angel moves to stand in front of Connor] I love you, Connor. [Quietly, after a beat] Now get out of my house.”

Angel to his son Connor, after escaping a coffin in which Connor confined him, in Angel: “Deep Down”

Most males have an unhealthy tendency to obey laws.

"The Number of the Beast" by Robert A. Heinlein

"You could have obeyed me!"

"But captain, to obey – just like that – for obedience's sake ... without questioning ... That's something only people like you do."

Capitán Vidal and the Doctor in "El Laberinto del fauno" (2006)

'No, it's absolutely forbidden,' said Lu-Tze. ' 'cos it's Interfering With History. Got to be careful of your witch, of course. Some of them are pretty canny.' He caught Lobsang's expression. 'Look, that's why there's rules, understand? So that you think before you break 'em.'

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

In the book "Night Watch" Commander Vimes considers that the book's villain, Carcer, is not a madman but is actually dangerously sane, having realised that the laws and conventions most people follow don't have to apply to him if he doesn't want them to.

Wikipedia

'So what you're saying,' said Magrat, icily, 'is that this "not meddling" thing is like taking a vow not to swim. You'll absolutely never break it unless of course you happen to find yourself in the water?'

"Wyrld Sisters" by Terry Pratchett

"Every actual state is corrupt. Good men must not obey laws too well."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

'When you break rules, break 'em good and hard,' said Nanny, and grinned a set of gums that were more menacing than teeth.

"Wyrld Sisters" by Terry Pratchett

If justice is measured out only when it is convenient,
then the Covenant is not worth the parchment it is written on.

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

"...The Bill of Rights is a literal and absolute document. The First Amendment doesn't say you have a right to speak out unless the government has a 'compelling interest' in censoring the Internet. The Second Amendment doesn't say you have the right to keep and bear arms until some madman plants a bomb. The Fourth Amendment doesn't say you have the right to be secure from search and seizure unless some FBI agent thinks you fit the profile of a terrorist. The government has no right to interfere with any of these freedoms under any circumstances."

Harry Browne, 1996 USA presidential candidate, Libertarian Party



"Commander, rules change depending on who's making them. Cardassians one day, Federation the next ... but justice is justice."

Odo in Star Trek DS9: "A Man Alone"

Laws are only words written on paper, words that change on society's whim and are interpreted differently daily by politicians, lawyers, judges, and policemen. Anyone who believes that all laws should always be obeyed would have made a fine slave catcher. Anyone who believes that all laws are applied equally, despite race, religion, or economic status, is a fool.

"And Hope to Die" by John J. Miller

The news that they have nothing to fear is guaranteed to strike terror into the hearts of innocents everywhere.

"The Fifth Elephant" by Terry Pratchett

I am treated as evil by people who claim that they are being oppressed because they are not allowed to force me to practice what they do.

D. Dale Gulledge

The problem isn't anonymity; it's accountability. If someone isn't accountable, then knowing his name doesn't help. If you have someone who is completely anonymous, yet just as completely accountable, then — heck, just call him Fred.

Wired on Accountability vs. Anonymity in Wikipedia

He tried hinting that she should obey the unwritten rules of Zoon life and stay afloat, but a hint was to Esk what a mosquito bite was to the average rhino because she was already learning that if you ignore the rules people will, half the time, quietly rewrite them so that they don't apply to you.

"Equal Rites" by Terry Pratchett

"Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws."

Plato

A right is not what someone gives you; it's what no one can take from you.

Ramsey Clark

"The good are innocent and create justice.
The bad are guilty, which is why they invent mercy."

"Witches Abroad" by Terry Pratchett

If you give up your rights during a police encounter,
these rights can no longer protect you.

BUSTED Video

"The right to life means nothing without the right to possess the means to protect and defend one's own life."

James Mullen

“If your laws don’t include me, well then, they don’t apply to me either.”
Anita Crown in “Bad Girls”

“All I ask is equal freedom. When it is denied, as it always is, I take it anyhow.”
H.L. Mencken

When leaders act contrary to conscience, we must act contrary to leaders.
Veterans Fast for Life

Anyone in a free society where the laws are unjust has an obligation to break the law.
Henry David Thoreau

All progress has resulted from people who took unpopular positions.
Adlai Stevenson, speech, Princeton, 1954

“Don’t put your trust in revolutions. They always come around again. That’s why they’re called revolutions. People die, and nothing changes.”
“Night Watch” by Terry Pratchett

Freethinking does not work without money and protection.

You can have peace. Or you can have freedom. Don’t ever count on having both at once.
Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

The world will not be saved by the internet.
from a TED Talk

Author	Thread	Post	Reply
Martin Luther King Jr Joined : Jan 18, 1966 	I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.		
April 3, 1968 : 16:31	User's Profile / Image Send a Private Message Search For More Posts	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>	<input type="button" value="Quote"/> <input type="button" value="Report this post to the Admins"/>
KKK Joined : June 27, 1964 	lol		
April 3, 1968 : 16:33	User's Profile / Image Send a Private Message User's Homepage Search For More Posts	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>	<input type="button" value="Quote"/> <input type="button" value="Report this post to the Admins"/>



“You can break a man’s skull. You can arrest him. You can throw him into a dungeon. But how do you fight an idea?”

Sextus

Books won’t stay banned. They won’t burn. Ideas won’t go to jail. In the long run of history, the censor and the inquisitor have always lost. The only weapon against bad ideas is better ideas.

Alfred Whitney Griswold, New York Times, 24 February 1959

“In order to be free you had to learn to fight. No one questions that. But you’ve overcompensated. You are like abused children who have grown big enough to do the same thing to someone else as if it would somehow balance the scales. It won’t. If you let the anger cloud your judgement, it will destroy you.”

Sinclair to G’Kar in Babylon 5: “Chrysalis”



“There’s a reason we separate military and the police: one fights the enemy of the state, the other serves and protects the people. When the military becomes both, then the enemies of the state tend to become the people.”

Adama in “Battlestar Galactica”



“People should not be afraid of their governments, governments should be afraid of their people.”

V in “V for Vendetta”

However, you probably cannot afford, or feel that you can’t afford, any move as drastic as that. (Whether or not you can in truth afford it is a moot point, to be settled by your own notion of the degree of danger. The pre-War refugees from Nazi Germany could not “afford” to flee, either; but events proved the wisdom of doing so. There is an old Chinese adage, “In the course of a long life a wise man will be prepared to abandon his baggage several times.” It has never been more true than it is today.)

“How to be a Survivor” by Robert A. Heinlein

"This is Captain John Sheridan. We are here on the authority of a multi-planetary force, that can no longer stand by and watch one of their greatest allies falling into darkness and despair. We are here on behalf of the thousands of civilians murdered under the current administration, who have no one else to speak for them, and on behalf of the EarthForce units that have joined us to oppose the tyranny that has darkened Earth, ever since President Santiago was assassinated three years ago. We are here to place President Clark under arrest, to disband Nightwatch and return our government to the hands of her people. We know that many in the government have wanted to act but have been intimidated by threats of retaliation against your families, your friends. You are not alone anymore. We call upon you to rise up and do what's right. We have drawn their forces away from Earth and disabled them. The time to act is now. This is not the voice of treason. These are your sons, your daughters, whose loyalties have never wavered, whose beliefs in this alliance have forced us to take extraordinary means. For justice, for peace, for the future ... we have come home!"

John Sheridan in Babylon 5: "Endgame"

"Suppose you managed it. Solidarity. So solid not a tonne of grain is delivered to catapult head. Forget ice; it's grain that makes Authority important and not just neutral agency it was set up to be. No grain. What happens?"

"Why, they have to negotiate a fair price, that's what!"

"My dear, you and your comrades listen to each other too much."

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress"

by Robert A. Heinlein

Never forget that the government is made up of people. Use them.

Terrorists that win are out of work.



Communication

Gesagt ist nicht gehört, gehört ist nicht
verstanden, verstanden ist nicht einverstanden.

Konrad Lorenz

Read between the lines.

Most conversations are simply monologues
delivered in the presence of a witness.

Margaret Millar

Never interrupt when you are
being flattered.

Moving parts in rubbing contact require lubrication to avoid excessive wear. Honorifics and formal politeness provide lubrication where people rub together. Often the very young, the untraveled, the naïve, the unsophisticated deplore these formalities as “empty,” “meaningless,” or “dishonest,” and scorn to use them. No matter how “pure” their motives, they thereby throw sand into machinery that does not work too well at best.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

"I thought you were a scholar," said
Peter.

"If you want to talk to the scholar
Grace Drinker," she said, "read my
papers and take a class. I thought you
wanted to talk to me."

Children of the Mind

The human brain, Miro had concluded,
just like a computer, can only receive
data at certain speeds. If you get too
slow, the listener's attention wanders
and the information is lost.

Xenocide

Then he was done. He pulled away,
rolled onto his back. "I'm sorry," he
said.

"You're welcome," she said. She
believed in answering what people
meant, not what they said.

Xenocide

"For the sake of simplicity, let's skip the
hypotheticals," he said. "Let's say this
juror is actually you, okay?"

"Okay."

Runaway Jury

Smile when picking up the phone.
The caller will hear it in your voice.

It seems a long time since the morning
mail could be called correspondence.

*“God’s Country and Mine” by Jacques Barzun,
1954*

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right place but
to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

Dorothy Nevill

“My son displays a general garment and you claim it’s cut to your fit?” Jessica asked.
“What a fascinating revelation.” She slid a hand down to her leg to the crysknife she
had fastened in a calf-sheath. The banker turned his glare on Jessica. Eyes shifted
away from Paul and she saw him ease himself back from the table, freeing himself
for action. He had focused on the code word: garment. ‘Prepare for violence.’

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

Ouanda's anxiety visibly eased, but her hostility was no less. "You're slick, Senhor Andrew, Speaker for the Dead, you're very clever. You remind him of the Hive Queen, and speak scripture to me out of the side of your mouth."

"I speak to everyone in the language they understand," said Ender. "That isn't being slick. It's being clear."

Speaker for the Dead

Only a sadistic scoundrel – or a fool – tells the bald truth on social occasions.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

Don't speak unless you can improve upon the silence.

Spanish Proverb

My father had taught me that a woman will forgive any action, up to and including assault with violence, but is easily insulted by language; the lovelier half of our race is symbol-oriented-very strange, in view of their extreme practicality. In any case, I have never let a taboo word pass my lips when it might offend the ears of a lady since the time I last received the back of my father's hard hand full on my mouth ... Father could have given Professor Pavlov pointers in reflex conditioning.

"Double Star" by Robert A. Heinlein

For women the best aphrodisiacs are words. The G-spot is in the ears. He who looks for it below there is wasting his time.

Isabel Allende

Always tell her she is beautiful, especially if she is not.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

Colon thought Carrot was simple. Carrot often struck people as simple. And he was. Where people went wrong was thinking that simple meant the same thing as stupid. Carrot was not stupid. He was direct, and honest, and good-natured and honourable in all his dealings. In Ankh-Morpork this would normally have added up to 'stupid' in any case and would have given him the survival quotient of a jellyfish in a blast furnace, but there were a couple of other factors. One was a punch that even trolls had learned to respect. The other was that Carrot was genuinely, almost supernaturally, likeable. He got on well with people, even while arresting them. He had an exceptional memory for names.

From a Discworld novel by Terry Pratchett

How do I soften the blow? There were times when you could not soften it; in fact when it was kinder to rip off the bandages in one swift shot of agony.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

"I know that you were only the bearer of news, not the cause of our loss. But your visit here will not be remembered with happiness. Yet I want you to know that I understand how kindly you have done this miserable job."

Julian in Ender's Shadow

Lying

“Everyone lies, Michael. The innocent lie because they don’t want to be blamed for something they didn’t do and the guilty lie because they don’t have any other choice.”

Sinclair to Garibaldi in Babylon 5: “And the Sky Full of Stars”

I do know that the slickest way to lie is to tell the right amount of truth – then to shut up.

A truth that’s told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent.

William Blake

A half truth is a whole lie.

Yiddish Proverb

The cruelest lies are often told in silence.

Robert Louis Stevenson

[after Bashir tells the story of The Boy Who Cried Wolf]

“The point is, if you lie all the time, nobody’s going to believe you, even when you’re telling the truth.”

“Are you sure that’s the point, doctor?”

“Of course. What else could it be?”

“That you should never tell the same lie twice.”

Bashir and Garak in Star Trek DS9

Yueh ventured a thin smile, thinking: I believe it has worked. Now, she’ll think anything unusual in my manner is due to embarrassment. She’ll not look for deeper reasons when she believes she already knows the answer.

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

My marriage with Irina, in spite if everything, was a happy time to me. It was easy being with her. But there were times, moments and I became curious. How would she occupy her morning, or what were her plans when I was out of town?

Usually she told me but occasionally she stopped what she was doing, walk over and offer me a kiss – spontaneous gesture.

But on one occasion it struck me, this impulsive kiss, what if it was an evasion? Camouflaging the truth in an expression of love. Of course I dismissed my concern immediately. Merely my professional paranoia, after all she was my wife.

I don’t regret having married. I have Sydney because of our time together. What I do regret is once I saw signs of her duplicity, once I sensed her betrayal, I chose to ignore it.

All I’m asking is that you be responsive to the signs if and when they present themselves.

Jack Bristow in Alias Ep. 3.18: “Unveiled”

Active Listening

She wants to tell me, Susan knew.
She's desperate to. But I've got to play it right,
so she can square it with herself.
"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

The phrase “we (I)(you) simply must ...” designates something that need not be done. “That goes without saying” is a red warning. “Of course” means you had best check it yourself. These small-change clichés and others like them, when read correctly, are reliable channel markers.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in “Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Angua felt she was beginning to understand the way Carrot asked questions. He asked them by not asking them. He simply told people what he thought or suspected, and they found themselves filling in the details in an attempt to keep up. And he never, actually, told lies.

From a Discworld novel by Terry Pratchett

No one really listens to anyone else. Try it for a while, and you'll see why.
Mignon McLaughlin

Lu-Tze listened to the senior monks, while leaning on his broom. Listening was an art he had developed over the years, having learned that if you listened hard and long enough people would tell you more than they thought they knew.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

'I can't beat 'em, Gytha,' said Granny. 'I can't beat 'em, and that's a fact.'

One of Nanny Ogg's hidden talents was knowing when to say nothing. It left a hole in the conversation that the other person felt obliged to fill.

"Carpe Jugulum" by Terry Pratchett

Good ear. Spends a few seconds, watching, listening and adjusts to make herself understood. Very old art form that most humans adopt quickly.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

Earlier exquisites had shouted and ranted confessions out of people. Vorbis never did that. He just dug deep silences in front of them.

"Small Gods" by Terry Pratchett

So he watched. He listened. Everything the others learned, he had to learn just as well, maybe better. And on top of that, he had to learn what the others were oblivious to — the workings of the group, the systems of the Battle School. How teachers got on with each other. Where the power was. Who was afraid of whom. Every group had its bosses, its suckups, its rebels, its sheep. Every group had its strong bonds and its weak ones, friendships and hypocrisies. Lies within lies within lies. And Bean had to find them all, as quickly as possible, in order to learn the spaces in which he could survive.

Ender's Shadow

Languages

Problems with translations:

english translation of japanese proverb: "All for one and one for all."

original japanese proverb (lit.) "A single person is everyone's fault and everyone is a single person's fault."

There's a whole lot of cultural background that gets lost in translation.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

All the way up to the surface, Valentine struggled to make sense of what had happened. She had always thought that if only people could communicate mind-to-mind, eliminating the ambiguities of language, then understanding would be perfect and there'd be no more needless conflicts. Instead she had discovered that rather than magnifying differences between people, language might just as easily soften them, minimize them, smooth things over so that people could get along even though they really didn't understand each other. The illusion of comprehension allowed people to think they were more alike than they really were. Maybe language was better.

Xenocide

Focus on content, not on status

Excellent ideas can happen to anyone.



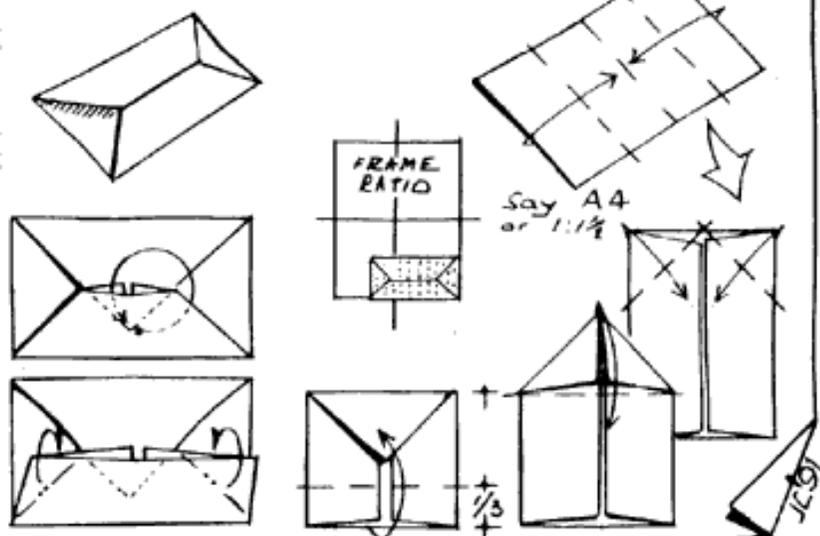
A child's wisdom is also wisdom.

Jewish Proverb

Have you ever observed that we pay much more attention to a wise passage when it is quoted than when we read it in the original author?

Philip G. Hamerton

Fern Letterfold



Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of
May, and summer's lease hath all too short
a day. Sometime too hot the eye of heaven
shines, and often the fair complexion
of a diamond glaze, but every fair proportion
has a change of nature, and this brief
candle of the sun doth melt away. Art thou
more lovely and more temperate than
these summer days, when the sky is clear,
the air is soft, the sun shines bright,
and the birds are singing? Art thou
more lovely and more temperate than
these summer days, when the sky is clear,
the air is soft, the sun shines bright,
and the birds are singing?

Eloquence

In disagreements, fight fairly.
No name calling.

In disagreements with loved ones, deal
with the current situation. Don't bring
up the past.

"Never offend people with style when
you can offend them with substance."

Sam Brown

Silence is one of the hardest arguments
to refute.

Josh Billings

"We make no accusation," said Wang-
mu softly, refusing to rise. "We offer an
observation. If we are wrong, we beg
you to teach us our mistake."

Children of the Mind

"They were subjects of the Empire –
their welfare was not your concern!"

"Apparently, it wasn't yours either."

Advocate Orak and Cap. Archer in "Enterprise"

"Which reminds me – we will be interviewed, my client and I, over the networks
later today – and I shall announce that we want public talks." "What? You mustn't
give out interviews now – why, that's contrary to the whole spirit of this discussion."
"I can't see that it is. Are you suggesting that a citizen must have your permission to
speak to the press?" "No, of course not, but—"

Jubal Harshaw and Secretary General Douglas in "Stranger In A Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein

"All these people want is to be heard.
A member of your group nearly
destroyed our tylium refiner. Before
we can even begin to talk I need your
personal assurance that there will be no
more attacks."

