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## Cookies

A small boy at summer camp received a large package of cookies in the mail from his mother. He ate a few, then placed the remainder under his bed. The next day, after lunch, he went to his tent to get a cookie. The box was gone.

That afternoon a camp counselor, who had been told of the theft, saw another boy sitting behind a tree eating the stolen cookies. "That young man," he said to himself, "must be taught not to steal."

He returned to the group and sought out the boy whose cookies had been stolen. "Billy," he said, "I know who stole your cookies. Will you help me teach him a lesson?"

"Well, yes-but aren't you going to punish him?" asked the puzzled boy.

"No, that would only make him resent and hate you," the counselor explained. "I want you to call your mother and ask her to send you another box of cookies."

The boy did as the counselor asked and a few days later received another box of cookies in the mail.

"Now," said the counselor, "the boy who stole your cookies is down by the lake. Go down there and share your cookies with him."

"But," protested the boy, "he's the thief."

"I know. But try it--see what happens."

Half an hour later the camp counselor saw the two come up the hill, arm in arm. The boy who had stolen the cookies was earnestly trying to get the other to accept his jackknife in payment for the stolen cookies, and the victim was just as earnestly refusing the gift from his new friend, saying that a few old cookies weren't that important anyway.

## Children Learn What They Live

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to be shy.

If children live with jealousy, they learn what envy is.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with tolerance, they learn to be patient.

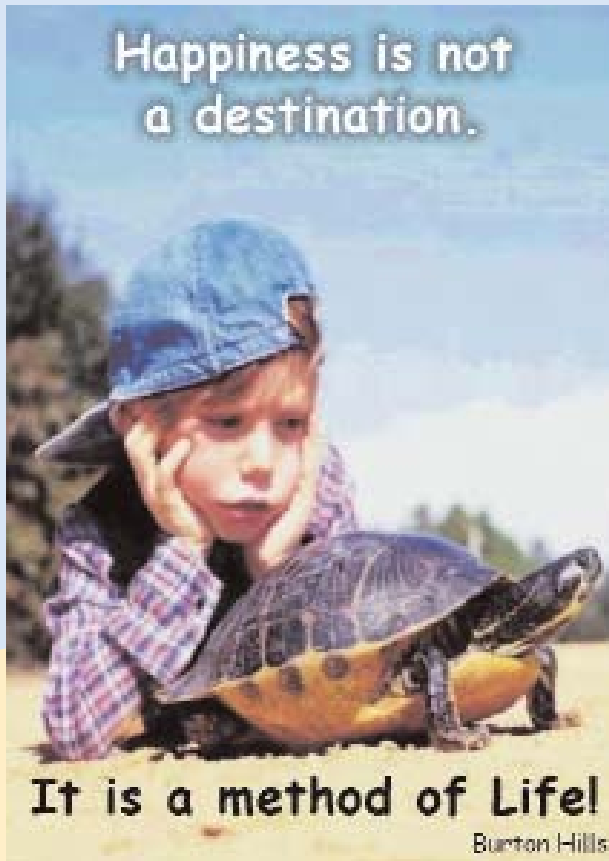
If children live with encouragement, they learn to be confident.

## Happiness is like a Butterfly.

The more you chase it,  
the more it will elude you.  
But if you turn your attention  
to other things,  
it comes and softly sits on your shoulder.

L. Richard Lessor





Dr. Howard Kelly was called in for the consultation. When he heard the name of the town she came from, he went down the hall of the hospital to her room. Dressed in his doctor's gown, he went in to see her. He recognized her at once. He went back to the consultation room determined to do his best to save her life. From that day, he gave special attention to the case.

After a long struggle, the battle was won. Dr. Kelly requested from the business office to pass the final billing to him for approval. He looked at it, then wrote something on the edge, and the bill was sent to her room. She feared to open it, for she was sure it would take the rest of her life to pay for it all. Finally she looked, and something caught her attention on the side of the bill. She read these words:

"PAID IN FULL WITH ONE GLASS OF MILK....

(Signed)

Dr. Howard Kelly."

Tears of joy flooded her eyes as her happy heart prayed: "Thank You, God, that Your love is shed abroad through human hearts and hands."

## Kindness

One day, a poor boy who was selling goods from door to door to pay his way through school, found he had only one thin dime left, and he was hungry. He decided he would ask for a meal at the next house. However, he lost his nerve when a lovely young woman opened the door.

Instead of a meal, he asked for a drink of water. She thought he looked hungry and so she brought him a large glass of milk. He drank it slowly, and then asked, "How much do I owe you?"

"You don't owe me anything," she replied. "Mother has taught us never to accept pay for a kindness." He said, "Then I thank you from my heart." As Howard Kelly left that house, he not only felt stronger physically, but his faith in God and man was strengthened also. He had been ready to give up and quit.

Years later, that young woman became critically ill. The local doctors were baffled. They finally sent her to the big city, where they called in specialists to study her rare disease.

## Lesson from a Terrapin

There was a boy who found a terrapin, more commonly known as a turtle.

He started to examine it but the turtle pulled in its head and closed its shell like a vice. The boy was upset and he picked up a stick to try to pry it open.

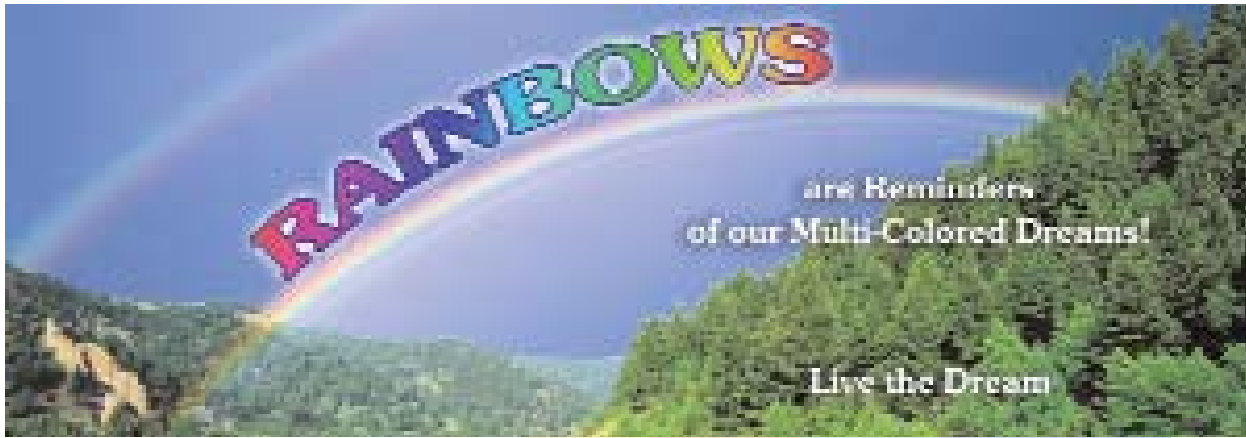
The boy's uncle saw all this and remarked, "No, that's not the way! In fact, you may kill the turtle but you'll not get it to open up with a stick."

