

50 Inspirational Book Excerpts

From "Discover Your Destiny with the Monk Who Sold his Ferrari" by Robin Sharma

You are far greater than you have ever dreamed of being. And no matter what you are experiencing in your life right now, trust that all is good and unfolding in your best interests. It may not look pretty, but it is exactly what you need to learn for you to grow into the person you have been destined to become. Everything occurring in your life has been perfectly orchestrated to inspire your maximal evolution as a human being and bring you into your true power. Learn from life and allow it to take you where you are meant to go - it has your highest interests in mind.

From "A Better Way to Live" by Og Mandino

"Dead at Midnight"

Simply imagine that every person you meet will be dead at Midnight, but they don't know it – only you do. It makes a colossal difference to the way you treat people and have time for them.

From "Buddhism: The Plain Facts" by Robert Mann & Rose Youd

Whenever there is worry in the mind, all we can think about is what might go wrong or what has gone wrong. In the absence of any obvious problem or concern, the worrying mind will simply manufacture problems. (What we perceive as problems are often only circumstances) Restlessness is a similar agitated state. When meditators are caught up in agitation, there are so many mental objects seeming to clamour for their attention – regretful thoughts, neurotic thoughts, anxieties, speculations, assumptions – the volume of mental activity can seem overwhelming. A surprisingly simple and useful technique for countering worry is to deliberately put to one side the specific concerns that are dominating the mind. Certainly there are things in life that need planning but so much of what we call planning is actually worry. So often, we try to solve problems when we don't have all the necessary information – concerns that are purely speculative – 'what might happen if' – are a complete waste of time. The significant feature of a restless or worried mind is the absence of happiness. When we introduce happiness into the mind, restlessness and worry fall away. Choosing to think positively – we can think about everything that is good in our lives, as opposed to what's wrong. As the mind stops jumping back into the past or forward into the future it becomes content to settle into the moment. Concerns that loomed large now seem insignificant; we wonder why we ever got so het up.

From "The Power of Positive Thinking" by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale

This is one of the greatest laws in the universe, fervently did I wish I'd discovered it as a very young man, it dawned upon me much later in life, and I have found it to be one of the greatest, if not the greatest discovery, outside my relationship with God and the great law, briefly and simply stated, is that if you think in negative terms you'll get negative results. That is the simple fact that is at the basis of an astonishing law of prosperity and success. In three words, believe and succeed.

From "Gift from an Angel" by Eileen Goble

"Always see the good in all things, even if the darkest side is what is shown to you. There remains the good to be recognized. Look with unconditional love, and you cannot fail"

"Fear not and be thankful, know your every need is being taken care of. If you are thankful, then you drive out fear. Do not worry about what is ahead, the journey ahead is assured. Have you not been brought forth so far in spite of all fears. Have you not travelled safely through all the trials, sorrows and tribulations of life. You never walk alone. Look back only to recognize the beauty you left behind, do not regret the past, bless it for had you not travelled by that path you would not be here."

"So your karma brings sorrows and anxieties. Fear not, have faith and courage for others look to you to see the light shining forth, maybe unconsciously, they still do, for they know you have something special which is helpful and good."

"Let go, surrender - lay down your problems, do not try to unravel the knots, it only gets tighter as you pull it. Let it go, concentrate with all your heart on love, knowing the knot will be unravelled if you stand back. Fill yourself with love and ask truly for guidance, your problems will be solved."

From "The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success" by Deepak Chopra

You must learn to get in touch with the innermost essence of your being. This true essence is beyond the ego. It is fearless; it is free; it is immune to criticism; it does not fear challenge. It is beneath no one, superior to no one, and full of magic, mystery and enchantment.

From "Silence in action" by Vimala Thakar

Generally we waste energy in unessential secondary things. This criminal waste, leaves us tired and troubled at the end of the day. An overtired and emotionally disturbed person cannot sleep profoundly. The sacred night is wasted and you begin the next day with a sluggish body and a lethargic mind.

One has to see that one does not waste precious energy unwarrentedly. The energy that is built-in, in childhood and youth is our capital. It should be conserved and used with care and concern. Energy is consumed by every movement of the body, mind and speech.