"As I told you the Admiral, I have had
no direct contact—"

"Genuine negotiations require trust.
Do not lie to me."

Roslin and Jahee in BattleStar Galactica

"I do not threaten,

I merely advise caution."

Dream, in "Sandman: Fables and Reflections",

by Neil Gaiman

"You knew this?" said the Bishop. "And
you didn't tell me?"

"Forgive me, Bishop Peregrino, but it
did not occur to us that you would not
have detected this yourselves."

Speaker for the Dead

"Anyhow, failure is a character builder,
right Charlie?"

"I don't know, Tom. You tell me."

*Tom Ince and Charlie Chaplin in "The Cat's
Meow" (2001)*

"You despise me, don't you?"

"If I gave you any thought I probably
would."

Ugarte and Rick Blaine in "Casablanca"

[As the plane prepares to take off.]

“Nervous?”

“Yes.”

“First time?”

“No, I’ve been nervous lots of times.”

Old lady and Ted Striker in Airplane

“Hush, minion.”

Sarah

“Well, that’s it, then. And we saved people the trouble of voting. What’s next?”

“Our point is that it’s —”

“I understand the point. We’re going to South Carolina to set up Illinois. When I ask, ‘What’s next?’, it means that I’m ready to move on to other things. So, what’s next?”

President Bartlet and Josh in “The West Wing”

I asked Prof how should have handled? "Always answer an unfriendly question with another question," he told me. "Never ask him to clarify; he'll put words in your mouth. This reporter— Was he skinny? Ribs showing?"

"No. Heavysset."

"Not living on eighteen hundred calories a day, I take it, which is the subject of that order he cited. Had you known you could have asked him how long he had conformed to the ration and why he quit? Or asked him what he had for breakfast — and then looked unbelieving no matter what he answered. Or when you don't know what a man is getting at, let your counter-question shift the subject to something you do want to talk about. Then, no matter what he answers, make your point and call on someone else. Logic does not enter into it — just tactics."

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" by Robert A. Heinlein

They delivered me to the robing room of the Palace and turned me over to King Willem’s equerry, Colonel Pateel, a bland-faced Hindu with perfect manners and the dazzling dress uniform of the Imperial space forces. His bow to me must have been calculated on a slide rule; it suggested that I was about to be Supreme Minister but was not quite there yet, that I was his senior but nevertheless a civilian — then subtract five degrees for the fact that he wore the Emperor’s aiguillette on his right shoulder. He glanced at the wand and said smoothly, “That’s a Martian wand, is it not, sir? Interesting. I suppose you will want to leave it here — it will be safe.” I said, “I’m carrying it.” “Sir?” His eyebrows shot up and he waited for me to correct my obvious mistake. I reached into Bonforte’s favorite clichès and picked one he used to reprove bumptiousness. “Son, suppose you tend to your knitting and I tend to mine.” His face lost all expression. “Very well, sir. If you will come this way?”

"Double Star" by Robert A. Heinlein

“Once I thought I was wrong,
but I was mistaken.”

“It’s not that I don’t believe in you, it’s
just that everything you say is wrong.”

“Quite so. Now, you’ve answered all my questions very fairly, sir, and here’s just one more. If you were me, what question would you ask of the Consul of the Witches?” For the first time Dr. Lanselius smiled.

"His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman

“Assuming you’re not a spy.”

“Assuming.”

“Then maybe you’re an outcast.”

“Or maybe I’m an outcast spy.”

“How could you be both?”

“I never said I was either.”

Bashir and Garak in Star Trek DS9

Discretion is being able to raise your eyebrow instead of your voice.

‘Never argue with a drunk or a fool.’

Leo in The West Wing: "Celestial Navigation"

“But would you do the Man from Mars a favor?”

“Eh? What favor?”

“Talks will not begin until Caxton is located – that is not subject to argument. But I have not been able to find him. I am merely a private citizen.”

“What do you mean?”

“I spoke disparagingly of the Special Service squadrons – check it off to the irk of a man who has had his door broken down. But I know that they can be amazingly efficient ... and they have the cooperation of police forces everywhere. Mr. Secretary, if you were to call in your S.S. Commandant and tell him that you wanted to locate a man at once – well, sir, it would produce more activity in an hour than I could in a century.”

Jubal Harshaw to Secretary General Douglas in "Stranger in A Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein

Every good scientist is half B. F. Skinner
and half P. T. Barnum.

Principal Skinner, on Bart's project, "Duffless"

To find out a girl’s faults,
praise her to her girlfriends.

Benjamin Franklin

“First, your return to shore was not part of our negotiations nor our agreement, so I must do nothin’. And secondly, you must be a pirate for the Pirate’s Code to apply, and you’re not. And thirdly, the Code is more what you’d call ‘guidelines’ than actual rules. Welcome aboard the Black Pearl, Miss Turner.”

Barbossa in "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl"

“Perhaps your fear in passing judgement on me
is greater than mine in receiving it.”

Giordano Bruno, after being sentenced to death

"To colony worlds, Demosthenes gave warning that the Lusitania Fleet was a dangerous precedent— it would be only a matter of time before Starways Congress used force to compel their obedience, too. To Catholic worlds and Catholic minorities everywhere, Demosthenes charged that Congress was trying to punish the Bishop of Lusitania for sending missionaries to the pequeninos to save their souls from hell. To scientists, Demosthenes sent warning that the principle of independent research was at stake— a whole world was under military attack because it dared to prefer the judgment of the scientists on the scene to the judgment of bureaucrats many light-years away. And to everyone, Demosthenes made claims that the Lusitania Fleet carried the Molecular Disruption Device. Of course that is an obvious lie, but some believed it."

Xenocide

Accept that others bring change

Changing yourself is easy – until you have to give up something you like.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

Change is feared by those who did not cause it.

The person who takes the banal and ordinary and illuminates it in a new way can terrify. We do not want our ideas changed. We feel threatened by such demands. "I already know the important things!" we say. Then Changer comes and throws our old ideas away.

The Zensufi Master Heretics of Dune (1984)

'Be careful. People like to be told what they already know. Remember that. They get uncomfortable when you tell them new things. New things . . . well, new things aren't what they expect. They like to know that, say, a dog will bite a man. That is what dogs do. They don't want to know that a man bites a dog, because the world is not supposed to happen like that. In short, what people think they want is news, but what they really crave is olds.'

The Patrician in "The Truth" by Terry Pratchett

Our only security is our ability to change.

John Lilly

New ideas are often greeted with skepticism ... even fear. But sometimes, those ideas are accepted ... and when they are, progress is made ... eyes are opened.

Star Trek Quotations

The Reverend Mother reminded herself then of Scytale's assessment: When a creature has developed into one thing, he will choose death rather than change into his opposite.

"Dune Messiah" by Frank Herbert

OMNIA
MUTANTUR,
NIHIL
INTERIT...?



Advice

The best advice is this:
Don't take advice and don't give advice.

Nobody can give you wiser advice
than yourself.
Cicero

A desire not to butt into other people's business
is at least eighty percent of all human wisdom ...
and the other twenty percent isn't very important.
Jubal Harshaw in "Stranger In A Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein

Almost every wise saying has an
opposite one, no less wise, to balance it.
Santayana, Essays

To know the road ahead,
ask those coming back.
Chinese Proverb

When a friend is in trouble, don't annoy him by asking if there is anything you can do. Think up something appropriate and do it.

Edgar Watson Howe

There's a certain glint in her eye generally possessed by those people who have found that they are more intelligent than most people around them but who haven't yet learned that one of the most intelligent things they can do is prevent said people ever finding this out.

"Lords and Ladies" by Terry Pratchett

And though there may be some superficial similarities between a psychiatrist and a headologist, there is a huge practical difference. A psychiatrist, dealing with a man who fears he is being followed by a large and terrible monster, will endeavour to convince him that monsters don't exist. Granny Weatherwax would simply give him a chair to stand on and a very heavy stick.

"Maskerade" by Terry Pratchett



You can't solve problems for those who don't want their problems solved.

"I? Accuse you? The only one who can do that is yourself. I merely give you the Bene Gesserit opinion."

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

In giving advice seek to help, not to please, your friend.

Solon

"You aren't very good at determining what other people want and need from you, Novinha. No one is. We're all as likely to hurt as help."

Children of the Mind

If it's very painful for you to criticize your friends – you're safe in doing it. But if you take the slightest pleasure in it, that's the time to hold your tongue.

Alice Duer Miller

Stanley: "Look, we're done for the night."

[He stands up and gets ready to leave.]

Bartlet: "What?"

Stanley [glancing at his watch]: "We've been here for two hours. It was a double session. We're done for the night."

Bartlet: "Stanley, I hate to put it this way, but I'm me, and you're you, and we're done when I say we're done."

Stanley: "No." [beat] "I think you could use some assistance right now, sir. Use me, don't use me, but all I can offer you is this: I'll be the only person in the world, other than your family, who doesn't care that you're the President."

[beat] "Our time is up."

"The West Wing"

But Wang-mu said nothing, because this was one of the first lessons she learned from Master Han. When you have wisdom that another person knows that he needs, you give it freely. But when the other person doesn't yet know that he needs your wisdom, you keep it to yourself. Food only looks good to a hungry man. Qing-jao was not hungry for wisdom from Wang-mu, and never would be. So silence was all that Wang-mu could offer. She could only hope that Qing-jao would find her own road to proper obedience, compassionate decency, or the struggle for freedom.

Xenocide

Only your real friends will tell you when your face is dirty.

Sicilian Proverb



When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.

Henri Nouwen

One reason a dog can be such a comfort when you're feeling blue
is that he doesn't try to find out why.

Sometimes the best helping hand you
can get is a good, firm push.

Joann Thomas

Advice is like snow; the softer it falls, the
longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it
sinks into the mind.

Samuel Coleridge

A good example has twice the value of good advice.

"Mmm ... boys, being a staff rating, I've served with a lot of high brass. When you are right and a general is wrong, there is only one way to get him to change his mind. You shut up and don't argue. You let the facts speak for themselves and give him time to figure out a logical reason for reversing himself."

"Time for the Stars" by Robert A. Heinlein

It's very important to know when
you're in a pissing match. And it's very
important to get out of it as quickly as
possible.

Randy Pausch

It's such a shame people perceive you
as so arrogant, because it's going to
limit what you're going to be able to
accomplish in life.

Randy Pausch

YOU CANNOT CHANGE OTHER PEOPLE.

In order to change we must be sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Consider how hard it is to change yourself and you'll understand what little chance you have in trying to change others.

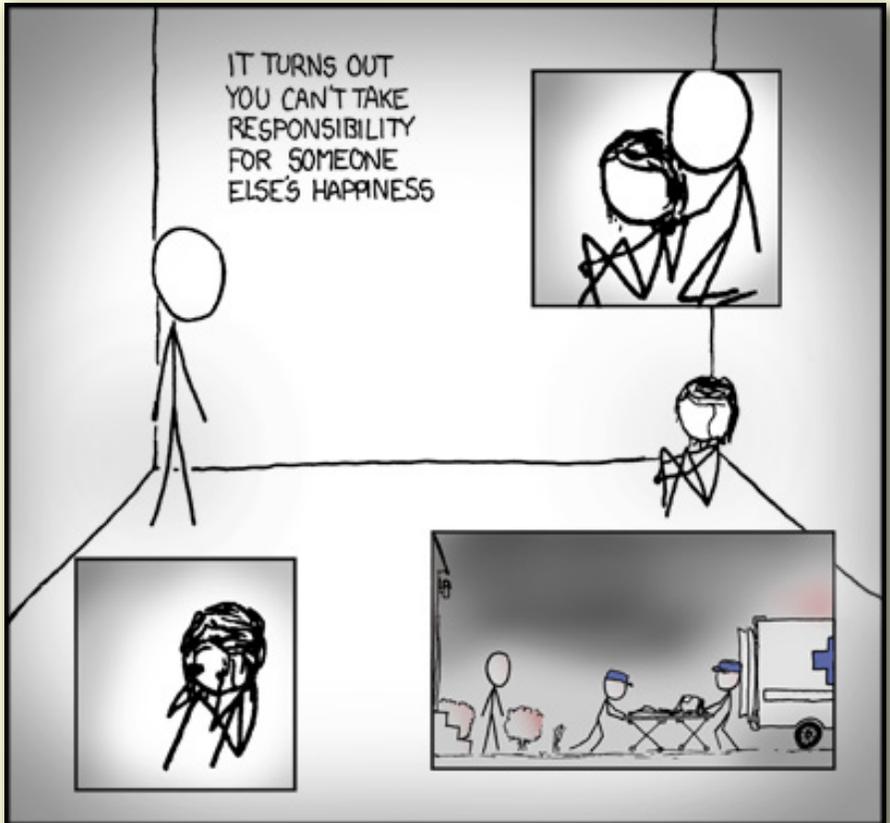
Jacob M. Braude

“Charity ain’t giving people what you wants to give, it’s giving people what they need to get.”

“Hogfather” by Terry Pratchett

There is no use whatsoever trying to help people who do not help themselves. You cannot push anyone up a ladder unless he is willing to climb himself.

Andrew Carnegie



POWER

“Power tends to isolate those who hold too much of it. Eventually, they lose touch with reality ... and fall.”

“Dune Messiah” by Frank Herbert

"I have seen what power does, and I have seen what power costs.

The one is never equal to the other."

G'Kar in Babylon 5: "Epiphanies"

“Isn’t it strange, G’Kar? When we first met, I had no power ... and all the choices I could ever want. And now I have all the power I could ever want ... and no choices at all. No choice ... at all.”

*Londo to G’Kar in Babylon 5:
“The Fall of Centauri Prime”*

“I object to intellect without discipline;
I object to power without constructive purpose.”

Spock in Star Trek TOS: “The Squire of Gothos”

“Do it!” Paul barked. “The power to destroy a thing is the absolute control over it. You’ve agreed I have that power. We are not here to discuss or to negotiate or to compromise. You will obey my orders or suffer the immediate consequences!”

“Dune” by Frank Herbert

“I’ve had a lot of people talking at me the last few days. Everyone just lining up to tell me how unimportant I am. And I’ve finally figured out why. Power. I have it. They don’t. This bothers them. Glory ... came to my home today.”

“Buffy, are you...”

“Just to talk. She told me I’m a bug, I’m a flea, she could squash me in a second. Only she didn’t. She came into my home, and we talked. We had what in her warped brain probably passes for a civilized conversation. Why? Because she needs something from me. Because I have power over her.”

Buffy and Giles in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer



Secrets

I'm told Confucius said,
'A closed mouth catches no flies.'
Noble House

"You may come and go as you please.
My secrets guard themselves. Will
yours do the same?"
Haggard in "The Last Unicorn"

Wise, she thought, amused, and a matter of face. Ah, but I could write such a book about them all if I wanted to. I never will — I don't think I ever will. Why should I, there's no reason. Even after Macao I've always kept the secrets. That's another thing Quillan taught me — discretion.

Noble House

The only way to retrieve a secret, once it is known, is to replace it with a lie; then the knowledge of the truth is once again your secret."

Xenocide

Most of our greatest secrets are our greatest accomplishments. No wonder that we are dying to tell them.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

The easiest way to keep a
secret is without help.

"You don't know what you're asking," said the Speaker. "You don't know how much pain it will cause if all the secrets come out."

"Take a look at my family, Speaker," she answered. "How can the truth cause any more pain than the secrets have already caused?"

Speaker for the Dead

"All I did was open the windows
and let in some air."

Speaker for the Dead

I wanted to ask her when and how she had learned Japanese but did not—Gwen would tell me when it suited her. (How many marriages are ruined by that itch to know "all about" a spouse? As a veteran of countless true confession stories I can assure you that unbridled curiosity about your wife's/husband's past is a sure formula for domestic tragedy.)

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Kasperavicius says he came to a watershed when he used his hacking skills to break into his college girlfriend's e-mail account, an act he evidently regrets to this day.

"Just because you can doesn't mean you should," Kasperavicius says, upset. "At some point in the relationship ... the information comes out. It destroys the friendship, it destroys the relationship and you cannot get it back because you lose all trust. You cannot go back."

Wired.com

The only system which is truly secure is one which is switched off and unplugged locked in a titanium lined safe, buried in a concrete bunker, and is surrounded by nerve gas and very highly paid armed guards. Even then, I wouldn't stake my life on it.

Gene Spafford, Director, Computer Operations, Audit, and Security Technology Project, Purdue University

"I thought you said the ... records were all confiscated."

"I made a copy. You never know when I might want to write my memoirs."

Sheridan and Garibaldi in Babylon 5: "Knives"

Using encryption on the Internet is the equivalent of arranging an armored car to deliver credit-card information from someone living in a cardboard box to someone living on a park bench.

Gene Spafford

Security. It doesn't exist in nature. No animal is so arrogant as to ever feel completely safe. Only humans believe they can find assured well-being through design ... and technology. Some even believe it with a vengeance.

Jim Profit

Treat your password like your toothbrush. Don't let anybody else use it, and get a new one every six months.

Clifford Stoll



Keep your own judgment

"Just because someone's a member of an ethnic minority doesn't mean they're not a nasty small-minded little jerk."

"Feet of Clay" by Terry Pratchett

The court of public opinion has spoken.

Bullshit Episode

The number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed.

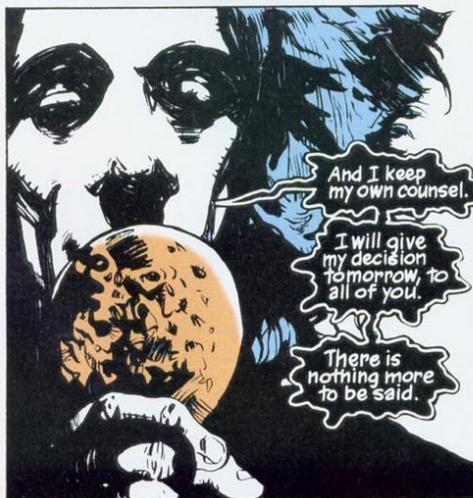
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, The Critic, 1799

'A dog doesn't care if its master's good or bad, just so long as it likes the dog.'

"Wyrd Sisters" by Terry Pratchett

It took me a long time but I finally figured it out: when it comes to men that are romantically interested in you, it's really simple: just ignore everything they say, and only pay attention to what they do. It's that simple. It's that easy.

Randy Pausch, quoting a CMU secretary



Judge People

Madam Frouf cringed back in her chair when Miss Susan looked up. The girl had this terrible ability to give you her full attention. You had to be a better person than Madam Frouf to survive in the intensity of that attention. It inspected your soul, putting little red circles around the bits it didn't like. When Miss Susan looked at you, it was as if she was giving you marks.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

"He is nice *to me*."