The uncle took the terrapin into the house and set it near the fireplace. It wasn't but a few minutes until it began to get warm. Then the turtle pushed out its head, then stretched out its legs and began to crawl. "Turtles are like that," said the uncle, "and people, too. You can't force them into anything.

But if you first warm them up with some real kindness, more than likely, they will do what you want them to do."







## The Color of Friendship

Once upon a time the colors of the world started to quarrel.

All claimed that they were the best.

The most important.

The most useful.

The favorite.

Green said:

"Clearly I am the most important. I am the sign of life and of hope. I was chosen for grass, trees and leaves. Without me, all animals would die. Look over the countryside and you will see that I am in the majority."

Blue interrupted:

"You only think about the earth, but consider the sky and the sea. It is the water that is the basis of life and drawn up by the clouds from the deep sea. The sky gives space and peace and serenity. Without my peace, you would all be nothing."

Yellow chuckled:

"You are all so serious. I bring laughter, gaiety, and warmth into the world. The sun is yellow, the moon is yellow, the stars are yellow. Every time you look at a sunflower, the whole world starts to smile. Without me there would be no fun."

Orange started next to blow her trumpet:

"I am the color of health and strength. I may be scarce, but I am precious for I serve the needs of human life. I carry the most important vitamins. Think of carrots, pumpkins, oranges, mangoes, and papayas. I don't hang around all the time, but when I fill the sky at sunrise or sunset, my beauty is so striking that no one gives another thought to any of you."

Red could stand it no longer he shouted out:

"I am the ruler of all of you. I am blood - life's blood! I am the color of danger and of bravery. I am willing to fight for a cause. I bring fire into the blood. Without

me, the earth would be as empty as the moon. I am the color of passion and of love, the red rose, the poinsettia and the poppy."

Purple rose up to his full height:

He was very tall and spoke with great pomp: "I am the color of royalty and power. Kings, chiefs, and bishops have always chosen me for I am the sign of authority and wisdom. People do not question me! They listen and obey."

Finally Indigo spoke, much more quietly than all the others, but with just as much determination: "Think of me. I am the color of silence. You hardly notice me, but without me you all become superficial. I represent thought and reflection, twilight and deep water. You need me for balance and contrast, for prayer and inner peace."

And so the colors went on boasting, each convinced of his or her own superiority. Their quarreling became louder and louder. Suddenly there was a startling flash of bright lightening thunder rolled and boomed. Rain started to pour down relentlessly. The colors crouched down in fear, drawing close to one another for comfort.

In the midst of the clamor, rain began to speak:

"You foolish colors, fighting amongst yourselves, each trying to dominate the rest. Don't you know that you were each made for a special purpose, unique and different? Join hands with one another and come to me."

Doing as they were told, the colors united and joined hands.

The rain continued:

"From now on, when it rains, each of you will stretch across the sky in a great bow of color as a reminder that you can all live in peace. The Rainbow is a sign of hope for tomorrow." And so, whenever a good rain washes the world, and a Rainbow appears in the sky, let us remember to appreciate one another.



## A Gift From God

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd."

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.

As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes. My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him and as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye.

As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives."

He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!" There was a big smile on his face.

It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude. I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now. I would have never hung out with a private school kid before.

We talked all the way home, and I carried his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play football on Saturday with me and my friends. He said yes.

We hung all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him. And my friends thought the same of him. Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "Darn boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that

the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak.

Graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than me and all the girls loved him!

Boy, sometimes I was jealous. Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!" He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began. "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a

coach ... , but mostly your friends. I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story."

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize its depth.

Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life. For better or for worse. God puts us all in each other's lives to impact one another in some way. Look for God in others.

Each day is a gift from God! Don't forget to say, "Thank you!"



## Information Please

When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember well the polished old case fastened to the wall. The shiny receiver hung on the side of the box. I was too little to reach the telephone, but used to listen with fascination when my mother used to talk to it.

Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person - her name was Information Please and there was nothing she did not know. Information Please could supply anybody's number and the correct time.

My first personal experience with this genie-in-the-bottle came one day while my mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing myself at the tool bench in the basement, I whacked my finger with a hammer. The pain was terrible, but there didn't seem to be any reason in crying because there was no one home to give sympathy. I walked around the house sucking my throbbing finger, finally arriving at the stairway - The telephone! Quickly I ran for the footstool in the parlor and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up I unhooked the receiver in the parlor and held it to my ear. Information Please I said into the mouthpiece just above my head.

A click or two and a small clear voice spoke into my ear. "Information."

"I hurt my finger. . ." I wailed into the phone. The tears came readily enough now that I had an audience.

"Isn't your mother home?" came the question.

"Nobody's home but me." I blubbered.

"Are you bleeding?"

"No," I replied. "I hit my finger with the hammer and it hurts."

"Can you open your icebox?" she asked. I said I could. "Then chip off a little piece of ice and hold it to your finger."

After that I called Information Please for everything. I asked her for help with my geography and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my

math, and she told me my pet chipmunk I had caught in the park just the day before would eat fruits and nuts.

And there was the time that Petey, our pet canary died. I called Information Please and told her the sad story. She listened, then said the usual things grown-ups say to soothe a child. But I was unconsoled. Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers, feet up on the bottom of a cage?

She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, "Paul, always remember that there are other worlds to sing in."

Somehow I felt better.

Another day I was on the telephone. "Information Please."

"Information," said the now familiar voice.

"How do you spell fix?" I asked.