Every thought, emotion and ideation consume vital energy. Every spoken word consumes vital energy.

Self-education begins by watching how we are using the energy and learning how not to waste it through:

Excitement

Haste

Worry

Envy

Ambition

Self-Pity

Fear

Gossip

Attitude of judging others

From "Anyway - The Paradoxical Commandments" by Kent M Keith

These commandments are often attributed to Mother Teresa as she had them up on her classroom wall! They were in fact written by Kent M Keith -

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centred.
Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.
Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies.
Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.
Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.
Think big anyway.

People favour underdogs but follow only top dogs.
Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.
Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.
Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.
Give the world the best you have anyway.

From "Being Happy" by Andrew Matthews

Each of us must work continually on maintaining our positive and healthy self-image. The following behaviour traits are evidence that there is room for improvement in our self-image;

- * jealousy
- * negative talk about ourselves
- * experiencing guilt
- * failure to give compliments
- * non-acceptance of compliments
- * not taking our own needs into account
- * not asking for what we want
- * starving ourselves of luxuries unnecessarily
- * failure to give affection
- * inability to receive and enjoy affection
- * criticism of others
- * comparison of ourselves with others
- * constant poor health

From "You'll see it when you believe it" by Wayne Dyer

"Detachment in human relationships does not mean an absence of caring. It means caring so much that you suspend your own value judgments about others and relate to them from a position of love rather than attempting to control or judge them. The person who is detached in this sense is one who will avoid all the unnecessary suffering that most people experience in their relationships. You send love, decline a victim role, and exhibit an infinite supply of caring for yourself and your loved ones."

From "Happiness in a Nutshell" by Andrew Matthews

"You get motivated by doing things, not thinking about them"

"Next time you are upset, remember it's not so much people who make you angry, as your thoughts about them"

"Whatever thoughts are causing you pain, they are only thoughts. You can change a thought"

"Where did we get the idea that if we don't forgive people, they suffer?"

"The only way to beat fear is to face it"

"If we are honest with ourselves, we can list almost everything that's ever happened to us - and see how we helped create it"

"The happiest people don't worry too much about whether life is fair or not. They just get on with it"

"If you want peace of mind, stop labeling everything that happens as good or bad"

"You give your best not because you need to impress people. You give your best because that's the only way to enjoy your work"

"When life is sweet, and that little voice says: It can't last! Tell yourself: Maybe it's about to get better!"

"Loving people means giving them freedom to be who they choose to be and where they choose to be. Love is allowing people to be in your life out of choice"

From "Loving What is" by Byron Katie

1. Is it true?
2. Can you absolutely know that it's true?
3. How do you react when you believe that thought?
4. Who would you be without the thought?

"When you argue with reality, you lose - but only 100% of the time."

An old Sufi story

A man entered a village and went to see the Sufi Master. The visitor said "I'm deciding whether I should move here or not - and I'm wondering what the people here are like?" The Sufi Master said "Tell me, what kind of people live where you come from" The visitor said "They were robbers, cheats and liars" The Sufi Master said "You know, those are exactly the same kind of people who live here" The visitor left and never came back. Another visitor entered the village and asked the same question of the Sufi Master "I am thinking of moving here - can you tell me what the people are like?" Again the Sufi Master asked "Tell me, what kind of people live where you come from?" The visitor said "Oh, they are the kindest, gentlest, most compassionate, loving people. I shall miss them terribly" The Sufi Master said "Those are exactly the kinds of people who live here too"

From "SynchroDestiny" by Deepak Chopra

"When external factors fail to influence your sense of self, you become immune to criticism or to praise. You also understand that we are all equal, because we are all connected to the same conscious intelligence flow. That means that you understand that as you move through your life, you are beneath no one and superior to no one. You don't have to beg or plead or convince anyone of anything because you don't have to convince yourself.

As wonderful as this sounds, very few of us actually achieve a state of internal reference. All too often, we muddy the message by allowing our ego to intervene. Our thoughts, influenced by external factors - money worries, job stress, relationship tensions - end up hindering our spiritual development, and we find ourselves moving in a direction opposite from where we want to go.