Manuela, why she likes a fellow worker who mobbs colleagues and gossips behind their backs

"I think it's impossible to really understand somebody, what they want, what they believe, and not love them the way they love themselves."

"Ender's Game"

When deeds speak,
words are nothing.
African Proverb

As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say.
I just watch what they do.
Andrew Carnegie

The louder he talked of his honor
the faster we counted our spoons.
"The Conduct Of Life, VI"
by R. W. Emerson, 1860

"Do actions agree with words? There's your measure of reliability. Never confine yourself to the words."
Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"



Money is truthful. If a man speaks of his honor, make him pay cash.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

If you want to judge a man, take a look at his enemies.

"It is our choices Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

Dumbledore in "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" by R.K. Rowling

Don't judge people by their relatives.

Never judge someone by who he's in love with; judge him by his friends. People fall in love with the most appalling people. Take a cool, appraising glance at his pals.

Cynthia Heimel

This sad little lizard told me that he was a brontosaurus on his mother's side. I did not laugh; people who boast of ancestry often have little else to sustain them. Humoring them costs nothing and adds to happiness in a world in which happiness is always in short supply.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

Whoever gossips to you will gossip about you.

Spanish Proverb

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

James D. Miles

Watch what people are cynical about, and one can often discover what they lack.

George S. Patton, General (1885-1945)

"I still can't believe you didn't tell me about your family and all that."

"I was just afraid if you saw the kind of people I came from, you wouldn't want to be anywhere near me."

"See ... that's where you're a dummy. I think about what you grew up with and then I look at what you are. It makes me proud. It makes me love you more."

Willow and Tara in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

A person who is nice to you, but rude to the waiter, is not a nice person.

"Things That It Took Me 50 Years to Learn" by Dave Barry

"If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals."

Sirius Black

The only man I know who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew each time he sees me. The rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them.

George Bernard Shaw

"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 out of it."

Brigid Brophy

“We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal.”
is not “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are clones.”

Steven Pinker

She turned on Susan a glare like a thermic lance. 'You'll be thinking, this is an old biddy of a midwife,' she said. 'You'll be thinking, what does she know?' Susan paid her the courtesy of not lying. 'Part of me was,' she admitted. 'Good answer! Part of us thinks all kinds of things,' said Mrs Ogg.

"Thief of Time" by Terry Pratchett

I understand their logic
and I totally disagree with it.

David Carson

“Forgiving and Forgetting means
discarding valuable experience.”

Schopenhauer

“You [humans] reveal yourselves best in
how you play.”

Q in Star Trek TNG: “Hide And Q”

How you greet a stranger tells more
than the way you meet a friend.

The lounge was el-shaped and he was out of sight; he hung back and listened shamelessly. Eavesdropping had saved his skin on several occasions; it worried him not at all — he enjoyed it.

"Methuselah's Children" by Robert A. Heinlein

Wait long enough and people will surprise and impress you. He [Jon Snoddy] said, when you are pissed off at somebody, and you're angry at them, you just haven't given them enough time. Just give them a little more time — and they'll almost always impress you. And that really stuck with me. I think he's absolutely right on that one.

Randy Pausch

'Money is, alas, tight—' Vitoller began. 'But it will stretch,' said his wife firmly. 'Yes. I think it will. We should be happy to take care of him.' Granny nodded, and fished in the deepest recesses of her cloak. At last she produced a small leather bag, which she tipped out on to the table. There was a lot of silver, and even a few tiny gold coins. 'This should take care of—' she groped — 'nappies and suchlike. Clothes and things. Whatever.' 'A hundred times over, I should think,' said Vitoller weakly. 'Why didn't you mention this before?' 'If I'd had to buy you, you wouldn't be worth the price.'

"Wyrd Sisters" by Terry Pratchett

Don't judge those who try and fail.
Judge only those who fail to try.

H. Jackson Brown

I have never for one instant seen clearly
within myself. How then would you
have me judge the deeds of others?

Maurice Maeterlinck

We judge others by their behavior.
We judge ourselves by our intentions.

Ian Percy

We are all inclined to judge ourselves by
our ideals; others, by their acts.

Harold Nicolson

“In good times, Leo. It's not hard to
like a guy when he's doing well. The
measure of a man is, how does he
behave when things are otherwise?”

President Bartlet in “The West Wing”

“I know I chatter on far too much ...
but if you only knew how many things
I want to say and don't. Give me some
credit.”

Anne Shirley

I've heard all the usual Sweetness and
Light that kids get pushed at them-how
they should always forgive, how there's
some good in the worst of us, etc. But
when I see a black widow, I step on it;
I don't plead with it to be a good little
spider and please stop poisoning people.
A black widow spider can't help it-but
that's the point.

*“Have Space Suit will Travel”
by Robert A. Heinlein*

Some people are like trivia, interesting
to know but of little importance

“You were born with an asshole, Doris,
you don't need Chuck.”

Younger Sister in “Night of the Comet”

The wounded animal is only concerned
with his pain.

But I don't hold with the idea that to understand all is to forgive all; you follow
that and first thing you know you're sentimental over murderers and rapists and
kidnappers and forgetting their victims. That's wrong. I'll weep over the likes of
Pee-wee, not over criminals whose victims they are. I missed Jock's talk but if there
were some way to drown such creatures at birth, I'd take my turn as executioner.
That goes double for Tim.

“Have Space Suit will Travel” by Robert A. Heinlein

“You,” said Trelane dangerously, “are a very annoying little man. Are you aware
of just how easily I could destroy you?” “Yes,” said Picard. “But you won't.” This
certainty actually seemed to amuse Trelane. “Oh, really. Why won't I?” “Because
you're a sadist,” Picard told him. “Because you enjoy the hurting and the torturing
of other beings more than anything else. And if you kill me, then you won't be able
to hurt me anymore. Where's the fun in that?”

Q-Squared

... [she] likes to show off her power over the others. She does not do what others want but what she thinks they do not want.

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

Then she realized what nonsense she had been thinking. It wasn't the desperation of the street that drove Achilles to murder Poke. It was pride. It was Cain, who thought that being shamed was reason enough to take his brother's life. It was Judas, who did not shrink to kiss before killing. What was she thinking, to treat evil as if it were a mere mechanical product of deprivation? All the children of the street suffered fear and hunger, helplessness and desperation. But they didn't all become cold-blooded, calculating murderers.

Ender's Shadow

Sucking up wouldn't help. That would just look like weakness, and Bean had seen for a long time how bullies — and Achilles was still a bully at heart — thrived on the terror of other children, how they treated people even worse when they showed their weakness. Nor would offering more clever ideas, first because Bean didn't have any, and second because Achilles would think it was an affront to his authority. And the other kids would resent it if Bean kept acting like he thought he was the only one with a brain. They already resented him for having thought of this plan that had changed their lives.

Ender's Shadow

"When you're as gifted as Bean, accurate self-assessment looks like vanity to other people."

Ender's Shadow

Until a man is twenty-five, he still thinks, every so often, that under the right circumstances he could be the baddest motherfucker in the world.

Neal Stephenson, "Snowcrash"

"You're quite right that the truth about him will cause nothing but pain, but not because he was a miserable man," said the Speaker. "If I told nothing but what everyone already knows— that he hated his children and beat his wife and raged drunkenly from bar to bar until the constables sent him home— then I would not cause pain, would I? I'd cause a great deal of satisfaction, because then everyone would be reassured that their view of him was correct all along. He was scum, and so it was all right that they treated him like scum."

"And you think he wasn't?"

"No human being, when you understand his desires, is worthless. No one's life is nothing. Even the most evil of men and women, if you understand their hearts, had some generous act that redeems them, at least a little, from their sins."

"If you believe that, then you're younger than you look," said Novinha.

"Am I?" said the Speaker. "It was less than two weeks ago that I first heard your call. I studied you then, and even if you don't remember, Novinha, I remember that as a young girl you were sweet and beautiful and good. You had been lonely before, but Pipo and Libo both knew you and found you worthy of love."

Speaker for the Dead

“Don’t you think imposing additional penalties for hate-motivated crimes is a powerful statement by society against tolerance?”

“No. A crime is a crime. One murder isn’t any better or worse than another.”

“Boy, was that the wrong answer.”

“Punishing people for their beliefs is, the beginning of the end. Once more you agree with me.”

C.J. and Danny in “The West Wing”

Men go abroad to wonder at the heights of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motions of the stars, and they pass by themselves without wondering.

St. Augustine

“You are a clever imitation of life ... Can a robot write a symphony? Can a robot take a blank canvas and turn it into a masterpiece?”

“Can you?”

Detective Del Spooner and Sonny, the robot he interrogates, in “I, Robot”

A young guy, must have been Brotigan, gave a nod of thanks to each end of the table. Lantern-jawed, all-American, smooth-cheeked. He struck Teddy as the kind of guy who needed watching, too secure in his own fulfillment of his parents' wildest dreams.

“Shutter Island” by Dennis Lehane

Campaigns to bearproof all garbage containers in wild areas have been difficult because, as one biologist put it, ‘There is a considerable overlap between the intelligence levels of the smartest bears and the dumbest tourists’

Have no fear of robbers or murderers. They are external dangers, petty dangers. We should fear ourselves. Prejudices are the real robbers; vices the real murders. The great dangers are within us. Why worry about what threatens our heads or purses? Let us think instead of what threatens our souls.

Victor Hugo

MOST PEOPLE ARE RATHER STUPID AND WASTE THEIR LIVES. HAVE YOU NOT SEEN THAT? HAVE YOU NOT LOOKED DOWN FROM THE HORSE AT A CITY AND THOUGHT HOW MUCH IT RESEMBLED AN ANT HEAP, FULL OF BLIND CREATURES WHO THINK THEIR MUNDANE LITTLE WORLD IS REAL? YOU SEE THE LIGHTED WINDOWS AND WHAT YOU WANT TO THINK IS THAT THERE MAY BE MANY INTERESTING STORIES BEHIND THEM, BUT WHAT YOU KNOW IS THAT REALLY THERE ARE JUST DULL, DULL SOULS, MERE CONSUMERS OF FOOD, WHO THINK THEIR INSTINCTS ARE EMOTIONS AND THEIR TINY LIVES OF MORE ACCOUNT THAN A WHISPER OF WIND.

‘No,’ whispered Susan, ‘no, I’ve never thought like that.’

Death stood up abruptly and turned away. YOU MAY FIND THAT IT HELPS, he said.

Death and Susan in “Soul Music” by Terry Pratchett

“You know, Londo never liked the Pak’ma’ra [race of garbage eaters that are avoided by all other races]. I mean, they’re stubborn, lazy, obnoxious, greedy—”
“They kinda look like an octopussy that got run over by a truck.”
“That too, but ... one day Londo and I were walking past their quarters ... and we heard them ... singing.”
“Singing? They can sing?”
“There’s nothing about that in the literature.”
“Apparently it’s something they only do certain times of the year as part of their religious ceremonies. You may not believe this, but ... it was the most beautiful sound I’ve ever heard. I couldn’t make out the words, but I knew it was full of sadness and ... hope and wonder and ... terrible ... sense of loss. I looked at Londo and — this is the amazing part — there was a ... tear running down his face. I said: ‘Londo, we should leave.’ And ‘This is upsetting you.’ He just stood there and ... listened. And when it was over he turned to me and he said: ‘There are 49 gods in our pantheon, Vir. To tell you the truth I never believed in any of them. But if only one of them exist, ... then god sings with that voice.’ It’s funny. After everything we’ve been through, all he did, ... I miss him.”

Vir, Garibaldi, Sheridan, Franklin, Vir in Babylon 5: “Sleeping in Light”



Enemies

Men are not against you; they
are merely for themselves.

Gene Fowler, Skyline, 1961

“Never attribute to malice that which can
be adequately explained by stupidity.”

“Logic of Empire” by Robert A. Heinlein

“You forgot the first rule of a fanatic.
When you become obsessed with the
enemy, you become the enemy.”

Sinclair to ‘Tular’ in Babylon 5: ‘Infection’

Your enemy is never a villain in his own
eyes. Keep this in mind; it may offer a
way to make him your friend. If not,
you can kill him without hate – and
quickly.

*Notebooks of Lazarus Long in ‘Time Enough For
Love’ by Robert A. Heinlein*

“Why are you defending him, Quark? You’re his greatest enemy.”

“Maybe because that’s the closest thing he has in this world to a friend.”

Bar patron and Quark, about Odo, in Star Trek DS9: ‘A Man Alone’

Do not confuse your vested interests
with ethics. Do not identify the enemies
of your privilege with the enemies of
humanity.

Max Lerner, Actions and Passions, 1949

“For a man, to be great, needs great
enemies, great foes.” The Forkbeard
then lifted his mead to Svein Blue
Tooth. “You are a great man, Svein
Blue Tooth,” said he, “and you have
been a great enemy.”

Marauders of Gor

You have enemies? Good. That
means you’ve stood up for something,
sometime in your life.

Winston Churchill

He who lives by fighting with an enemy
has an interest in the preservation of
the enemys’ life.

Nietzsche

Am I not destroying my enemies when I
make them my friends?

Abraham Lincoln

“Your enemies always get strong on
what you leave behind.”

Michael Corleone in The Godfather: Part III

“Yes, we’ve disagreed, even fought, but I would rather have someone who opposed
me out of an honest belief in the rightness of his cause than someone who was
always on my side because it was expected and required. I’ve questioned your
judgement and wisdom, your temperament, but never your loyalty.” “Was that a
compliment?” “After a fashion.” “Then you trust me?” “After a fashion.”

Delenn and Neroon in Babylon 5: ‘Rumors, Bargains and Lies’

Revenge

Should we pursue revenge to avenge a wrong,
or seek the goals we set for ourself?

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

“Revenge is for children and the emotionally retarded.”

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

The only people with whom you should try to get even are those who have helped you.

John E. Southard

“Semirhage once made a man scream his every waking hour for five years. She even kept him sane, but in the end even she could not keep his heart beating.”

Moghedian in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

“I don’t want to get even. To get even, even Steven. I would have to kill you, go into Nikki’s room, kill her, then wait for your old man, Dr. Bell, to come home and kill him. That would make us even. No, my unborn daughter will just hafta be satisfied with your death at her mother’s hands.”

The Bride in “Kill Bill Vol. 1”

“I thought revenge would feel good. And I’m sure that he deserves whatever he gets, but it doesn’t feel right.”

“Of course it doesn’t, Gail. Revenge is pointless: it’s a tool for the weak. And you’re not weak ... not anymore.”

Gail and Jim in “Jim Profit”

“They invade our space, and we fall back. They assimilate entire worlds, and we fall back. Not again. The line must be drawn HERE. This far NO farther. And I will make them pay for what they’ve done.”

[...]

“You broke your little ships.”

Picard, seeking revenge for the pain the Borg inflicted to him and humanity, and Lily, in “Star Trek: First Contact”

The four tenets of the ideal revenge

1. Do unto others as they do unto you.

(Let the punishment fit the crime.)

2. Don’t involve innocents.

(Don’t hurt someone unless they hurt you.)

3. Be prepared to be caught.

(Always imagine a worst case scenario.)

4. Think before you drink.

(Think before you do, period.)

“My name is Maximus Decimus Meridius, Commander of the Armies of the North, General of the Felix Legions, loyal servant to the true emperor, Marcus Aurelius. Father to a murdered son, husband to a murdered wife. And I will have my vengeance, in this life or the next.”

Maximus in “Gladiator”

mastery has no need to show off

Don't say that you are over something.
Act this way. Words are superfluous.

If it was attention I wanted,
I'd take off my clothes and walk into the street.
Dave Matthews Band

The point is, once you have reached a level of mastery,
you don't feel the need to show off your skills anymore.
Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

People betray themselves

Show me a completely smooth operation
and I'll show you someone who's covering mistakes.
Real boats rock.
Darwi Odrade Heretics of Dune (1984)

“Why don't you cut the cute act,
Danny, and tell me exactly what it is
you're looking for?”

“Flaws.”

“There hasn't been a murder in six
years. There's nothing wrong with the
system. It's perfect.”

“I agree. The system is perfect. If
there's a flaw, it's human. It always is.”

Anderton and Witwer in “Minority Report”

“I thought the sleepers keep you from
scanning [mind reading] anyone.”

“That's right.”

“So, how did you know he was lying?”

“Well, the odds were good that he was
lying about something. Liars are always
afraid that somebody is going to see
through them. So, I just provided him
with a vehicle for his paranoia. Your
captain's opinions notwithstanding, the
badge and a uniform do have certain ...
advantages.”

“Like an intimidation?”

“Absolutely. Just like ... your badge and
... your uniform.”

Garibaldi and Bester in Babylon 5: “Dust to Dust”

He slipped the second desk back into the locker and closed the door, then tossed his first desk down onto his own bunk and slipped down after it. He did not look around to see if anyone noticed him. If they did, they'd say something soon enough; visibly checking around would merely call attention to him and make people suspect him who would not otherwise have noticed what he did.

Ender's Shadow

Group Work

My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there.

Indira Gandhi

The Intelligence Quotient of any meeting can be determined by starting with 100 and subtracting 5 points for each participant.

Dogbert's Group IQ Formula

Delegation Blocker

“Since when do you know this?”

“How important is it?” (not: how urgent is it)

A committee is a life form with six or more legs and no brain.

*Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in
“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein*

To get something done a committee should consist of no more than three people, two of whom are absent.

Robert Copeland

Luckily we had a breathing spell in which I sobered down and took to heart the oldest lesson on patrol: You can't do the other man's job. Then I gave all my attention to our rear.

“Glory Road” by Robert A. Heinlein

Cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there.

Virginia Burden, The Process of Intuition

But Prof didn't get excited; he went on smiling. "Manuel, do you really think that mob of retarded children can pass any laws?"

"You told them to. Urged them to."

"My dear Manuel, I was simply putting all my nuts in one basket. I know those nuts; I've listened to them for years. I was very careful in selecting their committees; they all have built-in confusion, they will quarrel. The chairman I forced on them while letting them elect him is a ditherer who could not unravel a piece of string—thinks every subject needs 'more study.' I almost needn't have bothered; more than six people cannot agree on anything, three is better—and one is perfect for a job that one can do. This is why parliamentary bodies all through history, when they accomplished anything, owed it to a few strong men who dominated the rest. Never fear, son, this Ad-Hoc Congress will do nothing. . . or if they pass something through sheer fatigue, it will be so loaded with contradictions that it will have to be thrown out. In the meantime they are out of our hair. Besides, there is something we need them for, later."

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" by Robert A. Heinlein

Look for real people

Carn Carby left, and Ender mentally added him to his private list of people who also qualified as human beings.

"Ender's Game"

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

Mark Twain

"It is wonderful to work in an environment with a lot of smart people. It challenges you to think and work on a different level. If you play with better players, you learn a lot: perspectives, intellectual arguments, new ways of thinking about things."