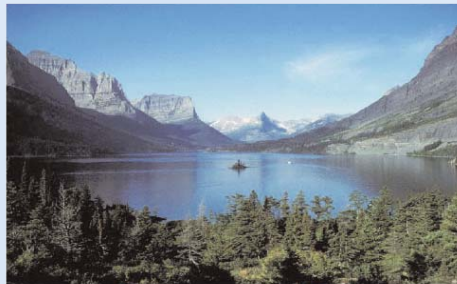
All this took place in a small town in the pacific Northwest. Then when I was 9 years old, we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much. Information Please belonged in that old wooden box back home, and I somehow never thought of trying the tall, shiny new phone that sat on the hall table.

Yet as I grew into my teens, the memories of those childhood conversations never really left me; often in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down in Seattle. I had about half an hour or so between plane and I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone with my sister, who lived there now. Then without thinking what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said, "Information Please".

Miraculously, I heard again the small, clear voice I knew so well, "Information." I hadn't planned this but I heard myself saying, "could you tell me please how-to spell fix?" There was a long pause. Then came the soft spoken answer, "I guess that your finger must have healed by now."

## One Touch of Nature ...



**makes us all kin!**

William Shakespeare





I laughed, "So it's really still you, I said." "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time."

"I wonder, she said, if you know how much your calls meant to me. I never had any children, and I used to look forward to your calls."

I told her how often I had thought of her over the years and I asked if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister.

"Please do, just ask for Sally."

Just three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered Information and I asked for Sally.

"Are you a friend?" "Yes, a very old friend." "Then I'm sorry to have to tell you. Sally has been working part-time the last few years because she was sick. She died five weeks ago." But before I could hang up she said, "Wait a minute. Did you say your name was Paul?"

"Yes."

"Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down, Here it is I'll read it 'Tell him I still say there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean'."

I thanked her and hung up. I did know what Sally meant.

## Flying

Once upon a time there was a little boy who was raised in an orphanage.

The little boy had always wished that he could fly like a bird. It was very difficult for him to understand why he could not fly. There were birds at the zoo that were much bigger than he, and they could fly.

"Why can't I?" he thought. "Is there something wrong with me?" he wondered.

There was another little boy who was crippled. He had always wished that he could walk and run like other little boys and girls.

"Why can't I be like them?" he thought.

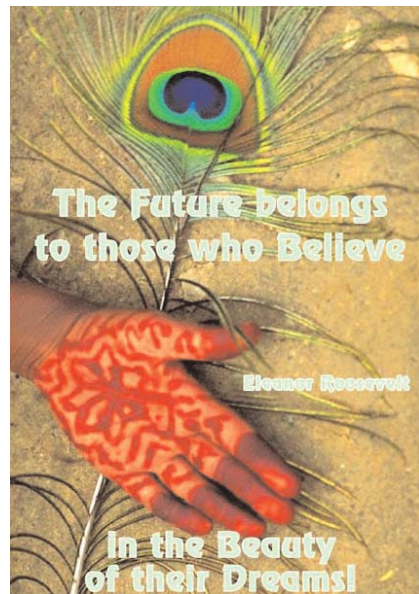
One day the little orphan boy who had wanted to fly like a bird ran away from the orphanage. He came upon a park where he saw the little boy who could not walk or run playing in the sandbox.

He ran over to the little boy and asked him if he had ever wanted to fly like a bird.

"No," said the little boy who could not walk or run. "But I have wondered what it would be like to walk and run like other boys and girls."

"That is very sad." said the little boy who wanted to fly. "Do you think we could be friends?" he said to the little boy in the sandbox.

"Sure." said the little boy.



The two little boys played for hours. They made sand castles and made really funny sounds with their mouths. Sounds which made them laugh real hard. Then the little boy's father came with a wheelchair to pick up his son. The little boy who had always wanted to fly ran over to the boy's father and whispered something into his ear.

"That would be OK," said the man.

The little boy who had always wanted to fly like a bird ran over to his new friend and said, "You are

my only friend and I wish that there was something that I could do to make you walk and run like other little boys and girls. But I can't. But there is something that I can do for you."

The little orphan boy turned around and told his new friend to slide up onto his back. He then began to run across the grass. Faster and faster he ran, carrying the little crippled boy on his back. Faster and harder he ran across the park. Harder and harder he made his legs travel. Soon the wind just whistled across the two little boys' faces.

The little boy's father began to cry as he watched his beautiful little crippled son flapping his arms up and down in the wind, all the while yelling at the top of his voice,

"I'M FLYING, DADDY. I'M FLYING!"



## Mikey's Goal

Last night was the last game for my eight-year-old son's soccer team. It was the final quarter. The score was two to one, my son's team in the lead. Parents encircled the field, offering encouragement.

With less than ten seconds remaining, the ball rolled in front of my son's teammate, one Mikey O'Donnel. With shouts of "Kick it!" echoing across the field, Mikey reared back and gave it everything he had. All round me the crowd erupted. O'Donnel had scored!

Then there was silence. Mikey had scored all right, but in the wrong goal, ending the game in a tie. For a moment there was total hush. You see, Mikey has Down's syndrome and for him there is no such thing as a wrong goal. All goals were celebrated by a joyous hug from Mikey. He had even been known to hug the opposing players when they scored.

The silence was finally broken when Mikey, his face filled with joy, grabbed my son, hugged him and yelled, "I scored! I scored. Everybody won! Everybody won!" For a moment I held my breath, not sure how my son would react. I need not have worried. I watched, through tears, as my son threw up his hand in the classic high-five salute and started chanting, "Way to go Mikey! Way to go Mikey!" Within moments both teams surrounded Mikey, joining in the chant and congratulating him on his goal.

Later that night, when my daughter asked who had won, I smiled as I replied, "It was a tie. Everybody won."

## Mr. Gillespie

When I was in seventh grade, I was a candy striper at a local hospital in my town. I volunteered about thirty to forty hours a week during the summer. Most of the time I spent there was with Mr. Gillespie. He never had any visitors, and nobody seemed to care about his condition.

I spent many days there holding his hand and talking to him, helping with anything that needed to be done. He became a close friend of mine, even though he responded with only an occasional squeeze of my hand. Mr. Gillespie was in a coma.

I left for a week to vacation with my parents, and when I came back, Mr. Gillespie was gone. I didn't have the nerve to ask any of the nurses where he was, for fear they might tell me he had died. So with many questions unanswered, I continued to volunteer there through my eighth-grade year.