The two best ways to overcome that tendency are to meditate and to consciously practice positive inner dialogue. Positive inner dialogue helps move us in the right direction, fosters synchronicity, and promotes spiritual development. With positive inner dialogue, we can create self-power."

"When you realise that the intentions and desires that arise in you are the very intentions of the universe, you can relinquish your desire for control and let the miraculous life you were born to lead unfold in all its unimaginable magnificence."

From "The Endorphin Effect" by William Bloom

The slightest use of these strategies is better than none. The slightest attempt to trigger endorphins, to remember your location in a universe beyond Blobsville, to smile internally, can create the minuscule leverage that ultimately sets change rolling.

Even in your worst mood, on a day when you are cursing all creation, you need to remember the power of a small gesture in the right direction. Remember the power in the tiniest act of connection. The slightest glimmer of a good vibration may unfold to redeem the whole situation. What a terrible mood needs is a glimpse of light at the end of the tunnel

From "Inviting Silence" by Gunilla Norris

Beginning Silence

Within each of us there is a silence -
A silence as vast as the universe.
We are afraid of it...and we long for it.

When we experience that silence, we remember
who we are: creatures of the stars, created
from the birth of galaxies, created
from the cooling of this planet, created
from the dust and gas, created
from the elements, created
from time and space...created
from silence.

Silence is the source of all that exists,
the unfathomable stillness where vibration began -
the first oscillation, the first word,
from which life emerged.

Silence is our deepest nature,
our home, our common ground, our peace.

Silence reveals. Silence heals.
Silence is where God dwells.
We yearn to be there.

From "The Way of the Wizard" by Deepak Chopra

People want to know why I, who come from India, am so interested in wizards. My answer is this: in India we still believe that wizards exist. What is a wizard? Not someone who can simply perform magic but someone who can cause transformation.

A wizard can turn fear to joy, frustration to fulfillment.

A wizard can turn the time-bound into the timeless.

A wizard can carry you beyond limitations into the boundless.

When I was growing up in India, I knew that all this was true. Sometimes old men in white robes and sandals came to our house, and even to a wide-eyed boy, they appeared to be very special creatures. They were completely at peace; they emanated joy and love; the wild ups and downs of everyday life seemed not to touch them at all.

From Paulo Coelho "The Lesson of the Butterfly"

A man spent hours watching a butterfly struggling to emerge from its cocoon. It managed to make a small hole, but its body was too large to get through it. After a long struggle, it appeared to be exhausted and remained absolutely still.

The man decided to help the butterfly and, with a pair of scissors, he cut open the cocoon, thus releasing the butterfly.

However, the butterfly's body was very small and wrinkled and its wings were all crumpled.

The man continued to watch, hoping that, at any moment, the butterfly would open its wings and fly away. Nothing happened; in fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its brief life dragging around its shrunken body and shrivelled wings, incapable of flight.

What the man - out of kindness and his eagerness to help - had failed to understand was that the tight cocoon and the efforts that the butterfly had to make in order to squeeze out of that tiny hole were Nature's way of training the butterfly and of strengthening its wings.

From "Life Lessons" by Dave Pelzer

There can be endless reasons why folks may not like us, no matter what we do. In the end, we must have the will to simply be ourselves.

When you please others in the hope of being accepted, you lose your self-worth in the process.

As elementary as this sounds: to help yourself, you have to be yourself. Be the best person you can possibly be. Stand up for yourself. Without being rude and arrogant, speak your piece.

Every day do your best and if there are those who disagree with you, it's not the end of the world.

By being more self-assured, you're not only taking a stand but you will actually learn more quickly to adapt to a negative environment

From "The Zen Card Pack" by Timothy Freke

Are you troubled by impermanence? Everything that has ever come into your life has either already passed away, or will inevitably pass away. Trace the suffering you have experienced back to its root in some form of attachment to a necessarily impermanent person, thing, or state of affairs. It can seem inhuman not to form such attachments, but being unattached is not the same as being coldly indifferent or unloving. In fact, attachments limit and confine love, because they trap us in our separate ego-self. When we are free of attachments, we are liberated from our personal self-interest to more fully express our naturally loving Buddha-Natures.

From "Edward de Bono's Textbook of Wisdom"

"Boredom means that you contribute nothing to the world, but demand that the world amuse you."