Marissa Mayer, Vice-President of Search Product and User Experience at Google

I think Lazarus suffers from a compulsion to be the biggest frog in any pond. He expects to be the bride at every wedding, the corpse at every funeral ... while pretending that he has no ambitions — just a barefoot country boy with straw in his hair and manure between his toes. If you think that I am not overly fond of Lazarus Long, I won't argue.

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in your joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

The Velveteen Rabbit

You're twisted, depraved, and rotten to the core ... I like that in a person.

In the bus I overheard two ladies: "—much as I despise them, you can't give a cocktail party without inviting the Sylvesters." It sounded like a foreign language. Then I played it back and understood the words. But why did she have to invite the Sylvesters? If she despised them, why didn't she either ignore them, or drop a rock on their heads? In God's name, why give a "cocktail party"? People who don't like each other particularly, standing around (never enough chairs), talking about things they aren't interested in, drinking drinks they don't want (why set a time to take a drink?) and getting high so that they won't notice they aren't having fun. Why?

I realized that acculturation had set in. I didn't fit.

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

Parents

Have no fear that your parents embarrass you. Worry about your own behavior. If it is excellent, others will be even more amazed of you, considering how your roots are.

“You’ve never had a child. You don’t know what it’s like to watch your son ... to watch him fall a little further behind every day You know he’s trying, but something’s holding him back. You don’t know what it’s like to stay up every night worrying that maybe it’s your fault. Maybe you did something wrong during the pregnancy, maybe you weren’t careful enough, or maybe there’s something wrong with you. Maybe you passed on a genetic defect without even knowing it.”

Mr. Bashir, about his decision to use illegal and dangerous genetic reengineering on his son, in Star Trek DS9: “Doctor Bashir, I Presume?”

“Did I make the right decision pushing her away?” “I don’t know.” “I miss the days when your answers were yes and no.” “[laughs] Me too.”

Clark and Martha, his mother, in “Smallville”

“You excited about the big fishing trip with your dad next weekend?”

“Mmm ...”

“You didn’t forget, did you?”

“How could I? We’ve been going every year since I was seven. Ten hours in a rowboat, swatting mosquitoes, looking for ripples in the water.”

“I thought you enjoyed fishing.”

“I did when I was younger.”

“Well, if you don’t want to go you need to tell him.”

“I don’t want to hurt his feelings.”

“He may not like it, but he needs to know.”

Martha and Clark in “Smallville”

Children begin by loving their parents.

After a time they judge them.

Rarely, if ever, do they forgive them.

Oscar Wilde

“I’m not trying to get my father to like me.”

“Good. ‘Cause it’s never, never gonna happen.”

President Bartlet and Stanley in “The West Wing”

“When one is a child, everything your parents do seems intentional, doesn’t it?”

Star Trek Dominion War Book 4

“There is probably no more terrible instant of enlightenment than the one in which you discover your father is a man — with human flesh.”

Frank Herbert by “Dune”

“As the Chinese say, The devil gives you your relations, thank all gods you can choose your friends.”

Noble House



Children

"But she is my daughter.
That may mean nothing to you,
but it means everything to me."
Dukat in DS9: "The Sacrifice of Angels"

"I'm sick of being punished because I
have these gifts. Most parents would be
happy if their son could be star of the
football team."

"Son ... I'm happy when you wake up
in the morning. I don't need to live
vicariously through your achievements."

Clark and Jonathan in "Smallville"

"Jonathan, Clark hasn't been able to
do anything normal his whole life –
no playgroups, no little league – all
because we were afraid he might hurt
somebody. He's a teenager now. Let's
give him a shot."

"His gifts come with responsibilities."
"This isn't about his gifts, it's about his
judgment. You're telling Clark that you
don't believe in him."

"Of course, I believe in him. W-what
if he makes a mistake... and somebody
suspects the truth? I do not want anyone
coming on this farm and taking our son
away from us."

"Well, if we don't start trusting him,
nobody's gonna have to take him away.
He's gonna leave all by himself."

Martha and Jonathan in "Smallville"

Try to see your child as a seed that came in a packet without a label. Your job is to provide the right environment and nutrients and to pull the weeds. You can't decide what kind of flower you'll get or in which season it will bloom.

Cited by Webb, J.T. et al. (2005)

"Marrying Gretchen is a good idea, darling; I would enjoy bringing her up. Teaching her to shoot, helping her with the first baby, coaching her in how to handle a knife, working out with her in martial arts, all the homey domestic skills a girl needs in this modern world." "Hummmph! My darling girl, you are as little and cute and pretty and harmless as a coral snake. I think Jinx has already trained Gretchen."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Fairy tales are more than true —
not because they tell us dragons exist,
but because they tell us
dragons can be beaten."

After all, what was the point of
teaching children to be children?
They were naturally good at it.

"Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett

"Peter, you're twelve years old. I'm ten. They have a word for
people our age. They call us children and they treat us like mice."

"Ender's Game"



"Search for your dreams, lad, and good luck. — T."
Tymofarrar, a White Dragon, in "Neverwinter Nights"

The previous governess had taught [the children] a prayer which included the hope that some god or other would take their soul if they died while they were asleep and, if Susan was any judge, had the underlying message that this would be a good thing. One day, Susan averred, she'd hunt that woman down.

"Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett

"That's too bad. Parents always make their worst mistakes with the oldest children. That's when parents know the least and care the most, so they're more likely to be wrong and also more likely to insist that they're right."

Xenocide

"How you doing? You know I gave the kids candy all the time, right?"

"Behind my back?"

"Yes."

"You bought their love."

"Well, it was for sale, and I wanted it."

*President Bartlet and Abbey, his wife,
in "The West Wing"*

"Oh, I should've known. Well, I imagined this place differently. But it's not the life I wanted for you, Martha."

"I'm happy, Dad, it's a good life."

"For some people, maybe. But you had so much potential. Top ten in your class, you could have gone to any law school you wanted. I had hoped that one day you'd take over my practice."

"I never wanted to be a lawyer. This is the life I chose."

"This is a life Jonathan chose for you. You just went along for the ride."

"This isn't about Jonathan. You raised an independent daughter and you're angry because that's what you got."

Martha's father and Martha in "Smallville"

"... our baby is growing up, with its own nature, its own strengths and weaknesses."

The Liquid Information Company

"Children today are tyrants. they contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers."

Socrates, 470BC - 399BC

"No parent should expect to be paid back for the love they've given their children."

Star Trek TNG: "Half a Life"

Life would be a tragedy if sons couldn't be better than their fathers.

I got a fortune cookie that said, "To remember is to understand." I have never forgotten it. A good judge remembers what it was like to be a lawyer. A good editor remembers being a writer. A good parent remembers what it was like to be a child.

Anna Quindlen, Thinking Out Loud

Why do children want to grow up? Because they experience their lives as constrained by immaturity and perceive adulthood as a condition of greater freedom and opportunity. But what is there today, in America, that very poor and very rich adolescents want to do but cannot do? Not much: they can 'do' drugs, 'have' sex, 'make' babies, and 'get' money (from their parents, crime, or the State). For such adolescents, adulthood becomes synonymous with responsibility rather than liberty. Is it any surprise that they remain adolescents?

Thomas Szasz

In bringing up children, spend on them half as much money and twice as much time.

My father used to play with my brother and me in the yard. Mother would come out and say, 'You're tearing up the grass.' 'We're not raising grass,' Dad would reply. 'We're raising boys.'

Harmon Killebrew

We are always too busy for our children; we never give them the time or interest they deserve. We lavish gifts upon them; but the most precious gift — our personal association, which means so much to them — we give grudgingly.

Mark Twain

Do not handicap your children by making their lives easy.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

"My mommy always said there were no monsters — no real ones — but there are."

"Yes there are, aren't there?"

"Why do they tell little kids that?"

"Most of the time its true ..."

Newt and Ripley in "Aliens"

Children have more need of models than of critics.

"Things Your Dad Always Told You But You Didn't Want to Hear" by Carolyn Coats

Touch is the most fundamental sense. A baby experiences it, all over, before he is born and long before he learns to use sight, hearing, or taste, and no human ever ceases to need it. Keep your children short on pocket money — but long on hugs.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

"You're sad, and you're angry, and you're not warm. You take forever to trust someone. [...] I do worry about the kids."

"Don't."

"Because instead of showing them that the world is for them, you're going to be telling them that they have to work hard in school so they can bone up for a life of hopelessness and despair."

Andy and Toby in "The West Wing"

Give a bad time to an impressionable child, teach that child not to trust anyone, and you create a suicide — slow or fast suicide, doesn't make any difference."

Dune Vol. 6: "Chapterhouse Dune"

If I had my child to raise all over again, I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later. I'd finger-paint more, and point the finger less. I would do less correcting and more connecting. I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes. I'd take more hikes and fly more kites. I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play. I would run through more fields and gaze at more stars. I'd do more hugging and less tugging.

"If I Had My Child To Raise Over Again" by Diane Loomans

If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others.

Haim Ginott

Detective Phillips said gently, "We'd rather talk to your daughter alone, Mr. Adams."

Mr. Adams said courteously, "That depends on Kay, I think. My dear, would-you rather speak to these gentlemen alone or would you prefer to have me present? Or perhaps your mother?"

Godfather

Society does not need more children; but it does need more loved children. Quite literally, we cannot afford unloved children – but we pay heavily for them every day. There should not be the slightest communal concern when a woman elects to destroy the life of her thousandth-of-an-ounce embryo. But all society should rise up in alarm when it hears that a baby that is not wanted is about to be born.

Garrett Hardin

"Real children don't go hoppity-skip unless they are on drugs."

Susan in Hogfather by Terry Pratchett

She'd got Gawain on to the military campaigns of General Tacticus, which were suitably bloodthirsty but, more importantly, considered too difficult for a child. As a result his vocabulary was doubling every week and he could already use words like "disemboweled" in everyday conversation.

Hogfather by Terry Pratchett

The previous governess had used various monsters and bogeymen as a form of discipline. There was always something waiting to eat or carry off bad boys and girls for crimes like stuttering or defiantly and aggravatingly persisting in writing with their left hand. There was always a Scissor Man waiting for a little girl who wucked her thumb, always a bogeyman in the cellar. Of such bricks is the innocence of childhood constructed.

Hogfather by Terry Pratchett

"She told me later, that the second she lifted up her foot and saw him not flapping, she knew he was dead. Is that not the perfect visual image of life and death? A fish flapping on the carpet, and a fish not flapping on the carpet. So powerful even a five-year old child with no concept of life and death knew what it meant. Not only did she know Emilio was dead, she knew she had killed him. So she comes running into my room, holding Emilio in both of her little hands – it was so cute – and she wanted me to make Emilio better. And I asked her, why did she step on Emilio? And she said, she didn't know. But I knew why. You didn't mean to hurt Emilio, you just wanted to see what would happen if you stepped on him, right?"

"Uh-huh."

"And what happens when you stomp on Emilio, is you kill him. And you discovered that, didn't you?"

"Uh-huh."

"So we drove down to the beach, had a little funeral, and gave Emilio a burial at sea. And right now I'm sure he's happy as can be, swimmin around in fish heaven. But the point being, our child learned two very important lessons. One, about life and death. The other, some things once you do, they can't be undone. I knew just how she felt."

Bill and B.B. in "Kill Bill Vol. 2"

A look of bitter amusement passed across her face. "Hardly. He's always been a thief, Grego has, ever since he was old enough to hold something and walk at the same time. But this thing for hurting people, that's new. Please let him down."

"No," said Ender.

Her eyes narrowed and she looked defiant. "Are you kidnapping him? To take him where? For what ransom?"

"Perhaps you don't understand," said Ender. "He assaulted me. You've offered me no guarantee that he won't do it again. You've made no provision for disciplining him when I set him down."

[...]

"I am hurting him," said Ender. He had found that the best way to earn trust was to tell the truth. "Every time he struggles to get free, it causes him quite a bit of discomfort. And he hasn't stopped struggling yet."

[...]

Then a sudden warmth on Ender's lap told him that Grego, at least, was far from surrender. Ender had trained himself not to respond reflexively to an enemy's actions until he had consciously decided to let his reflexes rule. So Grego's flood of urine did not cause him to so much as flinch. He knew what Grego had been expecting— a shout of anger, and Ender flinging him away, casting him from his lap in disgust. Then Grego would be free— it would be a triumph. Ender yielded him no victory.

[...]

Ela, however, apparently knew the expressions of Grego's face. Her eyes went wide, and then she took an angry step toward the boy. "Grego, you impossible little—"

But Ender winked at her and smiled, freezing her in place. "Grego has given me a little gift. It's the only thing he has to give me, and he made it himself, so it means all the more. I like him so much that I think I'll never let him go."

Grego snarled and struggled again, madly, to break free.

"Why are you doing this!" said Ela.

"He's expecting Grego to act like a human being," said Miro. "It needs doing, and nobody else has bothered to try."

Speaker for the Dead

siblings



Relationships



"Doc, why you doin' this?"

"Wyatt is my friend."

"Friend? Hell, I got lots of friends."

"I don't."

Turkey Creek Jack Johnson and Doc Holliday in "Tombstone"

A friend doesn't ask you
what to do.
He just does it.

A friend to everyone
is a friend to none.

Never allow someone to be your priority ...
while allowing yourself to be their option.

PostSecret

Seeing the full complexity of another person.

"You were mortal enemies. Why should
you care what happened to her?"

"Because you did."

*Wesley and Angel, about a friend of Wesley
and an enemy of Angel, in "Angel"*

"A man is measured by the quality of his
friends. If the quarterback's with them,
he'll have to face the consequences."

Lex in "Smallville"

"That's really what we all need, right?
Someone to sit up on the wall with us."

"Yeah. To watch the world go by."

"To put us back together again when we
fall."

Josie and Sam in "Never Been Kissed"

"I value a friend who for me finds time on
his calendar, but I cherish the friend who
for me does not consult his calendar."

Wakefield



calvin and hobbes

BY WATERS

I CAN'T SLEEP.



I THINK NIGHTTIME IS DARK SO YOU CAN IMAGINE YOUR FEARS WITH LESS DISTRACTION.



AT NIGHTTIME, THE WORLD ALWAYS SEEMS SO BIG AND SCARY, AND I ALWAYS SEEM SO SMALL.



I WISH I COULD FALL ASLEEP, SO IT WOULD BE MORNING.



SIGHHHHH..



LOOK AT HOBBS. HE'S ASLEEP.



HEH HEH... HE SURE LOOKS FUNNY WHEN HE SLEEPS. TIGERS CLOSE THEIR EYES SO TIGHT. I WONDER WHAT HE'S DREAMING ABOUT.



GOOD OL' HOBBS. WHAT A FRIEND.



THINGS ARE NEVER QUITE AS SCARY WHEN YOU'VE GOT A BEST FRIEND.



I like you, but I wouldn't want to see you working with sub-atomic particles.

I'm something you'll regret losing, I promise you.

PostSecret

“Piffle, dear. I don’t have morals, just customs. I don’t wait for a man to make a pass; they fumble around and waste time. But when I met him I picked Zebbie for a chum — so I gave him an opening; he made a polite pass, I carefully failed to see it, and that ended it. I’m sure he’s as much fun on the workbench as you tell me he is — but bedmates are easy to find, while worthwhile male friends are scarce. Zebbie is one to whom I can holler for help in the middle of the night and be certain he’ll rally around. I’m not going to let that change merely because a weird concatenation now makes him my son-in-law. Besides, Deety, although your old Aunt Sharpie may seem undignified, I refuse to be the campus widow who seduces younger men. Save for minor exceptions close to my age, I always have bedded older men. When I was your age, I tripped several three times my age. Educational.”

“The Number of the Beast” by Robert A. Heinlein

“I’m not angry with you. Not now. I was. ... But Deleenn has a ... way of looking at things ... No. No, I’m not angry with you. But I am very disappointed, Michael.”

“I’d rather have you yelling at me or angry. Anything but disappointed. I know I failed.”

“I didn’t say I was disappointed in you because of your failure. I’m disappointed because I didn’t pick up on this earlier. Disappointed because you felt that you couldn’t come to me about this on your own. When Stephen had his problem a couple of years ago, I didn’t step forward and offer my help when I should have. And he damn near died trying to deal with his problem on his own. I have made a lot of mistakes, same as everybody else. But I try not to make the same mistake twice. [...] You have to understand that your problem is not between you and me, you and your job, or any of that. Your problem is between you ... and you.”

Sheridan and Garibaldi in Babylon 5: “The Wheel of Fire”

DEFINITION OF FRIENDSHIP

<i>AIMS</i>	<i>REQUIREMENTS</i>	<i>EXAMPLE</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having a good time together • mutual development • mutual support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mutual respect and acceptance of the other person • knowledge how the other person feels • investment of effort to get to know the person well enough to keep this knowledge up-to-date, check occasionally whether something did change or not • know the person well enough, knows e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what s/he likes/dislikes • signs that the person is feeling well/not well • investment of resources (energy, time, attention) in the friendship 	<p>I hear from the interaction how the other person is and when s/he is not well I offer my support without being asked. Often it is only a little thing like chocolate or going for a walk. But the thing is: I do this by myself, I consider — based on my comprehensive knowledge about the person — what could help her in the present situation and then do it. This, for me, is a sign of friendship. “You must tell me, when you do not feel well, and also tell me what I should do for you.” is not.</p>
<i>CHARACTERISTICS</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking about the other person • pointing the other person to things that are interesting for her/him, making small surprises/pleasures • offer the right kind of support without being asked to, if the other person is not feeling well • keep the quality of the friendship in mind and act if and when the quality falls 		

Building a relationship

The best time to make friends is before you need them.

Ethel Barrymore

Life dies inside a person when there are no others willing to be-friend him. He thus gets filled with emptiness and a non-existent sense of self-worth.

Mark R. J. Lavoie

“Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, ‘What! You too? I thought I was the only one!’”

C.S. Lewis

Friends are relatives you make for yourself.

Eustache Deschamps

Remember that the best relationship is one where your love for each other is greater than your need for each other.

Then Bean waited to see how much of this story started circulating. None of it did. Nikolai never said a word about it to anyone else. That was when Bean was sure that Nikolai was worth having as a friend. He could keep things to himself without even having to be asked to do it.

Ender's Shadow



Keeping a relationship

The essence of true friendship is to make allowance for another's little lapses.

David Storey

Friendship isn't a big thing - it's a million little things.

And let your best be for your friend. If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its flood also. For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill? Seek him always with hours to live.

Kahlil Gibran

"You know, I have just been thinking. He shouldn't be doing this. He shouldn't have to be doing this. I feel like I screwed up."

"Hey, come on Chief, it's not your fault. I heard what happened. You offered to help, he walked away."