Several years later, when I was a junior in high school, I was at the gas station when I noticed a familiar face. When I realized who it was, my eyes filled with tears. He was alive! I got up the nerve to ask him if his name was Mr. Gillespie, and if he had been in a coma about five years ago. With an uncertain look on his face, he replied yes. I explained how I knew him, and that I had spent many hours talking with him in the hospital. His eyes welled up with tears, and he gave me the warmest hug I had ever received.

He began to tell me how, as he lay there comatose, he could hear me talking to him and could feel me holding his hand the whole time. He thought it was an angel, not a person, who was there with him. Mr. Gillespie firmly believed that it was my voice and touch that had kept him alive.

Then he told me about his life and what happened to him to put him in the coma. We both cried for a while and exchanged a hug, said our good-byes and went our separate ways.

Although I haven't seen him since, he fills my heart with joy every day. I know that I made a difference between his life and his death. More important, he has made a tremendous difference in my life. I will never forget him and what he did for me: he made me a hero.



and the World  
Laughs with you!





## My Best Friend and I

I can still remember the first day when I met my best friend. She had just moved into the neighborhood and her grandmother who also lived in the neighborhood brought her down to meet me. I hid behind my mother and she hid behind her grandmother, scared to look at each other. Soon, we lost the shyness and started playing with each other, bike riding to each other's house and having sleepovers. In 7th grade, I first lost touch with her. She was going through family problems and I deserted her to be with the "cooler people". None of my new friends liked her as much as I did because they knew she had "problems". However every summer we would always sit at each other's house and watch soap operas, eat Doritos (or whatever junk food her mom had bought) and talk about everything we liked.

It was last year when I noticed the problem. I guess I was just to catch up in high school to realize she needed someone there for her. Well, she made a new "best friend" and so did I. Then I didn't know why, but she started cutting herself!

She was diagnosed with clinical depression, and had to go to a hospital during the day. I was very upset at first but with the late night calls, and meeting each other halfway up the street at midnight. We still stayed in touch. I wanted to be there for her since her new best friend basically deserted her since people were calling her crazy, and I knew I still cared about her like a sister.

Yesterday she came to me and said this: "I never knew what a best friend was until you were the only person that would stop me from cutting; the only person that ever made me feel better about myself and my problems. You don't know this but I was trying to kill myself this one night you called me and I was crying. I owe you so much, and you didn't even know you were helping me."

We both cried. And I guess a kind of lesson from my life so far is to never give up on your friends. Even if they aren't as cool as others, or people think they are crazy, they need someone there. If you desert them, you will only be miserable yourself. So if a friend needs you, and you care for them, you can never desert them.



## Real Friend

Horror gripped the heart of the World War I soldier, as he saw his life-long friend fall in battle. Caught in a trench with continuous gunfire whizzing over his head, the soldier asked his lieutenant if he might go out into the "No Man's Land" between the trenches to bring his fallen comrade back.

"You can go," said the lieutenant, "but I don't think it will be worth it. Your friend is probably dead and you may throw your own life away."

The lieutenant's words didn't matter, and the soldier went anyway. Miraculously he managed to reach his friend, hoist him onto his shoulder, and bring him back to their company's trench. As the two of them tumbled in together to the bottom of the trench, the officer checked the wounded soldier, then looked kindly at his friend.

"I told you it wouldn't be worth it," he said. "Your friend is dead, and you are mortally wounded."

"It was worth it, though, sir," the soldier said.

"How do you mean, 'worth it'?" responded the lieutenant. "Your friend is dead!"

"Yes sir," the private answered. "But it was worth it because when I got to him, he was still alive, and I had the satisfaction of hearing him say, 'Jim, I knew you'd come.'"

Many times in life, whether a thing is worth doing or not really depends on how you look at it. Take up all your courage and do something your heart tells you to do so that you may not regret not doing it later in life. May each and everyone of you be blessed with the company of true friends.

## The Emperor's Seed

Once there was an emperor in the Far East who was growing old and knew it was coming time to choose his successor. Instead of choosing one of his assistants or one of his own children, he decided to do something different.

He called all the young people in the kingdom together one day. He said, "It has come time for me to step down and to choose the next emperor. I have decided to choose one of you." The kids were shocked! But the emperor continued. "I am going to give each one of you a seed today. One seed. It is a very special seed. I want you to go home, plant the seed, water it and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from this one seed. I will then judge the plants that you bring to me, and the one I choose will be the next emperor of the kingdom!"

There was one boy named Ling who was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his mother the whole story. She helped him get a pot and some planting soil, and he planted the seed and watered it carefully. Every day he would water it and watch to see if it had grown.

After about three weeks, some of the other youths began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow. Ling kept going home and checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by. Still nothing.

By now others were talking about their plants but Ling didn't have a plant, and he felt like a failure. Six months went by, still nothing in Ling's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Ling didn't say anything to his friends, however. He just kept waiting for his seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the youths of the kingdom brought their plants to the emperor for inspection. Ling told his mother

that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But she encouraged him to go, and to take his pot, and to be honest about what happened. Ling felt sick to his stomach, but he knew his mother was right. He took his empty pot to the palace.

When Ling arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by all the other youths. They were beautiful, in all shapes and sizes. Ling put his empty pot on the floor and many of the other kinds laughed at him. A few felt sorry for him and just said, "Hey nice try."

When the emperor arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted the young people. Ling just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the emperor. "Today, one of you will be appointed the next emperor!"

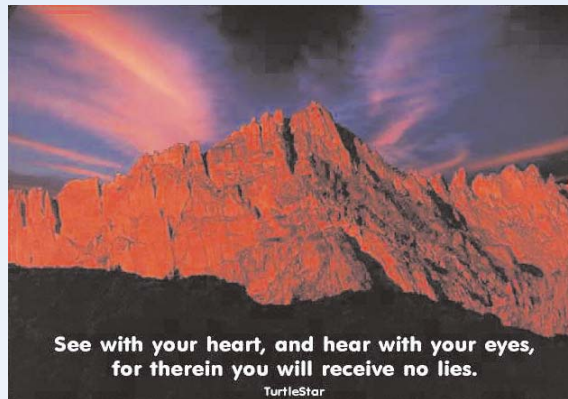
All of a sudden, the emperor spotted Ling at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered his guards to bring him to the

front. Ling was terrified. "The emperor knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me killed!"