"We may be hostage to our own personal self-images. We act out the role which we have designed for ourselves. We cannot think of stepping outside that role"

From "Transform your life - A Blissful Journey" by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso

"What does 'engaging in spiritual practice' mean? Essentially it means transforming the mind - overcoming delusions and negative actions and cultivating constructive thoughts and actions"

"Someone controlled by their anger lives within a paranoid view of the world, surrounded by enemies of his or her own creation. The false belief that everyone hates him can become so overwhelming that he might even go insane, the victim of his own delusion"

From the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Happiness is within you, but since you do not know the springs of your own inner experience you attribute that happiness to someone else. You like him because he scratches your back. If another person says you are an idiot, you are unhappy, and that unhappiness is in you; but you think it comes from someone else and that if he (whom you call your enemy) is eliminated, then the unhappiness will also be eliminated! It is not so. The enemy is in you.

From "The Heart of the Enlightened" by Anthony de Mello

"A large truck was moving through a railway underpass when it got wedged in between the road and the girders overhead. All the efforts of experts to extricate it proved useless, and traffic was stalled for miles on both sides of the underpass.

A little boy kept trying to get the attention of the foreman but was always pushed away. Finally in sheer exasperation, the foreman said, "I suppose you've come to tell us how to do this job!"

"Yes", said the child. "I suggest you let some air out of the tires."

"A bear paced up and down the twenty feet that was the length of his cage.

When, after five years, the cage was removed, the bear continued to pace up and down those twenty feet as if the cage were there. It was. For him!"

"Wife to husband whose face is buried in the newspaper: "Has it ever occurred to you that there might be more to life than what's going on in the world."

DISCIPLE: "Why learn something new one week before you die?."

MASTER: "For exactly the same reason that you would learn something new fifty years before you die."

"There was once a candymaker who made candy in the shapes of animals and birds of different colors and sizes. When he sold his candy to children, they would begin to quarrel with words such as these: "My rabbit is better than your tiger.....My squirrel may be smaller than your elephant, but it is tastier....."

And the candymaker would laugh at the thought of grown-ups who were no less ignorant than the children when they thought that one person was better than another."

From "The Way to Love" by Anthony de Mello

What can one do to attain happiness? There is nothing you or anyone else can do. Why? For the simple reason that you are already happy right now. So how can you acquire what you already have? If that is so, why do you not experience this happiness which is already yours? Because your mind is creating unhappiness all the time. Drop this unhappiness of your mind and the happiness that has always been yours will instantly surface. How does one drop unhappiness? Find out what is causing it and look at the cause unflinchingly. It will automatically drop.

From "The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Wisdom"

"The success of our lives and our future depends on our motivation and determination or self-confidence. Through difficult experiences, life sometimes becomes more meaningful. If you look at people who, from the beginning of their lives, have had everything, you may see that when small things happen they soon lose hope or grow irritated. Others have developed stronger mental attitudes as a result of their hardships.

I think the person who has had more experience of hardships can stand more firmly in the face of problems than the person who has never experienced suffering. From this angle then, some suffering can be a good lesson for life"

From "The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Wisdom"

"Your mental state should always remain calm. Even if some anxiety occurs, as it is bound to in life, you should always be calm. Like a wave, which rises from the water and dissolves back into the water, these disturbances are very short, so they should not affect your basic mental attitude. If you remain calm your blood pressure and so on remains more normal and as a result your health will improve"

From "The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Wisdom"

"If you think only of yourself, if you forget the rights and well-being of others, or, worse still, if you exploit others, ultimately you will lose. You will have no friends who will show concern for your well-being. Moreover, if a tragedy befalls you, instead of feeling concerned, others might even secretly rejoice. By contrast, if an individual is compassionate and altruistic, and has the interests of others in mind, then irrespective of whether that person knows a lot of people, wherever that person moves, he or she will immediately make friends. And when that person faces a tragedy, there will be plenty of people who will come to help"