"Yeah, I know, but the thing is: sometimes people walk away because they want to be alone, and sometimes they walk away because they want to see if you care enough to follow them into hell. I think I went the wrong way."

"Look, he's gotta get his head screwed on straight. You can't do that for him."

"Yeah, you are right. It's just ... I've had my own problems. I've been where he is. I've walked away from lot of things in my life. I just hope he can find his way back again."

Garibaldi and Zack in Babylon 5: "Shadow Dancing"

"It's like the German poet Rilke said, 'A person isn't who they are during the last conversation you had with them. They're who they've been throughout your whole relationship.'"

Smallville

The most beautiful discovery true friends make is that they can grow separately without growing apart.

Elisabeth Foley

People change
and forget to tell each other.

Lillian Hellman

It's sad when someone you know becomes someone you knew.

Henry Rollins

We are not the same persons this year as last; nor are those we love. It is a happy chance if we, changing, continue to love a changed person.

W. Somerset Maugham

"It is good to have friends, is it not, Mr. Garibaldi? Even if maybe ... only for a little while."

"Even if only for a little while."

Londo and Garibaldi in "Babylon 5"

There was this to be said about Cohen. If there was no reason for him to kill you, such as you having any large amount of treasure or being between him and somewhere he wanted to get to, then he was good company. Rincewind had met him a few times before, generally while running away from something.

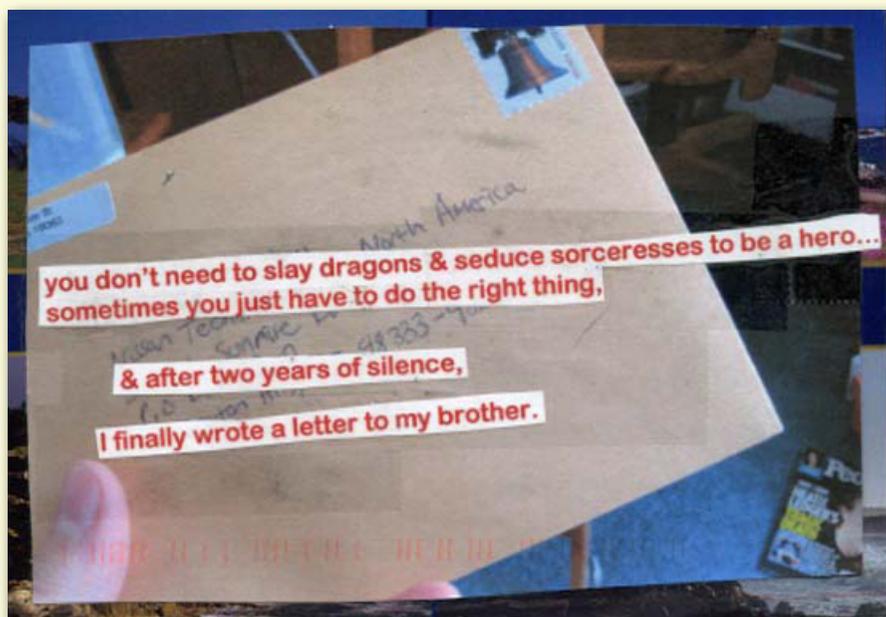
Cohen didn't bother overmuch with questions. As far as Cohen was concerned, people appeared, people disappeared. After a five-year gap he'd just say, 'Oh, it's you.' He never added, 'And how are you?' You were alive, you were upright, and beyond that he didn't give a damn.

Interesting Times

“Well, I haven’t been to a hell-dimension just of late, but I know a thing or two about torment.”

“I was happy. Wherever I was, I was happy. At peace. I knew that everyone I cared about was all right. I knew it. Time didn’t mean anything. Nothing had form, but I was still me, you know? And I was warm, and I was loved. And I was finished. Complete. I don’t understand theology and dimensions ... or any of it, really. But I think I was in heaven. And now I’m not. I was torn out of there, pulled out by my friends. Everything here is hard, and bright, and violent. Everything I feel, everything I touch ... this is hell. Just getting through the next moment and the one after that. Knowing what I’ve lost ... They can never know. Never.”

Spike and Buffy, after Buffy died her friends thought she would suffer in a hell-dimension for all eternity - so they resurrected her, in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer: “Afterlife”



Healing Relationships

The bitterest tears shed over graves
are for words left unsaid and deeds left undone.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, Little Foxes, 1865

"Forgiveness is a tricky thing, isn't it.
Even god can't do it if you won't let him."

Alias 4x04 - "Ice"

Never apologize for showing feeling. When
you do so, you apologize for the truth.

Benjamin Disraeli

God, protect me from my friends,
I can protect me from my enemies myself.

When you say, "I'm sorry",
look the person in the eye.

An apology is the superglue of life. It
can repair just about anything.

Lynn Johnston

Don't let a little dispute
injure a great friendship.

"A forced apology is no apology."

I can forgive, but I cannot forget, is only another way of saying, I will not forgive.
Forgiveness ought to be like a cancelled note – torn in two, and burned up, so that it
never can be shown against one.

Henry Ward Beecher

To carry a grudge is like being stung to
death by one bee.

William H. Walton

Resentment is an extremely bitter diet,
and eventually poisonous. I have no
desire to make my own toxins.

Neil Kinnock

"I'm sorry, too, Dmitri. ... I'm very sorry. ... All right, you're sorrier than I am, but I
am as sorry as well. ... I am as sorry as you are, Dmitri! Don't say that you're more
sorry than I am, because I'm capable of being just as sorry as you are. ... So we're
both sorry, all right?! ... All right."

"Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb" (1964)

If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man, Sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair.

Samuel Johnson

If you were going to die soon and had only one phone call you could make, who would you call and what would you say? And why are you waiting?

Stephen Levine

Why must conversions always come so late?
Why do people always apologize to corpses?

David Brin



Ending a relationship

I know that we have grown apart and that's as it should be. We learn what we can from certain people, then we move on after we've taken what we need. When we learn nothing new about ourselves in a relationship that's when the relationship is over. Or it's over the moment when we're afraid to learn something new about ourselves.

Garak in "A Stitch in Time"

I don't miss them, I miss the resources they provided. I miss that I could give them resources and feel good about myself.

Relationships are like glass. Sometimes it's better to leave them broken than try to hurt yourself putting it back together.

My plan is to forgive and forget.
Forgive myself for being stupid,
and forget you ever existed.

PostSecret

Do not keep on with a mockery of friendship after the substance is gone – but part, while you can part friends. Bury the carcass of friendship: it is not worth embalming.

William Hazlitt

Friends can be the greatest impediment to change. They know you, at least they know who you were, and even if you are ready to let go of the past, they may be not. Perhaps they like the predictability of your habits, or they have some other stakes in your current behaviors, perhaps they fear that they might lose you if you set your sights to new goals, new shores. You might try something new to which they do not belong.

At some time or the other you have to – not only lead a battle against yourself – but also lead a battle against your friends. You have to define the borders, the areas where your friends may tread and which areas they have to accept. You might need a lot of distance to them. It's a frightening process. While successfully changing yourself you may lose some or all of your friends in the transformation.

Of course, there is always the questions what kind of friends they are if they do not want you to change, to grow, and if it is such a bad thing to loose them. After all, with each change comes a change of environments, new friends, new possibilities.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash

Loneliness

"I never forget the feeling of helplessness. I never thought there could be anything worse than being all alone in the night."

"But there is. Being all alone in a crowd."

Sheridan and DeLenn in Babylon 5: "There All the Honor Lies"

"Lonely people ... they always have a look, a look that it could change any second, maybe with the next person that enters the room. Lonely people have hope, she didn't seem to. She was just sad, like she knew too much. Some people find love, permanent; some are just meant to be alone. She knew what she was."

Jason in Ally McBeal: "The Real World"

Have you ever imagined
your loved ones around your bed
when you were going to sleep?

To be alone is the greatest freedom.
To feel alone is the lowest prison.

Our language has widely sensed the two sides of being alone. It has created the word "loneliness" to express the pain of being alone. And it has created the word "solitude" to express the glory of being alone.

Paul Johannes Tillich, The Eternal Now

"All my life I've been alone. Many times I've faced death with no one to know. I would look into the huts and the tents of others in the coldest dark and I would see figures holding each other in the night. But I always passed by."

Valeria in "Conan the Barbarian"

Masturbation is cheap, clean, convenient, and free of any possibility of wrongdoing – and you don't have to go home in the cold. But it's lonely.

"Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

We all seek that other, a soul mate, the shadow self with whom we can merge seamlessly. But in that coming together, we risk losing ourselves. Everything becomes a blur, and we grow afraid, unsure ... even distrustful. The danger, of course, is we never know who that other really is, what they want, or the lengths they'll go to to get it. In the end, it's probably best to go your own way, even though there will be times you long for something else.

Jim Profit



BORIS

Kissing

“... we kiss. And it feels like we have just shrugged of the world.”

Jim Shahin

“I know exactly what they feel when they bite me – because I feel it every time we’re together. It’s like the whole world falls away – and all there is is you.”

Riley, letting vampires feed on his body, in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

"Anne? What's so special about the way that lad kisses?" Anne looked dreamy, then dimpled. "You should have tried it." "I'm too old to change. But I'm interested in everything about the boy. Is this something different?" Anne pondered it. "Yes." "How?" "Mike gives a kiss his whole attention." "Oh, rats! I do myself. Or did." Anne shook her head. "No. I've been kissed by men who did a very good job. But they don't give kissing their whole attention. They can't. No matter how hard they try parts of their minds are on something else. Missing the last bus – or their chances of making the gal – or their own techniques in kissing – or maybe worry about jobs, or money, or will husband or papa or the neighbors catch on. Mike doesn't have technique ... but when Mike kisses you he isn't doing anything else. You're his whole universe ... and the moment is eternal because he doesn't have any plans and isn't going anywhere. Just kissing you."

"Stranger in a Strange Land" by Robert A. Heinlein







KISS

by Tanya Chalkin





Love is the condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own.

"Jubal Harshaw" in "Stranger in a Strange Land"

I do my thing, and you do your thing. I am not in this world to live up to your expectations, and you are not in this world to live up to mine. You are you, and I am I, and if by chance we find each other, it's beautiful.

Frederick E. Perl



One of the oldest human needs is having someone to wonder where you are when you don't come home at night.

Margaret Mead

I love you not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you. I love you not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me. I love you for the part of me that you bring out.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

> What is it to love?
Nothing.
> What is it to be loved?
Something.
> What is it to love and be loved?
Everything.

"Neuromancer" by William Gibson

The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved – loved for ourselves, or rather, loved in spite of ourselves.

Victor Hugo

"He gets me. When someone sees you as you really are and wanna be with you — that's powerful."

Keith in "Six Feet Under"



"Because she knows the worst thing about me and it's ok."

Quince in "Meet Joe Black"



It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing. It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive. It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of your sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals, or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain! I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine and your own, without moving to hide it or fade it or fix it. I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own: if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, to be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human. It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself: if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul. I want to know if you can be faithless and therefore trustworthy. I want to know if you can see beauty even when it is not pretty everyday, and if you can source your life from its presence. I want to know if you can live with failure, yours or mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, "Yes!" It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done for the children. It doesn't interest me who you are, or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back. It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away. I want to know if you can be alone with yourself, and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.

Oriah Mountain Dreamer, The Invitation

"Again stop. I haven't. You volunteered a few things. But, even so, I've shut you up a couple of times when you were about to have an attack of pernicious autobiography. Gwen, I didn't marry you for your money, or for your family background, or your brains, or even for your talents in bed."

"Not even for the last? You haven't left me much."

"Oh, yes, I have. I appreciate your horizontal skills and your enthusiasm. But competent mattress dancers are not uncommon. Take Xia, for example. I conjecture that she is both skilled and eager."

"Probably twice as skilled as I am, but I'll be damned if she's more eager."

"You do all right when you get your rest. But don't distract me. Do you want to know what it is that makes you so special?"

"Yes! Well, I think so. If it's not booby-trapped."

"It's not. Mistress mine, your unique and special quality is this: When I'm around you, I'm happy."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Balthamos was slender; his narrow wings were folded elegantly behind his shoulders, and his face bore an expression that mingled haughty disdain with a tender, ardent sympathy, as if he would love all things if only his nature could let him forget their defects. But he saw no defects in Baruch, that was clear.

"His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman

She felt contained in his embrace, never confined.

Xenocide

"You know you love someone when you want them to be happy even if their happiness means you're not part of it."

Love is not the dying moan of a distant violin – it's the triumphant twang of a bedspring.

S. J. Perelman

The more you love, the more you can love – and the more intensely you love. Nor is there any limit on how many you can love. If a person had time enough, he could love all of the majority who are decent and just.

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

"I will never, ever be angry with you, I sw —" She cut him off with a hand over his mouth.

"Mother says the worst thing Father ever did to her was vow never to be angry with her. It took her a year to force him to take it back, and she says he was hardly fit to live with long before then from holding in. You will be angry with me, Perrin, and I with you. If you want to make me another wedding vow, vow you will not hide it when you are. I cannot deal with what you will not let me see, my husband. My husband," she repeated in a satisfied tone, snuggling against him. "I do like the sound of that."

"Wheel of Time"



“Clark, love isn’t about playing it safe. It’s about risks. Unless you’re willing to put yourself out there, you’ll never know.”

Lex in “Smallville”

For every romance that begins with a Mickey Rourke type slamming a Kim Basinger type up against an alley wall in the rain, there are a thousand, I suppose, that begin when your cat throws up a fur ball in the lap of the woman you’re trying to impress.

Roger Ebert

If you do not have the courage to step up to her and tell her your feelings, then what the hell can she expect from you?

Me, in reminiscence about the second person I was in love with but never did anything until it was too late. Ingrid, I hope you are alright wherever you are and with whoever you are.

Love deeply and passionately. You might get hurt but it’s the only way to live life completely.

We waste time looking for the perfect lover, instead of creating the perfect love.

Tom Robbins

When you say, “I love you”,
mean it.

“I love you. Always have. I want to marry you.”

William Wallace

If your heaven allows me, I’ll cross the line for you.

Anime Page

“All the gods, they cannot sever us. If I were dead and you were still fighting for life, I’d come back from the darkness. Back from the pit of hell to fight at your side.”

Valeria in “Conan the Barbarian”

“You’re my always.”
Willow in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer:
“Tough Love”

“I wish I could take all the world’s pains away, except those given in love.”

Empathic in alt.sex.bondage

“You’ll find me in the next life, if not in this one.”

“What?”

“The writing on the back of Nadia’s photograph.”

Sayid and Danielle Rousseau “Lost”

He had no way with words. He certainly did not know how to say things in the fancy way women liked. All he could was write what he felt. Dipping the pen again, he added a few lines.

I will not ask your forgiveness for what I did. I do not know if you could give it, but I will not ask. You are more precious to me than life. Never think I have abandoned you. When the sun shines on you, it is my smile. When you hear the breeze stir through the apple blossoms, it is my whisper that I love you. My love is yours forever.
Perrin

Perrin, writing a letter to his wife, he send away prior to a suicidal defense of his village, in “Wheel of Time”

“There are two kinds of sparks, the one that goes off with a hitch like a match, but it burns quickly. The other is the kind that needs time, but when the flame strikes ... it’s eternal.”

Timothy Oliveira

“What is flirtation? One might say that it is behavior leading another to believe that sexual intimacy is possible, while preventing that possibility from becoming a certainty. In other words, flirting is a promise of sexual intercourse without a guarantee.”

Milan Kundera “The Unbearable Lightness of Being”

“Women don’t know what they want.”
“Amen.”

Bedazzled

“I want to be what you are. See what you see – love what you love.”

“Mina, to walk with me you must die to your breathing life and be reborn to mine.”

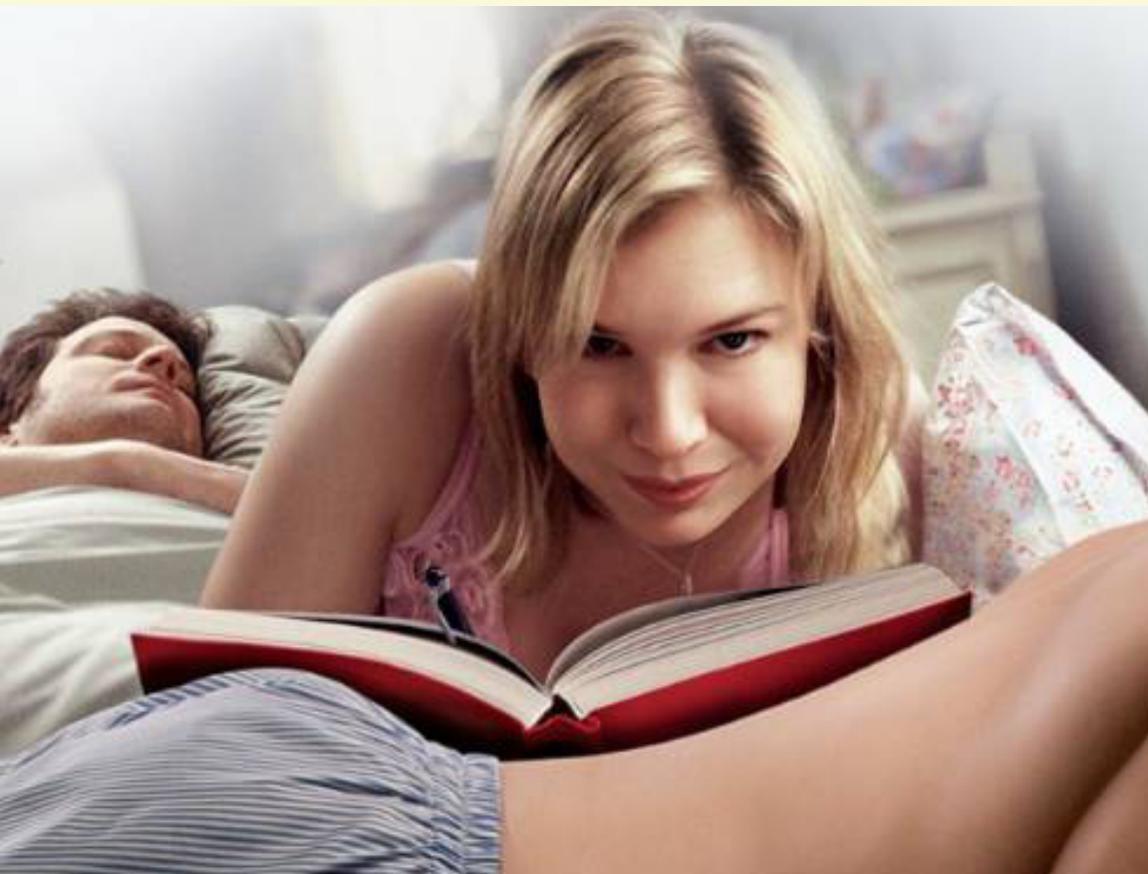
“You are my love ... and my life ... always ...”