When Ling got to the front, the Emperor asked his name. "My name is Ling," he replied. All the kids were laughing and making fun of him. The emperor asked everyone to quiet down. He looked at Ling, and then announced to the

crowd, "Behold your new emperor! His name is Ling!" Ling couldn't believe it. Ling couldn't even grow his seed. How could he be the new emperor?

Then the emperor said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone here a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds which would not grow. All of you, except Ling, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Ling was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new emperor!"



## The Cherry Tree

When George Washington was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet of which, like most little boys, he was extremely fond. He went about chopping everything that came his way.

One day, as he wandered about the garden amusing himself by hacking his mother's pea-

sticks; he found a beautiful, young English cherry tree, of which his father was most proud. He tried the edge of his hatchet on the trunk of the tree and barked it so that it died.

Some time after this, his father discovered what had

happened to his favorite tree. He came into the house in great anger, and demanded to know who the mischievous person was who had cut away the bark. Nobody could tell him anything about it.

Just then George, with his little hatchet, came into the room.

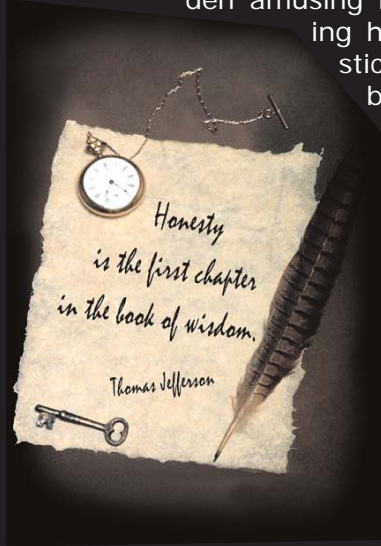
"George," said his father, "do you know who has killed my beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden? I would not have taken five guineas for it!"

This was a hard question to answer, and for a moment George was staggered by it, but quickly recovering himself he cried: --

"I cannot tell a lie, father, you know I cannot tell a lie! I did cut it with my little hatchet."

The anger died out of his father's face, and taking the boy tenderly in his arms, he said:

"My son, that you should not be afraid to tell the truth is more to me than a thousand trees! yes, though they were blossomed with silver and golden.



## Maintain Your Integrity

A while back, there was a story about Reuben Gonzolas, who was in the final match of his first professional racquetball tournament. He was playing the perennial champion for his first shot at a victory on the pro circuit. At match point in the fifth and final game, Gonzolas made a super "kill shot" into the front corner to win the tournament. The referee called it good, and one of the linemen confirmed the shot was a winner.

But after a moment's hesitation, Gonzolas turned and declared that his shot had skipped into the wall, hitting the floor first. As a result, the serve went to his opponent, who went on to win the match.

Reuben Gonzolas walked off the court; everyone was stunned. The next issue of a leading racquetball magazine featured Gonzolas on its cover. The lead editorial searched and questioned for an explanation for the first ever occurrence on the professional racquetball circuit. Who could ever imagine it in any sport or endeavor? Here

was a player with everything officially in his favor, with victory in his grasp, who disqualifies himself at match point and loses.

When asked why he did it, Gonzolas replied, "It was the only thing I could do to maintain my integrity."

## That's Not My Job

This is a story about four people: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.



## Winners and Winners

As a high school coach, I did all I could to help my boys win their games. I rooted as hard for victory as they did.

A dramatic incident, however, following a game in which I officiated as a referee, changed my perspective on victories and defeats. I was refereeing a league championship basketball game in New Rochelle, New York, between New Rochelle and Yonkers High.

New Rochelle was coached by Dan O'Brien, Yonkers by Les Beck. The gym was crowded to capacity, and the volume of noise made it impossible to hear. The game was well played and closely contested. Yonkers was leading by one point as I glanced at the clock and discovered there were but 30 seconds left to play.

Yonkers, in possession of the ball, passed off - shot - missed. New Rochelle recovered - pushed the ball up court - shot. The ball rolled tantalizingly around the rim and off. The fans shrieked.

New Rochelle, the home team, recovered the ball, and tapped it in for what looked like

victory. The tumult was deafening. I glanced at the clock and saw that the game was over. I hadn't heard the final buzzer because of the noise. I checked with the other official, but he could not help me.

Still seeking help in this bedlam, I approached the timekeeper, a young man of 17 or so. He said, "Mr. Covino, the buzzer went off as the ball rolled off the rim, before the final tap-in was made."

I was in the unenviable position of having to tell Coach O'Brien the sad news. "Dan," I said, "time ran out before the final basket was tapped in. Yonkers won the game."

His face clouded over. The young timekeeper came up. He said, "I'm sorry, Dad. The time ran out before the final basket."

Suddenly, like the sun coming out from behind a cloud, Coach O'Brien's face lit up. He said, "That's

okay, Joe. You did what you had to do. I'm proud of you."

Turning to me, he said, "Al, I want you to meet my son, Joe."

The two of them then walked off the court together, the coach's arm around his son's shoulder.



## Flame of Love

"I can master it", said the Ax.

His blows fell heavy on the hard, strong steel.

But each blow only made his edge blunter until he ceased to strike.

"Leave it to me", said the Saw.

With his relentless teeth, he worked back & forth.

But to his dismay, all of his teeth were worn out or broken off.

"Ha!" said the Hammer. "I knew you could not do this.

Let me show you how."

But with the very first blow, his head flew off, and the steel was unchanged.

"Shall I try?" asked the Flame.

And it curled itself gently around the strong, hard steel, and embraced it, and would not let it go.

And the tough steel melted.

There are hearts that are hard enough to resist:

The forces of wrath,

The fury of pride.

But hard is the heart that can resist the warm "flame of Love".



## Circle of Love!

**Y**ou know, he almost didn't see the old lady, stranded on the side of the road. But even in the dim light of day, he could see she needed help. So he pulled up in front of her Mercedes and got out. His Pontiac was still sputtering when he approached her.

Even with the smile on his face, she was worried. No one had stopped to help for the last hour or so. Was he going to hurt her? He didn't look safe, he looked poor and hungry. He could see that she was frightened, standing out there in the cold. He knew how she felt.

It was that chill which only fear can put in you. He said, "I'm here to help you ma'am. Why don't you wait in the car where it's warm? By the way, my name is Bryan."