From "The Power of Now" by Eckhart Tolle

"Are you always trying to get somewhere other than where you are? Is most of your doing just a means to an end? Is fulfillment always just around the corner or confined to short-lived pleasures, such as sex, food, drink, drugs, or thrills and excitement? Are you always focused on becoming, achieving, and attaining, or alternatively chasing some new thrill or pleasure? Do you believe that if you acquire more things you will become more fulfilled, be good enough, or psychologically complete? Are you waiting for a man or woman to give meaning to your life? In the normal, mind-identified or unenlightened state of consciousness, the power and infinite creative potential that lie concealed in the Now are completely obscured by psychological time. Your life then loses its vibrancy, its freshness, its sense of wonder. The old patterns of thought, emotion, behaviour, reaction, and desire are acted out in endless repeat performances, a script in your mind that gives you an identity of sorts but distorts or covers up the reality of the Now. The mind then creates an obsession with the future as an escape from the unsatisfactory present."

From "Stillness Speaks" by Eckhart Tolle

"Whenever you are immersed in compulsive thinking, you are avoiding what is. You don't want to be where you are. Here, Now."

From "Practising the Power of Now" by Eckhart Tolle

"When you create a problem, you create pain. All it takes is a simple choice, a simple decision: No matter what happens, I will create no more pain for myself. I will create no more problems."

From The Mastery of Love" by Don Miguel Ruiz

"When you awake, you cross a line of no return, and you never see the world in the same way. You are still dreaming - because you cannot avoid dreaming, because dreaming is the function of the mind - but the difference is that you know it's a dream. Knowing that, you can enjoy the dream or suffer the dream. That depends on you"

"You open your eyes, you are awake, and everything becomes obvious"

"It is as if you awake one day, and no longer have emotional wounds. When you no longer have those wounds in the emotional body, the boundaries disappear, and you start to see everything as it is, not according to your belief system"

"Once you surrender, there is no longer a struggle, there is no resistance, there is no suffering"

"The awakening is when you have the awareness that you are life"

"When we awake and we are the only sober person in the party where everyone is drunk, we can have compassion because we were drunk too. We don't need to judge, not even people in hell, because we, too, were in hell"

From "A Manual for Living" (Epictetus) by Sharon Labell

Events Don't Hurt Us, But Our Views of Them Can

Things themselves don't hurt or hinder us. Nor do other people. How we view these things is another matter. It is our attitudes and reactions that give us trouble. Therefore, even death is no big deal in and of itself. It is our notion of death, our idea that it is terrible, that terrifies us. There are so many different ways to think about death. Scrutinize your notions about death - and everything else. Are they really true? Are they doing you any good? Don't dread death or pain; dread the fear of death or pain. We cannot choose our external circumstances, but we can always choose how we respond to them.

Feel the Fear & Do It Anyway by Susan Jeffers

"Pushing through fear is less frightening than living with the underlying fear that comes from a feeling of helplessness"

From "When things fall apart" by Pema Chodron

"The more we experience fundamental richness, the more we can loosen our grip. This fundamental richness is available in each moment. The key is to relax: relax to a cloud in the sky, relax to a tiny bird with gray wings, relax to the sound of the telephone ringing. We can see the simplicity in things as they are. We can smell things, taste things, feel emotions, and have memories. When we are able to be there without saying 'I certainly agree with this', or 'I definitely don't agree with that', but just be here very directly, then we find fundamental richness everywhere. It is not ours or theirs but is available always to everyone. In raindrops, in blood drops, in heartache and delight, this wealth is the nature of everything. It is like the sun in that it shines on everyone without discrimination. It is like a mirror in that it is willing to reflect anything without accepting or rejecting."

"Generally speaking, we regard discomfort in any form as bad news. But for practitioners or spiritual warriors - people who have a certain hunger to know what is true - feelings like disappointment, embarrassment, irritation, resentment, anger, jealousy, and fear, instead of being bad news, are actually very clear moments that teach us where it is that we're holding back. They teach us to perk up and lean in when we feel we'd rather collapse and back away. They're like messengers that show us, with terrifying clarity, exactly where we're stuck. This very moment is the perfect teacher, and, lucky for us, it's with us wherever we are."

From "Too soon old, Too late smart" by Gordon Livingston

Think of the slights, the insults, the rebukes, and, most important, the unfulfilled dreams that are a part of every life. Think of the ways in which our closest relationships are subject to complaint and score keeping. For most of us the process of nursing blame for past injury distracts us from the essential question of what we need to do now to improve our lives.