“Then ... I give you life eternal. Everlasting love. The power of the storm. And the beasts of the earth. Walk with me ... to be my loving wife ... forever.”

Mina and Dracula in “Bram Stokers Dracula”

Prepare in body odor, clothing, ornament and speech – but once you are there, forget about it and have fun.

Henry J. Wilcoxon-Ash



A man can be short and dumpy and getting bald but if he has fire, women will like him.

Mae West

“There’s a difference between beauty and charm. A beautiful woman is one I notice. A charming woman is one who notices me.”

John Erskine

“There were many women in those lives of yours.”

“I’ve never counted them.”

“Did you love them?”

“They’re dead, Murbella. All I can promise is that there are no jealous ghosts in my past.”

Dune Vol. 6: “Chapterhouse Dune”

Do not choose your wife at a dance,
but in the field among the harvesters.

The course of true love
never did run smooth.

William Shakespeare

“... but who can know the heart of a man? Not even he himself, I suspect. A man is the easiest animal to put on a leash, and the hardest to keep leashed. Even when he chooses it himself.”

Suan Sanche in “The Wheel of Time” by Robert Jordan

The first time you buy a house you see how pretty the paint is and buy it. The second time you look to see if the basement has termites. It’s the same with men.

Lupe Vélez

“And what makes you think that he has feelings for me?”

“The way he never touches you.”

Alice and Lucius Hunt in “The Village” (2004)

One friend, wise in the ways of long-distance love, says, “You can be in love with them and still just want to come home and watch TV. It’s when they take it personally, as a rejection or a sign you don’t want to be with them, that the trouble starts.”

“I thought we were invincible. But now I know that the things that people in love do to each other, they remember. And if they stay together, it’s not because they forget.

It’s because they forgive.”

David in “Indecent Proposal”

I’m a supporter of gay rights. And not a closet supporter either. From the time I was a kid, I have never been able to understand attacks upon the gay community. There are so many qualities that make up a human being ... by the time I get through with all the things that I really admire about people, what they do with their private parts is probably so low on the list that it is irrelevant.

Paul Newman



In itself, homosexuality is as limiting as heterosexuality: the ideal should be to be capable of loving a woman or a man; either, a human being, without feeling fear, restraint, or obligation.

Simone de Beauvoir

Everybody's journey is individual. If you fall in love with a boy, you fall in love with a boy. The fact that many Americans consider it a disease says more about them than it does about homosexuality.

James Baldwin

We love men. We just don't want to see them naked.

Two Nice Girls

[Willow sits morosely on her bed, holding a stuffed animal. Buffy bustles in with her bag. Remark: Oz is Willows' visiting ex-boyfriend who is also a werewolf.]

Buffy: "Hey."

Willow: "Hey. You okay?"

Buffy: "Yeah, I just ... I don't want to talk about it. I want to hear about you and Oz. You saw him, right?"

Willow: "I was with him all night."

[Buffy raises her eyebrows.]

Buffy: "All night?" [grins] "Oh, my god. Wait. Last night was a wolf moon, right?"

Willow: "Yup."

Buffy: "Either you're about to tell me something incredibly kinky or—"

Willow: "No kink." [smiling] "He didn't change, Buffy. He said he was going to find a cure and he did. In Tibet."

Buffy [smiles]: "Oh, my god. I can't believe it!" [beat] "Okay, I'm all with the 'woo-hoo' here and you're not."

Willow: "No, there's 'woo' and 'hoo'. But there's 'uh-oh,' and 'why now'? And ... it's complicated."

Buffy: "Why complicated?"

[Willow sighs and steels herself.]

Willow: "It's complicated ... because of Tara."

Buffy [frowns]: "You mean Tara has a crush on Oz?"

Willow: "No."

[The realisation suddenly hits Buffy like blow.]

Buffy: "Oh!"

[Willow flashes her a nervous smile as Buffy stands up and moves to the other side of the room.]

Buffy: "Oh. Um ... well ... that's great. You know, I mean, I think Tara's a really great girl, Will."

Willow: "She is. And there's something between us. It wasn't something I was looking for. It's just powerful. And it's totally different from what Oz and I have."

Buffy: "Well, there you go. I mean, you know, you have to ... follow your heart, Will. And that's what's important, Will."

Willow: "Why do you keep saying my name like that?"

Buffy: "Like what, Will?"

Willow: "Are you freaked?"

Buffy: "What? No, Will, d—"

[She stops herself and sighs, sitting back down on the bed next to her best friend.]

Buffy: "No. No, absolutely no to that question. I'm glad you told me. What did you say to Oz?"

Willow: "I was going to tell him but then we started hanging out and ... I could just feel everything coming back. He's Oz, you know?"

Buffy: "Yeah. I know."

Willow: "I don't want to hurt anyone, Buffy."

Buffy: "No matter what, somebody's going to get hurt. And the important thing is, you just have to be honest or it's going to be a lot worse."

Buffy - The Vampire Slayer: "New Moon Rising"



Black Love

Definition of “Just Friends”

It means I don't just want you to mourn the loss; I want to remind you of it every day. I want you to suffer. I want you to envy. I want you to die slowly, a bit at a time. And I want you to smile and thank me for it.

Ask me why I keep on loving you when it's clear that you don't feel the same way for me ... the problem is that as much as I can't force you to love me, I can't force myself to stop loving you.

“I want him to be happy because when he is happy I am happy, but how can I be happy knowing that I am not the one making him smile?”

“I know I should just get over him, but I just can't seem to. Maybe that's because you can never really get over something that was never really yours.”

“I've had my heart broken, and it's not fun. But I'd rather have my heart broken than break someone else's heart.”

Josh Hartnett

“I know I shouldn't like him cause I know its not working, and everybody tells me that, and I convince myself I don't ... and then, I like, see him and he'll, like, smile or put his arm around me or just say something, and then all that logic and convincing myself, just like, evaporates.”

“I love you.”

“No, you don't. But thanks for sayin' it.”
Buffy and Spike in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Most women spend their early to mid twenties chasing after bad boys and ignoring the decent ones. Then when they are finally ready to settle down, they find out that the nice guy who they kept shooting down, figuring he'd be there later, is now taken.

Lex & Terry Radio Show

“I would have followed you into hell if you would have let me.”

Justine in “Angel”

“You still have feelings for her, don't you? But she doesn't share them. I'm sorry.”

“Aren't you going to tell me I shouldn't waste my time with a solid?”

“You love her.”

“I wish I didn't. I'm so vulnerable to her. All she has to do is smile at me and I'm happy beyond reason. A minor disagreement between us and I'm devastated. It's absurd! Sometimes I wish I could reach inside myself and tear out my feelings for her, but I can't!”

Founder Leader and Odo, about Kira, in Star Trek DS9: “Behind the Lines”

I can't wait all my life
On a street of broken dreams.
Journey, "It Could Have Been You"

Beat me with the truth,
don't torture me with lies.

I never knew until that moment
how bad it could hurt to lose
something you never really had.

"The Wonder Years"

"You shut down, Buffy. And you've been treating Riley like the rebound guy, when he's the one who comes along once in a lifetime. He's never held back with you – he's risked it all – and you're about to let him fly because you don't like ultimatums?"

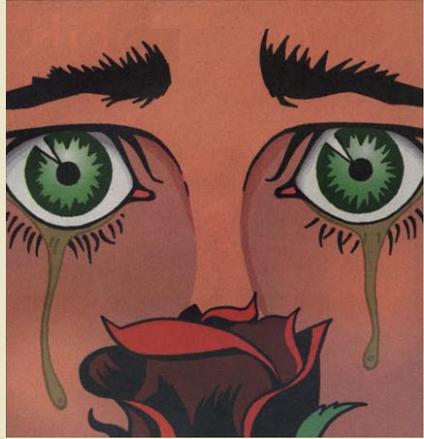
"What am I supposed to do? Beg him to stay? ... I thought Riley was dependable."

"Dependable? What is he, State Farm?"

"You know what I mean."

"Yeah, I think you mean convenient. I think you took it for granted that he was gonna show up when you wanted him to and take off when you didn't. [...] If he's not the guy, if what he needs from you just isn't there ... let him go. Break his heart and make it a clean break. But if you really think you can love this guy — I'm talking scary, messy, no-emotions-barred need — if you're ready for that ... then think about what you're about to lose."

Buffy and Xander in "Buffy - The Vampire Slayer"



Have you ever been in love? Horrible isn't it? It makes you so vulnerable. It opens your chest and it opens up your heart and it means that someone can get inside you and mess you up. You build up all these defenses, you build up a whole suit of armor, so that nothing can hurt you, then one stupid person, no different from any other stupid person, wanders into your stupid life You give them a piece of you. They didn't ask for it. They did something dumb one day, like kiss you or smile at you, and then your life isn't your own anymore. Love takes hostages. It gets inside you. It eats you out and leaves you crying in the darkness, so simple a phrase like "maybe we should be just friends" or "how very perceptive" turns into a glass splinter working its way into your heart. It hurts. Not just in the imagination. Not just in the mind. It's a soul-hurt, a real gets-inside-you-and-rips-you-apart pain. Nothing should be able to do that. Especially not love. I hate love.

*Rose Walker's soliloquy, in Sandman #65:
"The Kindly Ones" by Neil Gaiman*

"So you see, Holly, even if you don't love him, you must be very gentle with him, because he loves you and you can hurt him terribly."

Ariel in "The Menace From Earth" by Robert A. Heinlein

If she ever says she doesn't know if she truly loves you after you've been together long enough to know, leave her. Leave her that second. 'Cause guess what: she's just building up the courage to do it to you. You're not going to change her mind, she doesn't want to change her mind. And it isn't your responsibility. Dump her. She's playing it safe for herself, and is gonna really tear you apart if you're in love with her. She doesn't care about you. Your pain won't bother her.

"Do you wanna make out with me?"

"What?"

"Forget it. I'm sorry. ... Well, do you?"

"Sometimes when I'm sitting in class ... You know, I'm not thinking about class, 'cause that would never happen. I think about kissing you. And it's like everything stops. It's like, it's like freeze frame. Willow kissage. ... Oh, I'm not gonna kiss you."

"What? But freeze frame."

"Well, to the casual observer, it would appear that you're trying to make your friend Xander jealous or even the score or something. And that's on the empty side. See, in my fantasy when I'm kissing you, you're kissing me. It's okay. I can wait."

Willow and Oz in Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

"So what if I always think about you! Or if I sit around and wait for you to call! Its my life isn't it? And who cares that I spend almost half of every day thinking about you, and the other half dreaming about you, Its my Life. And who cares if I pick out my clothes or how I wear my hair and what color lipstick over what I think you would like It's my life right? Well I guess if everything I do revolves around you ... maybe it isn't my life anymore."





J.M.W. Turner

Sex

A faint heart never laid a lovely lady.

Noble House

“Desire begins in the mind.”

Paola Franco in “Dangerous Beauty”

That's what Quillan did for me, she thought, her lovely head high and the curious half-smile lighting her face—one of the many things. He made me understand sensuality.

Noble House

Pleasure, yourself.

“He who hesitates, doesn't get laid.”

Brian Kinney

"So far as I know, your culture is the only semicivilized one in which love is not recognized as the highest art and given the serious study it deserves." [...] I lay there a while longer, thinking about what she had said. The "highest art" — and back home we didn't even study it, much less make any attempt to teach it. Ballet takes years and years. Nor do they hire you to sing at the Met just because you have a loud voice. Why should "love" be classed as an "instinct"? Certainly the appetite for sex is an instinct — but did another appetite make every glutton a gourmet, every fry cook a Cordon Bleu? Hell, you had to learn even to be a fry cook. I walked out of the steam room whistling "The Best Things in Life Are Free" — then chopped it off in sudden sorrow for all my poor, unhappy compatriots cheated of their birthright by the most mammoth hoax in history.

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Oscar, when you get home, don't expect too much of your feminine compatriots. You're sure to be disappointed and the poor dears aren't to blame. American women, having been conditioned out of their sex instincts, compensate by compulsive interest in rituals over the dead husk of sex . . . and each one is sure she knows 'intuitively' the right ritual for conjuring the corpse. She knows and nobody can tell her any different . . . especially a man unlucky enough to be in bed with her. So don't try. You will either make her furious or crush her spirit. You'll be attacking that most Sacred of Cows: the myth that women know all about sex, just from being women." Rufo had frowned. "The typical American female is sure that she has genius as a couturiere as an interior decorator, as a gourmet cook, and, always, as a courtesan. Usually she is wrong on four counts. But don't try to tell her so." He had added, "Unless you can catch one not over twelve and segregate her, especially from her mother—and even that may be too late. But don't misunderstand me; it evens out. The American male is convinced that he is a great warrior, a great statesman, and a great lover. Spot checks prove that he is as deluded as she is. Or worse. Historo-culturally speaking, there is strong evidence that the American male, rattier than the female, murdered sex in your country."

"Glory Road" by Robert A. Heinlein



“There’s this beautiful girl just fucked me forty ways from Sunday ... we’re done, she’s walking to the bathroom, she’s trying to walk, she turns ... she looks ... it’s me. Not the Trojan army just fucked her. Little ol’ me. She gets this look on her face like: ‘How the hell did that happen?’”

John Milton (the Devil) in “The Devil’s Advocate” (1997)

“God damnit, what did you do to my wife?” “Well, on a scale of one to ten ... ten being the most depraved act of sexual theatre know to man ... one being your average Friday night run-through at the Lomaxes’ household ... I’d say, not to be immodest, Mary Ann and I got it on at about ... seven.”

Kevin Lomax and John Milton (the Devil) in “The Devil’s Advocate” (1997)

Life without sex might be safer but it would be unbearably dull. It is the sex instinct which makes women seem beautiful, which they are once in a blue moon, and men seem wise and brave, which they never are at all. Throttle it, denaturalize it, take it away, and human existence would be reduced to the prosaic, laborious, boresome, imbecile level of life in an anthill.

Henry Louis Mencken

Everybody lies about sex.

“Time Enough For Love” by Robert A. Heinlein

Is she a slave because she is beautiful,
or beautiful because she is a slave?

Gorean Proverb

“No,” she said, “I would not like to be returned to Earth. I have never been so sensuously alive as here, at the mercy of men. I pity even the free women of this world, who cannot know the joys and loves of the female slave. I do not wish to return to Earth, to adopt again the role of pretending to be a man. What has Earth to offer that is worth more than joy and happiness?” “I may sell you,” I said. “You may do so if you wish, Master,” she said, “for I am only a slave, If you do sell me, I shall hope that I will please another.” “You speak scarcely like an Earth girl,” I said. “I am no longer an Earth girl,” she said, “I am a Gorean slave girl.”

From a “Gor” Novel

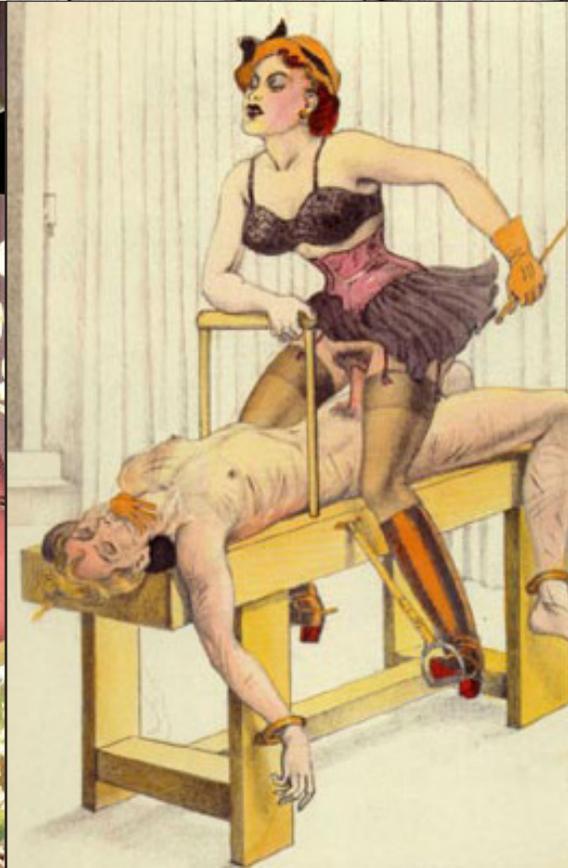


Few things work up an appetite like good, wholesome, sadomasochistic sex.

“I thank God I was raised Catholic, so sex will always be dirty.”

John Waters

I find physical bounds stimulating, but mental bounds that leave the slave no way of resisting atrocious.





Your Network



AIDS obliges people to think of sex as having, possibly, the direst consequences: suicide. Or murder.

Susan Sontag



Prostitution

Some have enough experience and the mind set to be good at it, very good. Perhaps because it is their job and they are not only professionals, but professional enough to want to satisfy their customers and hone their skills.

"Bathe."
Koko in "Paying For It"

It's not easy to meet women. Sure I can walk into a bar and buy a lady a drink and under the pretext of a perhaps budding relationship seduce her into satisfying my sexual needs, but that goes against my grain to deceive another person no matter what the personal gratification. So I thought it more honest to solicit a prostitute.

John, in court, in Ally McBeal: "Compromising Positions"

Marriage is for women the commonest mode of livelihood, and the total amount of undesired sex endured by women is probably greater in marriage than in prostitution.

"Marriage and Morals" by Bertrand Russell

The big difference between sex for money and sex for free is that sex for money usually costs a lot less.

Brendan Francis, Playboy, 1985

"Yes," he said, delighted as always by the forthrightness of a Chinese pillow partner. His father had explained it early: "You give them money, they give you their youth, the Clouds and the Rain and entertain you. In Asia it's a fair and honorable exchange. The more their youth, the more the laughter and gratification, the more you must pay. That's the bargain, but don't expect romance or real tears — that's not part of their commitment. Just temporary entertainment and pillowing. Don't abuse the fairness!"

Noble House

"Line, this is Asia. Here sex is not Anglo-Saxon mumbo-jumbo and guilt-ridden. It's a pleasure to be sought like great food or great wine. What's the value of one night to a man, a real man, with one of these Pleasure Ladies? A moment of pleasure. A memory. Nothing more. What has that to do with love, real love? Nothing. I'm not for one night or for hire.

Noble House

*I have waited in vain to meet the love of my life –
until I turned 30 and realized that I was simply scared of having sex.*

*Then I had my first sexual experiences
with a very professional and humorous courtesan.*

*Two years have passed since then and I have recently
met a woman I fell in love with. We are together now. :-)*

*I would not have met my love, nor would I have been so relaxed,
if it were not for these first experiences with this incredible lady.*

*Thank you – it was very interesting and enlightening ...
and changed my life for the better.*



marriage

[Veronica Franco, a courtesan, is confronted by the wives of her clients]
Veronica Franco [peeling a banana]: "The Latin for banana is arienna. Banana tree is pala." [she swallows the banana whole, as the wives look on shocked]
Veronica Franco: "A woman's greatest, and most hard-won asset ... is an education."
Giulia De Lezze: "Just because you can say it in Latin doesn't make it any less obscene."
Veronica Franco: "Just because you took a vow doesn't mean you know how to love."