Well, all she had was a flat tire, but for an old lady, that was bad enough. Bryan crawled under the car looking for a place to put the jack, skinning his knuckles a time or two. Soon he was able to change the tire. But he had to get dirty and his hands hurt. As he was tightening up the lug nuts, she rolled down the window and began to talk to him. She told him that she was from St. Louis and was only just passing through. She couldn't thank him enough for coming to her aid.

Bryan just smiled as he closed her trunk. She asked him how much she owed him. Any amount would have been all right with her. She had already imagined all the awful things that could have happened had he not stopped.

Bryan never thought twice about the money. This was not a job to him. This was helping someone in need, and God knows there were plenty who had given him a hand in the past. He had lived his whole life that way, and it never occurred to him to act any other way. He told her that if she really wanted to pay him back, the next time she saw someone who needed help, she could give that person the assistance that they needed, and Bryan added "...and think of me".

He waited until she started her car and drove off. It had been a cold and depressing day, but he felt good as he headed for home, disappearing into the twilight.

A few miles down the road the lady saw a small cafe. She went in to grab a bite to eat, and take the chill off before she made the last leg of her trip home. It was a dingy looking restaurant. Outside were two old gas pumps. The whole scene was unfamiliar to her. The cash register was like the telephone of an out of work actor. It didn't ring much.

Her waitress came over and brought a

clean towel to wipe her wet hair. She had a sweet smile, one that even being on her feet for the whole day couldn't erase. The lady noticed that the waitress was nearly eight months pregnant, but she never let the strain and aches change her attitude.

The old lady wondered how someone who had so little could be so giving to a stranger. Then she remembered Bryan.

After the lady finished her meal, and the waitress went to get change for her hundred dollar bill, the lady slipped right out the door. She was gone by the time the waitress came back. She wondered where the lady could be, then she noticed something written on the napkin under which was 4 \$100 bills. There were tears in her eyes when she read what the lady wrote. It said "You don't owe me anything, I have been there too. Somebody once helped me out, the way I'm helping you. If you really want to pay me back, here is what you do; Do not let this chain of love end with you." Well, there were tables to clear, sugar bowls to fill, and people to serve, but the waitress made it through another day.

That night when she got home from work and climbed into bed, she was thinking about the money and what the lady had written. How could the lady have known how much she and her husband needed it? With the baby due next month, it was going to be hard. She knew how worried her husband was, and as he lay sleeping next to her, she gave him a soft kiss and whispered soft and low, "Everything's gonna be all right; I love you, Bryan."



**The best way to cheer yourself**



**is to cheer somebody else up.**

Mark Twain

## Learn from Mistakes

Thomas Edison tried two thousand different materials in search of a filament for the light bulb. When none worked satisfactorily, his assistant complained, "All our work is in vain. We have learned nothing."

Edison replied very confidently, "Oh, we have come a long way and we have learned a lot. We know that there are two thousand elements which we cannot use to make a good light bulb."

## The Pig and the Cow

"Why is it," said the rich man to his minister, "that people call me stingy when everyone knows that when I die I'm leaving everything to the church?"

"Let me tell you a fable about the pig and the cow," said the minister. "The pig was unpopular while the cow was beloved. This puzzled the pig. 'People speak warmly of your gentle nature and your sorrowful eyes,' the pig said to the cow. 'They think you're generous because each day you give them milk and cream. But what about me? I give them everything I have. I give bacon and ham. I provide bristles for brushes. They even pickle my feet! Yet not one likes me. Why is that?'"

"Do you know what the cow answered?" said the minister. "The cow said, 'Perhaps it is because I give while I'm still living.'"

## To Tell the Truth

"Who did this?" asked my teacher. Thirty children tried to think about not only what they had done, but also what our teacher may have found out. "Who did this?" asked my teacher once more. She wasn't really asking, she was demanding an answer.

She seldom became angry, but she was this time. She held up a piece of broken glass and asked, "Who broke this window?"

"Oh, oh," I thought. I was the one who broke the window. I had not done it intentionally. It was caused by an errant throw of a baseball. I was working on my knuckleball. It needed more work. Why did it have to be me? It wasn't really my fault. If I admitted guilt, I would be in a lot of trouble. How would I be able to pay for a big window like that? I didn't even get an allowance. "My father is going to have a fit," I thought. I didn't want to raise my hand, but some force much stronger than I was pulled it skyward. I told the truth. "I did it." I said no more. It was hard enough saying what I had.

My teacher went to one of our library shelves and took down a book. She then began walking towards my desk. I had never known my teacher to strike a student, but I feared she was going to start with me and she was going to use a book for the swatting.

"I know how you like birds," she said as she stood looking down at my guilt-ridden face. "Here is that field guide about birds that you are constantly checking out. It is yours. It's time we got a new one for the school anyway. The book is yours and you will not be punished as long as you remember that I am not rewarding you for your misdeed, I am rewarding you for your truthfulness."

## The Bear and the Two Travelers

Two men were traveling together, when a bear suddenly met them on their path. One of them climbed up quickly into a tree and concealed himself in the branches. The other, seeing that he must be attacked, fell flat on the ground, and when the bear came up and felt him with his snout, and smelt him all over, he held his breath, and feigned the appearance of death as much as he could.

The bear soon left him, for it is said he will not touch a dead body. When he was quite gone, the other Traveler descended from the tree, and jocularly inquired of his friend what it was the bear had whispered in his ear. "He gave me this advice," his companion replied. "Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger."



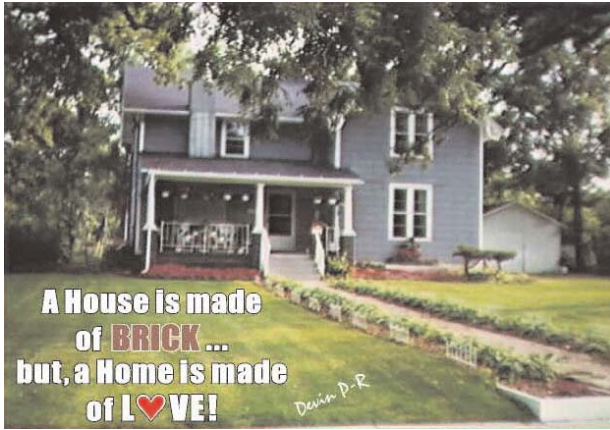
The fool is not the one  
who makes mistakes . . .

The fool is the one who never makes a mistake!

Devin Peltier-Robson







## The Builder

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end his career.