For many people the past is like an endlessly entertaining, if frequently painful, movie they replay for themselves over and over. It contains all the explanations, all the misery, all the drama that went into making us what we are today. That it may also, when checked against the versions of others who were there, be largely a work of our imagination does not detract from its power to occupy our attention. And to what end? We cannot change the parts that we wish were different, the unfairnesses, the injuries. What is the point in holding on to our outrage and unhappiness? Do we have a choice?

Coming to terms with our past is inevitably a process of forgiveness, of letting go, the simplest and most difficult of all human endeavors. It is simultaneously an act of will and of surrender. And it often seems impossible until the moment you do it.

From chapter; "Become a Child Again" in "Life, Love, Laughter" by Osho

The child never dies in anyone. It is not that the child dies when you grow, the child remains. Everything that you have been is still within you, and will remain within you until your very last breath.

But society is always afraid of nonserious people. Nonserious people will not be ambitious for money, or political power; they would rather enjoy existence. But enjoying existence cannot bring you prestige, cannot make you powerful, cannot fulfill your ego; and the whole world of man revolves around the idea of the ego. Playfulness is against your ego—you can try it and see. Just play with children, and you will find your ego is disappearing, you will find that you have become a child again. It is not only true about you, it is true about everyone.

Because the child within you has been repressed, you will repress your children. Nobody allows their children to dance and to sing and to shout and to jump. For trivial reasons—perhaps something may get broken, perhaps they may get their clothes wet in the rain if they run out—for these small things a great spiritual quality, playfulness, is completely destroyed.

The obedient child is praised by his parents, by his teachers, by everybody; and the playful child is condemned. His playfulness may be absolutely harmless, but he is condemned because there is potentially a danger of rebellion. If the child goes on growing with full freedom to be playful, he will turn out to be a rebel. He will not be easily enslaved; he will not be easily put into armies to destroy people, or to be destroyed himself.

The rebellious child will turn out to be a rebellious youth. Then you cannot force marriage on him; then you cannot force him into a particular job; then the child cannot be forced to fulfill the unfulfilled desires and longings of the parents. The rebellious youth will go his own way. He will live his life according to his own innermost desires—not according to somebody else's ideals.

The rebel is basically natural. The obedient child is almost dead; hence the parents are very happy, because he is always under control.

From "The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Inner Peace"

"Our happiness comes from others. In this world, all qualities spring from preferring the wellbeing of others to our own, whereas frustrations, confusion, and pain result from selfish attitudes. By adopting an altruistic outlook and by treating others in the way they deserve, our own happiness is assured as a byproduct. We should realize that self-centeredness is the source of all suffering, and that thinking of others is the source of all happiness"

Excerpt from "The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Wisdom"

"The way our attitude works is such that it is often troubled by outside factors, so one side of the issue is to eliminate the existence of trouble around you. The environment, meaning the surrounding situation, is a very important factor for establishing a happy frame of mind. However, even more important is the other side of the issue, which is one's own mental attitude.

The surrounding situation may not be so friendly, it may even be hostile, but if your inner mental attitude is right, then the situation will not disturb your inner peace. On the other hand, if your attitude is not right, then even if you are surrounded by good friends and the best facilities, you cannot be happy. This is why mental attitude is more important than external conditions. Despite this, it seems to me that many people are more concerned about their external conditions, and neglect the inner attitude of mind. I suggest that we should pay more attention to our inner qualities.