Dangerous Beauty

My heart is monogamous
but the rest of me is polyamorous.
Shy-too-shy on DeviantArt.com

Be engaged at least six months
before you get married.

Sovereign ingredient for a happy marriage: Pay cash or do without. Interest charges not only eat up a household budget; awareness of debt eats up domestic felicity. Another ingredient for a happy marriage: Budget the luxuries first! And still another – See to it that she has her own desk – then keep your hands off it! And another – In a family argument, if it turns out you are right – apologize at once!

Excerpt from the Notebooks of Lazarus Long in "Time Enough For Love" by Robert A. Heinlein

"Are quite different. Take own case. I have honor to be member of one of oldest line marriages in Luna—and, in my prejudiced opinion, best. You asked about divorce. Our family has never had one and would bet long odds never will. A line marriage increases in stability year after year, gains practice in art of getting along together, until notion of anybody leaving is unthinkable. Besides, takes unanimous decision of all wives to divorce a husband—could never happen. Senior wife would never let it get that far." Went on describing advantages—financial security, fine home life it gives children, fact that death of a spouse, while tragic, could never be tragedy it was in a temporary family, especially for children—children simply could not be orphaned. Suppose I waxed too enthusiastic—but my family is most important thing in my life. Without them I'm just one-armed mechanic who could be eliminated without causing a draft. "Here's why is stable," I said. "Take my youngest wife, sixteen. Likely be in her eighties before is senior wife. Doesn't mean all wives senior to her will die by then; unlikely in Luna, females seem to be immortal. But may all opt out of family management by then; by our family traditions they usually do, without younger wives putting pressure on them. So Ludmilla—" "Ludmilla?" "Russki name. From fairy tale. Milla will have over fifty years of good example before has to carry burden. She's sensible to start with, not likely to make mistakes and if did, has other wives to steady her. Self-correcting, like a machine with proper negative feedback. A good line marriage is immortal; expect mine to outlast me at least a thousand years—and is why shan't mind dying when time comes; best part of me will go on living."

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" by Robert A. Heinlein

"I told you to disappear. Jubal, living with three women takes fortitude."

"I know. I did so, for many years. Fortitude plus angelic disposition. And a taste for lazy living. But a group marriage, such as our Long Family, combines the advantages of bachelorhood, monogamy, and polygamy, with the drawbacks of none."

"The Cat Who Walks Through Walls" by Robert A. Heinlein

Then again she remembered what Gornt had said. "It's the law of the ages that every man has to be trapped into marriage, trapped by his own lust or possessiveness or avarice or money or fear or laziness or whatever but trapped. And no man ever willingly marries his mistress."

Noble House

What counts in making a happy marriage is not so much how compatible you are, but how you deal with incompatibility.

George Levinger

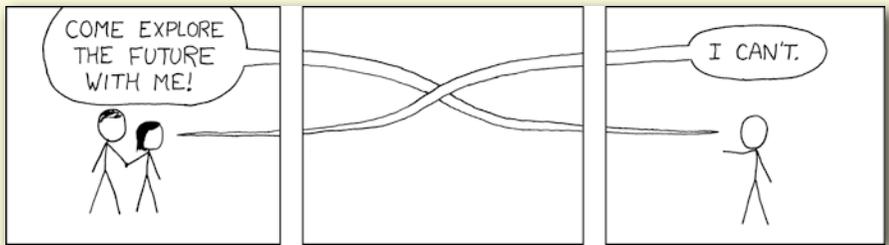
Marriage has many pain,
but celibacy has no pleasures.

Samuel Johnson

I dreamed of a wedding of elaborate elegance, A church filled with family and friends. I asked him what kind of a wedding he wished for, He said one that would make me his wife.

Marry a man/woman you love to talk to.

As you get older, their conversational skills will be as important as any other.



Mistresses

"Think only of my satisfaction and pleasure. Give me passion when I need it, quiet when I need it, privacy when I need it, and happiness and discretion all the time. Cook as a gourmet, know great wine, be discreet always, protect my face always and never nag." "But Quillan, you make it sound all so one-sided." "Yes. It is, of course it is. In return I do my part with equal passion. But that's what I want from you, nothing less. You wanted to be my mistress. I put it to you before we began and you agreed."

Noble House



An author once told me I must find my muse before I could write. When I finally found her, she was wearing a rubber helmet, a latex catsuit, a very tight corset, an armbinder, and ballet-toe boots with seven inch heels. I suspect I am not meant to be a writer.

"A man with a wife and six children plus a schoolgirl for a mistress can be called any number of rude names, but "coward" is not one of them."

Teddy Lloyd in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" (1969)

"Then," continued Chateau-Renaud, "since you have an establishment, a steward, and a hotel in the Champs Elysees, you only want a mistress." Albert smiled. He thought of the fair Greek he had seen in the count's box at the Argentina and Valle theatres. "I have something better than that," said Monte Cristo; "I have a slave. You procure your mistresses from the opera, the Vaudeville, or the Varietes; I purchased mine at Constantinople; it cost me more, but I have nothing to fear."

"The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas

"Maybe I just like watching a professional at work, then. Is this the hardest part, would you say, or does that come later?"

"You have no call to try to make me ashamed of my job. What I do is legal, and how is that smuggling coming?"

"My work's illegal, but it's honest."

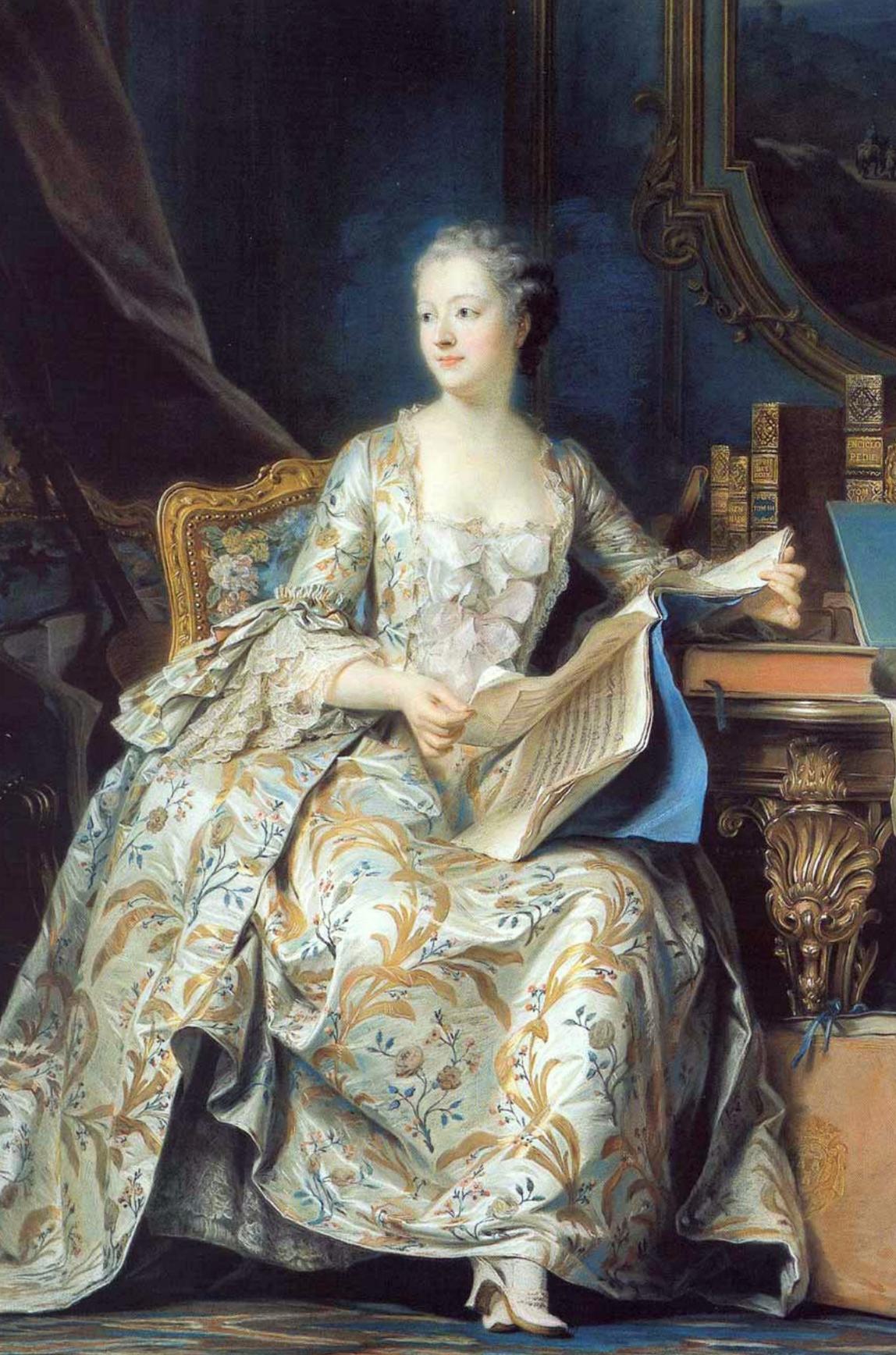
"What?!"

"While this... the lie of it... that man parading you on his arm as if he actually won you, as if he loves you, and everyone going along with it. How can that not bother you?"

"Going along with it?"

"He treats you like an ornament. Other men look at you and discuss if you're worth the cost. The women talk behind their fans, picturing you with their husbands. And to your face, they're sweet as pie."

Mal and Inara, a companion (mixture between a call girl and a Geisha), in "Firefly"



YOU & EVENTS



When I can look Life in the eyes,
Grown calm and very coldly wise,
Life will have given me the Truth,
And taken in exchange – my youth.

Sara Teasdale

Age is opportunity no less,
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away,
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.

“Morituri Salutamus”

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

There’s no such thing as a long and
happy life. A long life means saying
goodbye to old friends one after the
other.

Solomon Short (David Gerrold)

A man is not old until regrets take the place of dreams.

John Barrymore

Anya: “I mean what happens next in our lives? When do we get a car?”

SuaveXander [confused]: “A car?”

Anya: “And a boat. No, wait, I – I don’t mean a boat. I mean a puppy. Or a child. I have a list somewhere.”

SuaveXander: “What are you talking about?”

Anya: “Just ... we have to get going. I don’t have time just to let these things happen.”

SuaveXander: “There’s no hurry.”

Anya: “Yes there is. There’s a hurry, Xander. I’m dying.”

[SuaveXander looks shocked]

Anya: “I may have as few as fifty years left.”

SuaveXander: “Fifty years? What is this— Oh, wait a minute. This is about this.”

[Touching her arm sling.]

Anya: “What about the sling?”

SuaveXander: “You haven’t been hurt like this since you became human. [She

nods reluctantly] Maybe it’s finally hitting you what being human means.”

Anya pouting: “No, that’s not it.”

SuaveXander: “Yes, I think it is. You were gonna live for thousands of years.

[Anya nods] And now you’re gonna age

and die. That must be terrifying.”

Anya: “You don’t understand what it’s like.”

SuaveXander: “Being suddenly human? I think I can get what that would be like.

And we can get through it together.”

Anya: “You can’t make it any different. I’m going to get old. And ... you can’t

promise you’ll be with me when I’m ...

wrinkly and my teeth are artificial and stuck into my wrinkly mouth with an adhesive.”

SuaveXander: “No, I can’t promise that. But it doesn’t sound terrible. And that’s

saying something. I promise you, Anya. Very soon you won’t be thinking about

getting older.”

Anyway, I'm not blessed or merciful. I'm just me. I've got a job to do and I do it. Listen, even as we're talking, I'm there for old and young, innocent and guilty, those who die together and those who die alone. I'm in cars and boats and planes, in hospitals and forests and abattoirs. For some folks death is a release and for others death is an abomination, a terrible thing.

But in the end, I'm there for all of them.

Death, in Sandman #20: "Facade"

by Neil Gaiman



Neil Gaiman

I think Death is terribly lonely —
'cause no one stays.

It would be really neat if Death was somebody, and not just nothing, or pain, or blackness. And it would be really good if Death could be somebody funny, and friendly, and nice. And maybe just a tiny bit crazy.

“Death” by Neil Gaiman

"When the first living thing existed, I was there, waiting. When the last living thing dies, my job will be finished. I'll put the chairs on the tables, turn out the lights and lock the universe behind me when I leave."

Death in Sandman #20: "Façade" by Neil Gaiman

"One day in every century Death takes on mortal flesh, better to comprehend what the lives she takes must feel like, to taste the bitter tang of mortality: And this is the price she must pay for being the divider of the living from all that has gone before, all that must come after."

Neil Gaiman

Perhaps passing through the gates of death is like passing quietly through the gate in a pasture fence. On the other side, you keep walking, without the need to look back. No shock, no drama, just the lifting of a plank or two in a simple wooden gate in a clearing. Neither pain, nor floods of light, nor great voices, but just the silent crossing of a meadow.

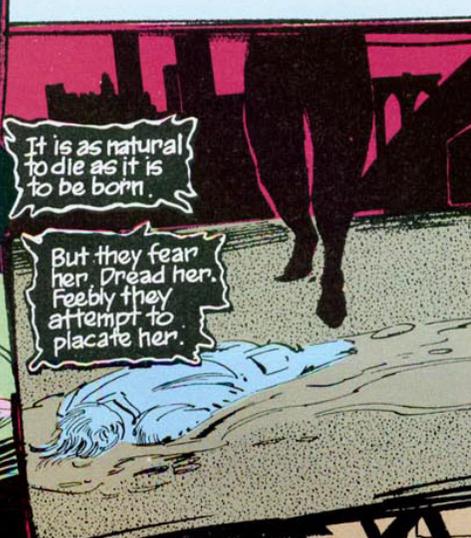
Mark Helprin, "A Soldier of the Great War"

Time is the flesh and blood of Death. Humans have decided that Death wears a skull face, but it might just as well be the face of a clock. Death is all possibilities hurling away from them at the speed of life.



I find myself wondering about humanity. Their attitude to my sister's gift is so strange.

Why do they fear the sunless lands?



It is as natural to die as it is to be born.

But they fear her. Dread her. Feebly they attempt to placate her.

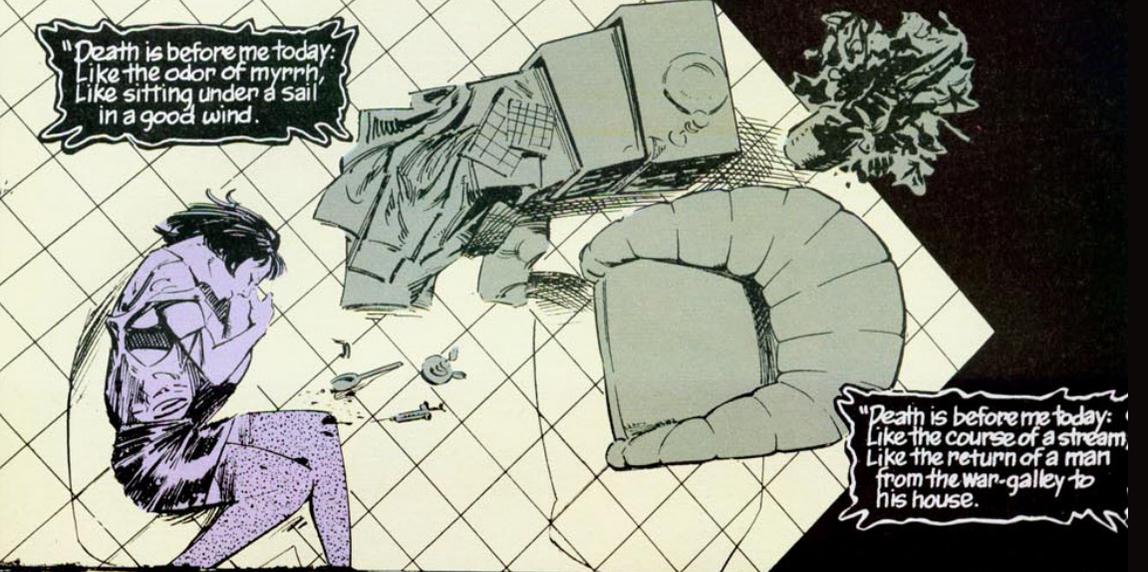
They do not love her.

Many thousands of years ago I heard a song in a dream, a mortal song that celebrated her gift.

I still remember it.



"Death is before me today. Like the recovery of a sick man. Like going forth into a garden after sickness."



"Death is before me today:
Like the odor of myrrh,
Like sitting under a sail
in a good wind."

"Death is before me today:
Like the course of a stream,
Like the return of a man
from the war-galley to
his house."



"Death is before me today:
Like the home that a man longs to see,
After years spent as a captive."



That forgotten poet
understood her gifts.

My sister has a function to
perform, even as I do. The
Endless have their
responsibilities.

I have responsibilities.



I walk by her side, and
the darkness lifts from
my soul.



I walk with her, and I
hear the gentle beating
of mighty wings...

“Why should I fear death? If I am, death is not. If death is, I am not. Why should I fear that which cannot exist when I do?”

Epicurus

If you spend all your time worrying about dying, living isn't going to be much fun.

Roseanne

“I knew a man who once said, ‘death smiles at us all; all a man can do is smile back.’”

Gladiator

We don't beat the reaper by living longer, but by living well, and living fully — for the reaper will come for all of us. The question is: what do we do between the time we're born and the time he shows up.

Randy Pausch

Death is kind of like sex in high school. If you knew how many times you missed having it, you'd be paralyzed.

George in “Dead Like Me”

Death twitches my ear. “Live,” he says, “I am coming.”

Virgil

That it will never come again Is what makes life so sweet.

Emily Dickinson

I can see the promised lands but I can't set foot in it. But that's okay, I can see it, the vision is clear. Millions of kids having fun while learning something hard.

Randy Pausch

I believe that when I die I shall rot, and nothing of my ego will survive. I am not young, and I love life. But I should scorn to shiver with terror at the thought of annihilation. Happiness is none the less true happiness because it must come to an end, nor do thought and love lose their value because they are not everlasting.