When the carpenter finished his work and the builder came to inspect the house, the contractor handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you."

What a shock! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in the home he had built none too well.

So it is with us. We build our lives in a distracted way, reacting rather than acting, willing to put up less than the best. At important points we do not give the job our best effort. Then with a shock we look at the situation we have created and find that we are now living in the house we have built. If we had realized, we would have done it differently.

Think of yourself as the carpenter. Think about your house. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. Build wisely. It is the only life you will ever build. Even if you live it for only one day more, that day deserves to be lived graciously and with dignity. The plaque on the wall says, "Life is

a do-it-yourself project."

Who could say it more clearly? Your life today is the result of your attitudes and choices in the past. Your life tomorrow will be the result of your attitudes and the choices you make today.

## Tommy's Essay

Soon Tommy's parents, who had recently separated, would arrive for a conference on his failing schoolwork and disruptive behavior. Neither parent knew that I had summoned the other.

Tommy, an only child, had always been happy, cooperative, and an excellent student. How could I convince his father and mother that his recent failing grades represented a brokenhearted child's reaction to his adored parents' separation and pending divorce?

Tommy's mother entered and took one of the chairs I had placed near my desk. Then the father arrived. They pointedly ignored each other.

As I gave a detailed account of Tommy's behavior and schoolwork, I prayed for the right words to bring these two together to help them see what they were doing to their son. But somehow the words wouldn't come. Perhaps if they saw one of his smudged, carelessly done papers.

I found a crumpled, tear-stained sheet stuffed in the back of his desk. Writing covered both sides, a single sentence scribbled over and over.

Silently I smoothed it out and gave it to Tommy's mother. She read it and then without a word handed it to her husband. He frowned. Then his face softened. He studied the scrawled words for what seemed an eternity.

At last he folded the paper carefully and reached for his wife's outstretched hand. She wiped the tears from her eyes and smiled up at him. My own eyes were brimming, but neither seemed to notice.

In his own way God had given me the words to reunite that family. He had guided me to the sheet of yellow copy paper covered with the anguished outpouring of a small boy's troubled heart.

"Dear Mother . . . Dear Daddy . . . I love you . . . I love you . . . I love you."

## The Man Who Had Plenty

Once there was a family that was not rich and not poor. They lived in Ohio in a small country house. One night they all sat down for dinner, and there was a knock at the door. The father went to the door and opened it.

There stood an old man in tattered clothes, with ripped pants and missing buttons. He was carrying a basket full of vegetables. He asked the family if they wanted to buy some vegetables from him. They quickly did because they wanted him to leave.

Over time, the family and the old man became friends.

The man brought vegetables to the family every week. They soon found out that he was almost blind and had cataracts on his eyes. But he was so friendly that they learned to look forward to his visits and started to enjoy his company.

One day as he was delivering the vegetables, he said, "I had the greatest blessing yesterday! I found a basket of clothes outside my house that someone had left for me."

The family, knowing that he needed clothes, said, "How wonderful!"

The old blind man said, "The most wonderful part is that I found a family that really needed the clothes."

## The Acorn Planter

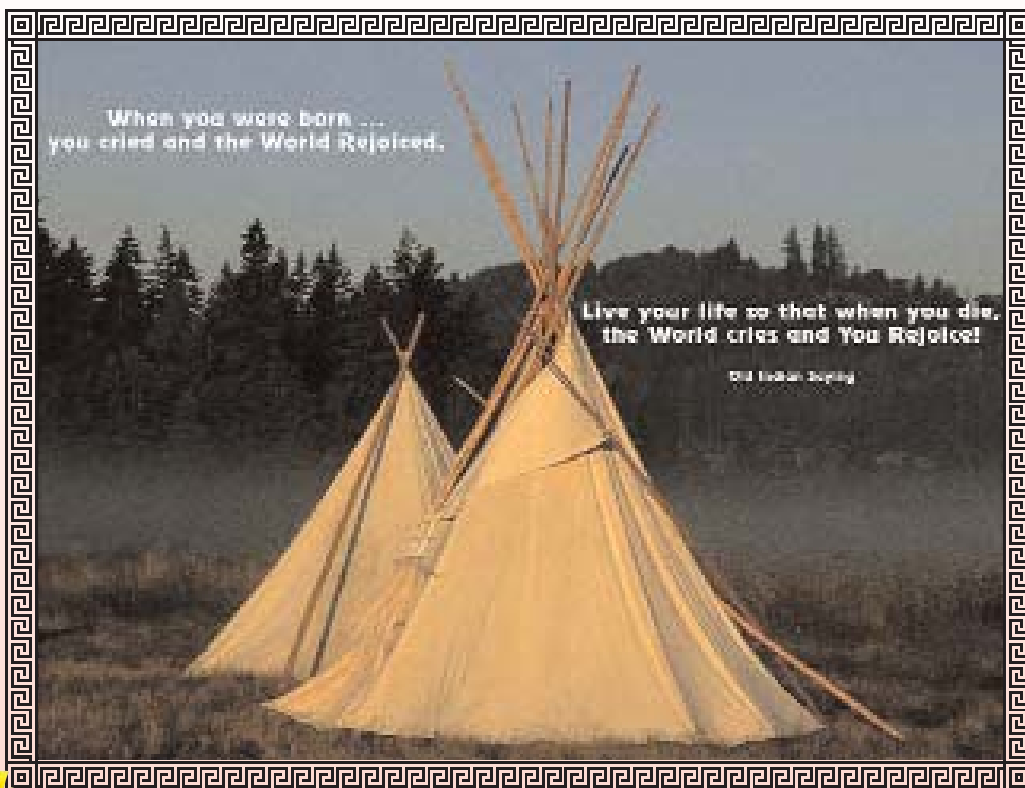
In the 1930s a young traveler was exploring the French Alps. He came upon a vast stretch of barren land. It was desolate. It was forbidding. It was ugly. It was the kind of place you hurry away from.

Then, suddenly, the young traveler stopped dead in his tracks. In the middle of this vast wasteland was a bent-over old man. On his back was a sack of acorns. In his hand was a four-foot length of iron pipe.

The man was using the iron pipe to punch holes in the ground. Then from the sack he would take an acorn and put it in the hole. Later the old man told the traveler, "I've planted over 100,000 acorns. Perhaps only a tenth of them will grow." The old man's wife and son had died, and this was how he chose to spend his final years. "I want to do something useful," he said.