There are a number of qualities which are important for mental peace, but from the little experience I have, I believe that one of the most important factors is human compassion and affection: a sense of caring"

From "The Passionate Mind" by Joel Kramer

"Much of what is called living is playing in memory, which is playing in the past and the future, playing with ambition and fear. So much of what I see is through a veil of images. When I look at you it's very difficult to see you. You flatter me or you insult me. If you flatter me, I like it. Even if I know you are flattering me and disapprove of it, secretly I like it. You insult me and I don't like it. When I approach you again I see you through the memory of flattery and/or insult, so I'm not in touch with you the living person, but rather with a memory of what you were. I approach you and respond to you out of that memory, which triggers response mechanisms in you, who have images of me. That is what's called relationship, which actually isn't real relationship at all, but rather images posturing in front of one another. When I relate to you through an image I have of you it is not you I am actually relating to, but rather with my own thoughts"

From "Don't sweat the small stuff...and it's all small stuff" by Richard Carlson

"When you're in an ill mood, learn to pass it off as simply that: an unavoidable human condition that will pass with time, if you leave it alone. A low mood is not the time to analyze your life. To do so is emotional suicide. If you have a legitimate problem, it will still be there when your state of mind improves. The trick is to be grateful for our good moods and graceful in our low moods - not taking them too seriously. The next time you feel low, for whatever reason, remind yourself 'This too shall pass'. It will."

From "Instant Life Coach - 200 Brilliant Ways To Be Your Best" by Lynda Field

Believe in yourself

Self-confident people have indestructible self-belief, nothing can take away their feeling of self-worth and they bounce back again and again. You can feel like this. You have all that it takes to go for what you want and to ride the ups and downs that life inevitably brings. No one has a smooth trip but just think how you will feel if you don't even give yourself a chance to get out there and give things a try!

Self-belief checklist

A person with self-belief:

Never compares herself with others.

Knows that she is her own woman and that nobody can understand her as well as she can

Listens to helpful advice and comments but never blindly follows others' opinions

Trusts her instincts and listens to her heart

Recognises that she will make mistakes and learns from them and moves on

Depends upon her own judgment and always gives herself time to work things through

Values rest and relaxation as much as action planning and activity

Knows that when she is calm and focused she will make the best decisions

Accepts that there will be days when her self-belief is not so strong and will wait until she is feeling more positive before committing herself to any course of action

"When you are high in self-belief you will trust your own thoughts and feelings and will be able to follow through with appropriate action"

From "How to Change Your Life in 7 Steps" by John Bird

"Don't think you have failed just because you have to change your plans or ideas. The cleverest scientists in the world do that all the time. They don't think of themselves as failures."

From "Screw it, Let's do it - Lessons in life" by Richard Branson

"We spent the rest of our holiday on another island. Our plan was to travel on to Puerto Rico - but when we got to the airport, the flight was cancelled. People were roaming about, looking lost. No one was doing anything. So I did - someone had to. I chartered a plane for \$2,000. I divided that by the number of people. It came to \$39 a head. I borrowed a blackboard and wrote on it:

VIRGIN AIRWAYS. \$39 SINGLE FLIGHT TO PUERTO RICO.

The idea for Virgin Airways was born.

From "One Minute Wisdom" by Anthony De Mello

"The governor on his travels stepped in to pay homage to the Master.

"Affairs of state leave me no time for lengthy dissertations," he said. "Could you put the essence of religion into a paragraph or two for a busy man like me?"

"I shall put it into a single word for the benefit of your highness."

"Incredible! What is that unusual word?"

"Silence."

"And what is the way to Silence?"

"Meditation."

"And what, may I ask, is meditation?"

"Silence."

From "Not always so - practicing the true spirit of Zen" by Shunryu Suzuki

To open your innate nature and to feel something from the bottom of your heart, it is necessary to remain silent. Through this kind of practice you will have a more intuitive understanding of the teaching. Not to talk does not mean to be deaf and dumb, but to listen to your intuition.

From "The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success" by Deepak Chopra

You must learn to get in touch with the innermost essence of your being. This true essence is beyond the ego. It is fearless; it is free; it is immune to criticism; it does not fear challenge. It is beneath no one, superior to no one, and full of magic, mystery and enchantment.

From "Silence in action" by Vimala Thakar

"Silence of the total human mind does not result in paralysis of action; does not result in withdrawing from the active world; does not result in benumbing any of your capacities. On the other hand silence of total mind sharpens your whole being; every pore of being becomes active. That is why the totality of being coming into operation and moving with the movement of life is a tremendous event."