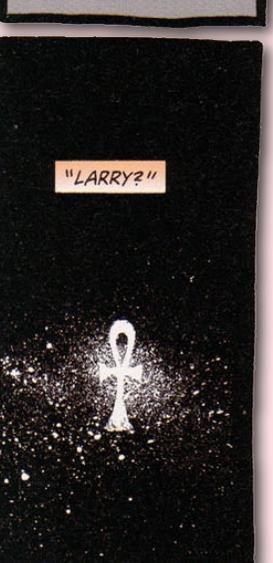
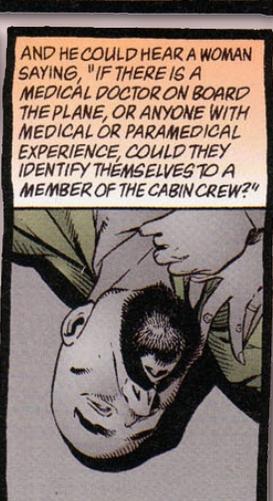
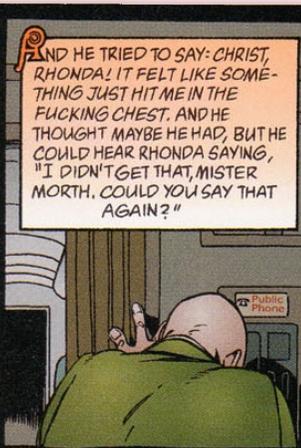
Bertrand Russell

And come he slow or come he fast,
it is but Death who comes at last.

Sir Walter Scott

I don't think I wasted any sympathy on Mrs. Royer. I did feel a shock of horror when I saw that flaming red face, but truthfully, I didn't like her, I thought she was a parasite with contemptible opinions, and if she had died of heart failure instead, I can't honestly say that it would have affected my appetite. None of us goes around sobbing over the millions and billions of people who have died in the past ... nor over those still living and yet to be born whose single certain heritage is death (including Podkayne Fries herself). So why should you cry foolish tears simply because you happen to be in the neighborhood when someone you don't like—despite, in fact—comes to the end of her string?

"Podkayne of Mars" by Robert A. Heinlein



AND HE TRIED TO SAY: CHRIST, RHONDA! IT FELT LIKE SOMETHING JUST HIT ME IN THE FUCKING CHEST. AND HE THOUGHT MAYBE HE HAD, BUT HE COULD HEAR RHONDA SAYING, "I DIDN'T GET THAT, MISTER MORTH. COULD YOU SAY THAT AGAIN?"

AND THEN HE LET GO OF THE TELEPHONE AND SAT ON THE FLOOR, BECAUSE THAT WAS SUDDENLY THE ONLY SENSIBLE THING TO DO.

AND HE FOUND HIMSELF AMAZED BY HOW SOFT AND ENVELOPING THE FLOOR BY THE AEROPLANE TOILETS SEEMED TO BE.

THEY MUST KEEP IT A SECRET, THOUGHT LARRY MORTH, TO STOP PEOPLE COMING BACK HERE AND LYING DOWN ON THIS SOFT FLOOR, AND MY CHEST STILL HURTS.

AND HE COULD HEAR A WOMAN SAYING, "IF THERE IS A MEDICAL DOCTOR ON BOARD THE PLANE, OR ANYONE WITH MEDICAL OR PARAMEDICAL EXPERIENCE, COULD THEY IDENTIFY THEMSELVES TO A MEMBER OF THE CABIN CREW?"

AND THE PAIN IN HIS CHEST WENT AWAY, SO, FOR A MOMENT, THERE WAS NOTHING BUT COMFORT AND WARMTH: AND THEN THERE WAS NOTHING AT ALL.

JUST A VOICE THAT SAID:

"LARRY?"



DON'T THINK OF IT AS DYING, said Death. JUST THINK OF IT AS LEAVING EARLY TO AVOID THE RUSH.

"Good Omens" by Terry Pratchett & Neil Gaiman

"It matters little how we die,
so long as we die better men than we
imagined we could be —
and no worse than we feared."

Drago Museveni CY 8451

Andromeda

"I'm dying. Let me be."

"No. You're going to live."

"I've lived long enough to live free. And proud to see you become the man that you are. I'm a happy man."

Campbell and Hamish in "Braveheart" (1995)

I'm having fun and I'm dying. And I keep on having fun every day I'm dying, because there is no other way to play it.

Randy Pausch

Death without pain
is like a sundae without sprinkles.

"I'm not leaving until I'm sure you're ..."

"I want you to go, Nerys."

"Why?"

"You ... watched Bareil die in this very room. I know how that's always haunted you. I don't want your last memory of me to be ... witnessing my death."

"Isn't that my choice?"

"Maybe it is. And maybe I'm being selfish by telling you everything that I want ... but I don't want the last thing I see to be ... pain in your eyes."

"You'd be surprised how well I can hide my feelings ... when I need to."

"Not from me."

*Kira Nerys and a dying Odo
in Star Trek DS9: "Extreme Measures"*



“She should not die, so young and beautiful. At least, she should not die alone.”
Merry, at the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, in “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King” by J.R.R. Tolkien

When I die I want to go like Grandpa,
in my sleep.
Not like Grandma in the passenger seat.

“Every living creature on this earth dies
alone.”

Roberta Sparrow in “Donnie Darko”

A girl rushed toward them from her bed, panicked at the sudden pain, the gushing blood; Ewen lifted her and laid her down. [...] The girl’s eyes were wide and terrified. “Can’t you help me?” she begged. “Oh, help me, help me—” Heather knelt and gathered the girl in her arms. “No, darling,” she said gently. “No, we can’t help you, you’re going to die. Don’t be afraid, Laura darling, it will be very quick, and we’ll be with you. Don’t cry, darling, don’t cry, there’s

nothing to be afraid of.” She held the girl close in her arms, murmuring to her, comforting her, sensing every bit of fear and trying with the strength of their rapport to soothe her, until the girl lay quiet and peaceful on her shoulder. They held her like that, crying with her, until she stopped breathing; then they laid her gently on the bed, covered her with a sheet, and sorrowfully, hand in hand, walked out into the sunrise and wept for her.

“Darkover Landfall”

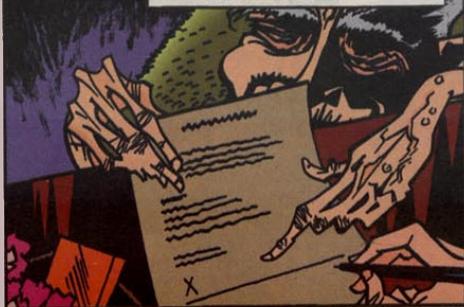
SO I GO DOWN THE HALL AND TO THE LEFT, AND I SAY HELLO TO MRS. BURROWS, AND I REALIZE THAT, SOMEWHERE IN ALL THIS MESS, I'D BEEN EXPECTING A MIRACLE.

I'D BEEN WAITING FOR DEATH TO SPIT ZELDA BACK, TO GIVE HER UP, FOR SOME KIND OF MAGIC MIRACLE CURE.



BUT THERE AREN'T ANY MIRACLES. AND ONCE YOU'RE DEAD, YOU'RE DEAD.

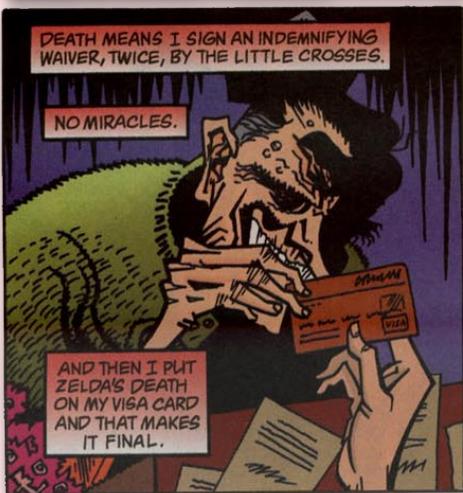
DEATH MEANS I HAVE TO SIGN FOR AN ITEMIZED LIST OF PERSONAL POSSESSIONS INCLUDING THREE DISPLAY CASES OF STUFFED SPIDERS, A HUMAN SKULL AND SEVERAL PHOTOGRAPHS, AND I HAVE THE CHOICE OF TAKING HER BOOKS HOME WITH ME OR DONATING THEM TO THE HOSPICE LIBRARY, WHICH IS WHAT I DO.



DEATH MEANS I SIGN AN INDEMNIFYING WAIVER, TWICE, BY THE LITTLE CROSSES.

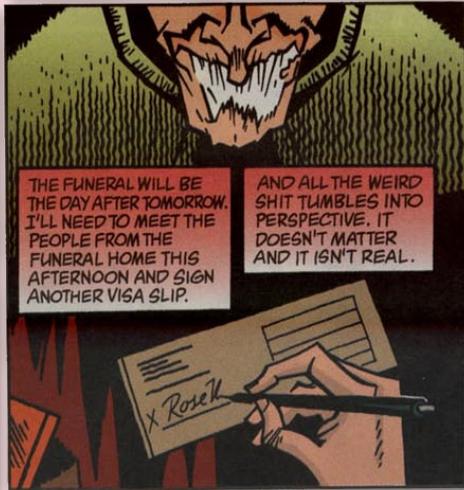
NO MIRACLES.

AND THEN I PUT ZELDA'S DEATH ON MY VISA CARD AND THAT MAKES IT FINAL.



THE FUNERAL WILL BE THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW. I'LL NEED TO MEET THE PEOPLE FROM THE FUNERAL HOME THIS AFTERNOON AND SIGN ANOTHER VISA SLIP.

AND ALL THE WEIRD SHIT TUMBLES INTO PERSPECTIVE. IT DOESN'T MATTER AND IT ISN'T REAL.



NO MIRACLES.

NO MAGIC.

NO DREAMS.



JUST PAIN AND DEATH, AND VISA SLIPS.



The door to the room swung open. Plikt stood in the doorway. "I heard," she said. "What's happening?" "She wants me to wake him up," said Novinha, "and tell him he can die." "Can I watch?" said Plikt.

Children of the Mind

'But my parents still died.'
I COULDN'T HAVE GIVEN THEM MORE LIFE. I COULD ONLY HAVE GIVEN THEM IMMORTALITY. THEY DIDN'T THINK IT WAS WORTH THE PRICE.

Soul Music

When I die I shall be content to vanish into nothingness ... No show, however good, could conceivably be good forever ... I do not believe in immortality, and have no desire for it.

H.L. Mencken

"You've digested so much time you have delusions of immortality," the ghola said. "Even your Empire, my lord, must live its time and die."

"Dune Messiah" by Frank Herbert

If you bring me back to life, my death will have no meaning. I had a fine existence. I was a good place. I spent a little time in the waking world. I even fell in love, once, a little. I lived a good life and it ended. Would you take that away from me?

Fiddler's Green, in Sandman #70, part one of "The Wake"

If man were immortal he could be perfectly sure of seeing the day when everything in which he had trusted should betray his trust, and, in short, of coming eventually to hopeless misery. He would break down, at last, as every good fortune, as every dynasty, as every civilization does. In place of this we have death.

Charles Sanders Peirce

If you remember your life, there will come the time when everything is boring. When you have seen everything all over again. And if you do not remember all this – what is the use in being immortal? Reincarnation all over again? This would be the same as a completely new life. Immortality simply makes no sense.

"To live on as we have is to leave behind joy, and love, and companionship, because we know it to be transitory, of the moment. We know it will turn to ash. Only those, whose lives are brief can imagine that love ... is eternal. ... You should embrace that remarkable illusion. It may be the greatest gift your race has ever received."

Lorien to Ivanova in Babylon 5: "Into the Fire"

Eckhart saw Hell too. He said: The only thing that burns in Hell is the part of you that won't let go of life, your memories, your attachments. They burn them all away. But they're not punishing you, he said. They're freeing your soul. So, if you're frightened of dying and ... and you're holding on, you'll see devils tearing your life away. But if you've made your peace, then the devils are really angels, freeing you from the earth.

Louis in "Jacob's Ladder" (1990)

“From the stars we came. From the stars we return. From now, till the end of time. We therefore commit these bodies to the deep.”

Captain John Sheridan in “Babylon 5” (1994)

The outer door started to open.
‘Ave, Mother Thing! Nos morituri.’
“*Have Space Suit will Travel*” by Robert A. Heinlein

“May your death bring you the peace
you never found in life.”

Tuwok in Star Trek Voyager

I hope for nothing.
I fear nothing.
I am free.
Nikos Kazantzakis

Not Fate,
but what we Make
Tombstone of Sarah Conner in Terminator 3

We have loved the stars too fondly
to be fearful of the night.
Tombstone of two amateur astronomers

Be to her virtues very kind,
Be to her faults a little blind.
Matthew Prior

If there’s another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.
“*Epitaph on William Muir*” by Robert Burns



It is not the things we do in life that we regret on our death bed. It is the things we do not. Find your passion and follow it.

Randy Pausch

"I will see you again ...
but not yet. Not yet!"
Juba, to his dead friend, in "Gladiator"

"Without forgiveness, you cannot mourn.
And without mourning, you can never let go of the pain."
Rabbi Koslov in Babylon 5: "TKO"

Writing Condolence Letters

Mention something in the letter that is meaningful about the person who has died. It can be a memory or just something you particularly liked about the person. Those left behind feel pain whether you write or not. Open yourself to those in grief and don't be afraid to say what you really feel, even if it's to tell them, "I'm so sorry. I don't know what to say, but I'm here for you." There is beauty in the honest confrontation of death and grief and only more hurt in the awkward avoidance of bringing it into the light.

Priest: "Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in this resting place to bid farewell to our sister. Into your arms we command her gracious spirit, take her to yourself and in into your safe haven. Although she struggled in life now she knows blessed peace. For all who question will find answers and all who love will find contentment, joy and peace eternal. For now we see as through a glass darkly but then we shall see clearly, face to face."

[The girl sees a stranger at the edge of the cemetery who looks over the congregation on his horse and then turns away. The girl runs to him.]

Girl: "Mister ... wait. Mister ... wait!

Excuse me, sir, but I was wondering if you knew my grandmother Leila. ... Yes. It's you, isn't it? My grandmother told me about you. ... So, I'd be honored if you'd come into our house, my dad would be so happy, ... please?"

D.: "I appreciate your kindness."

Girl: "Oh, come on, we don't live very far."

D.: "I just came here to keep a promise to an old friend of mine. She was afraid no one would mourn her death, I'm glad she was so wrong."

During a time as soldiers of fortune, D. and Leila promised each other to visit the grave of whoever dies first, in "Vampire Hunter D."



Where you used to be, there is a hole in the world, which I find myself constantly walking around in the daytime, and falling in at night. I miss you like hell.

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Death cannot stop true love. All it can do is ... delay it for a while.

The Princess Bride

The most I ever did for you was to outlive you. But that is much.

Edna St. Vincent Millay

“If you lose a spouse, you’re called a widow, or a widower. If you’re a child and you lose your parents, then you’re an orphan. But what’s the word to describe a parent who loses a child? I guess that’s just too fucking awful to even have a name.”

Brenda in “Six Feet Under”

We lead our lives, and when they end, sometimes we leave a little of ourselves behind. Sometimes we leave money, a painting, sometimes we leave a kind word.

And sometimes, we leave an empty space.

George in “Dead Like Me”

“I’m not going to sit here and pretend that I know what you’re going through or that I could begin to understand what it is you’re feeling. The last thing you need right now is someone saying that given time things will get better or the hurt’s gonna go away. Because – things won’t get better. The hurt’s never gonna go away. – The truth is, if you lived another two hundred years, you’d never forget how Connor was taken from you. And you shouldn’t. – You loved your son, Angel – and you’ll go on loving him, and missing him. – You’ll go on living, too. You’ll do that.”

“I don’t know how.”

“You don’t need to. The ‘how’ works itself out. Life will just keep happening. There’ll be people who need us and so – we’ll help them. – ‘cause that’s what we do.”

Cordelia and Angel in “Angel”



"The Speakers for the Dead are really quite innocuous — they set up no rival organization, they perform no sacraments, they don't even claim that the Hive Queen and the Hegemon is a work of scripture. They only thing they do is try to discover the truth about the lives of the dead, and then tell everyone who will listen the story of a dead person's life as the dead one meant to live it."

"And you pretend to find that harmless?"

"On the contrary. San Angelo founded our order precisely because the telling of truth is such a powerful act. But I think it is far less harmful then, say, the Protestant Reformation. And the revocation of our Catholic License on the grounds of religious persecution would guarantee the immediate authorization of enough non-Catholic immigration to make us represent no more than a third of the population."

Speaker for the Dead

"Then, as you said to me once: 'I will see you in a little while, in a place where no shadows fall.'"

Sheridan to DeLenn, about the worst-case scenario, in Babylon 5: "A View from the Gallery"

We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness.

1984

For what is it to die,
But to stand in the sun and melt into the wind?

Kahlil Gibran, from "The Prophet"

In a way, we are all immortal, stardust, energy, from now on until reality fails.

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there, I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond's glint on snow,
I am the sunlight on ripening grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of circled birds in flight,
I am the stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there, I did not die.

One Last Thing

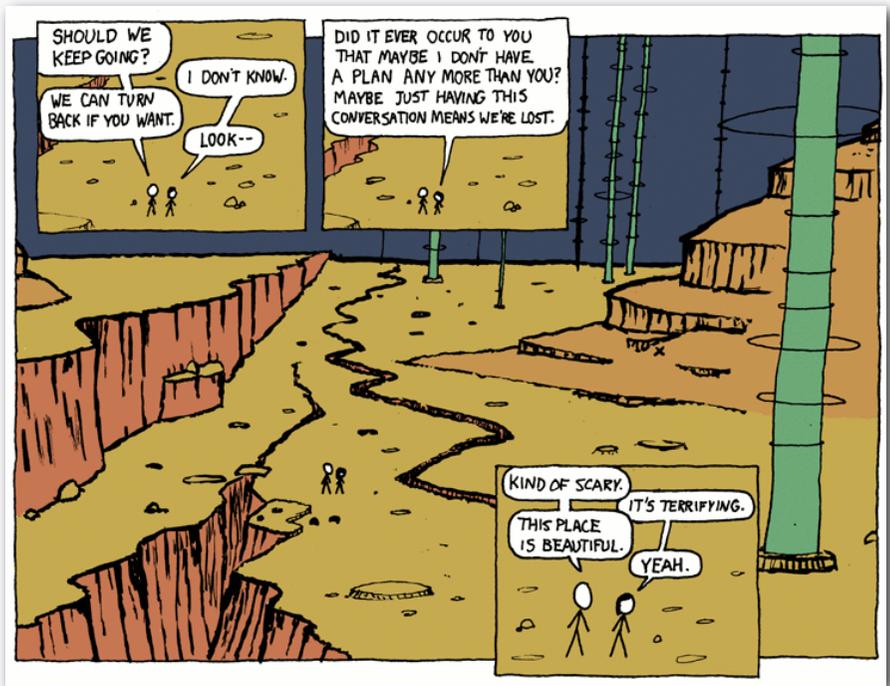
Through a cloud of sweet-smelling smoke Nanny reflected that Agnes read books. All the witches who'd lived in her cottage were bookish types. They thought you could see life through books but you couldn't, the reason being that the words got in the way.

"Carpe Jugulum" by Terry Pratchett

I gave my life to learning how to live. Now that I have organized it all ...

It is just about over.

Sandra Hochman



That's all folks. Good-bye.