"Do you know how much energy is wasted in the chattering of the mind? Every thought consumes energy. Every emotion consumes energy. Even when you are physically alone and by yourself you could be spending lots of energy through the chattering of your mind. The chattering which consumes energy will have to come to an end. Energy should not be wasted in reactions. Reacting and brooding also imply consumption of vital energy. Unwarranted indulgence in thought and emotion is sheer waste of energy. So please find out how much energy you are wasting throughout the day. If you allow that energy to gather itself unto itself, you will have immensurable more energy"

From "Don't sweat the small stuff...and it's all small stuff" by Richard Carlson

"Every experience you have ever had is over. Every thought you've ever had, started and finished. Every emotion and mood you've experienced has been replaced by another. You've been happy, sad, jealous, depressed, angry, in love, shamed, proud, and every other conceivable human feeling. Where did they all go? The answer is, no one really knows. All we know is that, eventually, everything disappears into nothingness. Welcoming this truth into your life is the beginning of a liberating adventure."

From "Journey Into Healing" by Deepak Chopra

"An old Indian saying goes "If you want to see what your thoughts were like yesterday, look at your body today. If you want to see what your body will be like tomorrow, look at your thoughts today"

From "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz

3. Don't Make Assumptions

Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.

From "Gift from an Angel" by Eileen Goble

"Your feet will be guided on the right path, fear not for love surrounds you. Be tranquil of mind as you surrender to the light, have confidence and let your heart be full of love, for peace is yours. Let wisdom be your guide"

From “Stop thinking and Start Living” by Richard Carlson

“When you feel bad, you will have the tendency to come up with a theory as to why you feel the way you do. Without knowing the actual cause, it makes sense to create a reason. As long as you can create reasons for your depression – your marital status, your job, your children, your genes, your financial situation, your future, and so forth – you can maintain the false hope that things will get better when...But you can probably see that, in actuality, this is not true. The mindset that says ‘Life will be better when...’ will create further conditions that must be met as soon as the initial conditions are satisfied. You need only to look at the countless times in your life that you received what you wanted – and happiness still eluded you – to realize that changing your circumstances isn’t the answer to your problems. If it were, you’d already be happy! You wanted to graduate, you graduated. You wanted a mate, you got one. You wanted a pet, you got one. You wanted a pay-check, you got one. And so on. Tens of thousands of times in your life you got exactly what you wanted and yet you’re still unhappy!

The solution is to have the humility to admit that all along you have been creating your own pain through your own thinking. Don’t worry; almost everyone else is doing the same thing. The good news is that as soon as you see that this is true, you’ll be on your way to a far better life. No matter how depressed you have been, or how long you have been depressed, the moment you can see that it’s only your thinking that is holding your depression in place, you’re on your way to freedom.”

From "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz

1. Be Impeccable With Your Word

Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.

2. Don't Take Anything Personally

Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.

3. Don't Make Assumptions

Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.

4. Always Do Your Best

Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.

From "Your Erroneous Zones" by Wayne Dyer

Avoiding the present moment is almost a disease in our culture, and we are continually being conditioned to sacrifice the present for the future. Carried to its logical conclusion, this attitude is not merely the avoidance of enjoyment in the now, but an evasion of happiness forever.

Various excerpts from books by Paramahansa Yogananda

"It is not possible to attain happiness without non-attachment"

"You don't need to seek understanding outside yourself - everything you want to know exists within yourself"

"Darkness cannot exist where there is light"

"Many people use their powers of reasoning cleverly to justify their delusions"

"If you want to be sad, no one in the world can make you happy. But if you make up your mind to be happy, no one and nothing on earth can take that happiness from you"

"You are a master when you can use your senses, but they don't use you"

"To be unhappy as you seek happiness defeats its own end. Happiness comes by being internally happy first, at all times, while struggling your utmost to uproot the causes of unhappiness"

"Life has a bright side and a dark side, for the world of relativity is composed of light and shadows. If you permit your thoughts to dwell on evil, you yourself will become ugly. Look only for the good in everything so you absorb the quality of beauty"

"In the spiritual life one becomes just like a little child - without resentment, without attachment, full of life and joy"

"Real happiness can stand the challenge of all outer experiences. When you can bear the crucifixions of others' wrongs against you and still return love and forgiveness; and when you can keep that divine inner peace intact despite all painful thrusts of outer circumstance, then you shall know this happiness."

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