Twenty-five years later the now-not-as-young traveler returned to the same desolate area. What he saw amazed him. He could not believe his own eyes. The land was covered with a beautiful forest two miles wide and five miles long. Birds were singing, animals were playing, and wild flowers perfumed the air.

The traveler stood there recalling the desolation that once was; a beautiful oak forest stood there now - all because someone cared.



## Animals Are Parents Too

I want to let you know about an event that changed my life many years ago. It is a memory that periodically comes and goes, but it is one of the most precious memories that me and my wife share. I am thankful that we can remember it together. It's a reminder that things are not what they seem and that angels come in many packages.

We live in College Station, Texas and we were on our way home from Houston, Texas around the Weston Lakes area one Saturday or Sunday morning. And when I say morning, I'm talking 1:00 to 2:00 in the morning. We were on our way home and decided to stop at a local gas station to get coffee and something to snack on since it was a good hour and a half before we got home.

When we were done, we got back into our car and before I started it, we noticed a man standing outside in front of the building. You could tell that he was a homeless man. His clothes were tattered and worn and it looked like he had gone in and gotten him some coffee or something warm to drink since it was cold this time of the year. He must have not had enough money to get something to eat. That is not something I remember too well, because that is not what "moved" me.

The next thing I remember is a dog that walked up to the front of the building. Being a dog lover, I noticed that she was part wolf and probably part German shepherd. I could tell she was a she, because you could tell that she had been feeding puppies. She was terribly in need of something to eat and I felt so bad for her. I knew if she didn't eat soon, she and her puppies would not make it.

Me and my wife sat there and looked at her. We noticed that people walked by and didn't even pet her, like most people do when they walk by an animal in front of a store. She might not have been as pretty and clean as most, but she still deserved better. But we still did not do anything. But someone did. The homeless man, who I thought did not buy himself anything to eat, went back into the store. And what he did brought tears to me and my wife. He had gone into the store and with what



money he may have had, bought a can of dog food and fed that dog.

I know that this story isn't as inspirational as most stories, but it plays a great part in our lives. You see, that was Mother's Day weekend. And a lot of people forget that some animals are parents too. And animals as well as us are God's creations too.

It would be a better story if I could remember all the details, but even without the details, I believe it still gets the message across. It took a homeless man, to show me what I should have done. He made me a better man that day.

## The Ass and the Mule

A Muleteer set forth on a journey, driving before him an Ass and a Mule, both well laden. The Ass, as long as he traveled along the plain, carried his load with ease, but when he began to ascend the steep path of the mountain, felt his load to be more than he could bear. He entreated his companion to relieve him of a small portion that he might carry home the rest; but the Mule paid no attention to the request. The Ass shortly afterwards fell down dead under his burden. Not knowing what else to do in so wild a region, the Muleteer placed upon the Mule the load carried by the Ass in addition to his own, and at the top of all placed the hide of the Ass, after he had skinned him. The Mule, groaning beneath his heavy burden, said to himself: "I am treated according to my deserts. If I had only been willing to assist the Ass a little in his need, I should not now be bearing, together with his burden, himself as well."



## The Bridge

There was once a bridge which spanned a large river. During most of the day the bridge sat with its length running up and down the river paralleled with the banks, allowing ships to pass thru freely on both sides of the bridge. But at certain times each day, a train would come along and the bridge would be turned sideways across the river, allowing a train to cross it.

A switchman sat in a small shack on one side of the river where he operated the controls to turn the bridge and lock it into place as the train crossed. One evening as the switchman was waiting for the last train of the day to come; he looked off into the distance thru the dimming twilight and caught sight of the train lights. He stepped to the control and waited until the train was within a prescribed distance when he was to turn the bridge. He turned the bridge into position, but, to his horror, he found the locking control did not work. If the bridge was not securely in position it would wobble back and forth at the ends when the train came onto it, causing the train to jump the track and go crashing into the river. This would be a passenger train with many people aboard.

He left the bridge turned across the river, and hurried across the bridge to the other side of the river where there was a lever switch he could hold to operate the lock manually. He would have to hold the lever back firmly as the train crossed. He could hear the rumble of the train now, and he took hold of the lever and leaned backward to apply his weight to it, locking the bridge. He kept applying the pressure to keep the mechanism locked. Many lives depended on this man's strength.

Then, coming across the bridge from the direction of his control shack, he heard a sound that made his blood run cold. "Daddy, where are you?" His four-year-old son was crossing the bridge to look for him. His first impulse was to cry out to the child, "Run! Run!" But the train was too close; the tiny legs would never make it across the bridge in time. The man almost left his lever to run and snatch up his son and carry him to safety.

But he realized that he could not get back to the lever. Either the people on the train or his little son must die. He took a moment to make his decision. The train sped safely and swiftly on its way, and no one aboard was

even aware of the tiny broken body thrown mercilessly into the river by the onrushing train. Nor were they aware of the pitiful figure of the sobbing man, still clinging tightly to the locking lever long after the train had passed.

They did not see him walking home more slowly than he had ever walked: to tell his wife how their son had brutally died.



### **EVERYBODY CAN BE GREAT.**

**Because anybody can serve.**

**You don't have to have a  
college degree to serve ...**

**You don't have to know about  
Plato and Aristotle to serve ...**

**You don't have to know Einstein's  
theory of relativity to serve ...**

**You only need a heart full of grace.  
A soul generated by Love.**

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**



## The Circus

Once when I was a teenager, my father and I were standing in line to buy tickets for the circus. Finally, there was only one family between us and the ticket counter. This family made a big impression on me. There were eight children, all probably under the age of 12. You could tell they didn't have a lot of money. Their clothes were not expensive, but they were clean. The children were well-behaved, all of them standing in line, two-by-two behind their parents, holding hands. They were excitedly jabbering about the clowns, elephants and other acts they would see that night. One could sense they had never been to the circus before. It promised to be a highlight of their young lives.

The father and mother were at the head of the pack standing proud as could be. The mother was holding her husband's hand, looking up at him as if to say, "You're my knight in shining armor." He was smiling and basking in pride, looking at her as if to reply, "You got that right."

The ticket lady asked the father how many tickets he wanted. He proudly responded, "Please let me buy eight children's tickets and two adult tickets so I can take my family to the circus."

The ticket lady quoted the price.

The man's wife let go of his hand, her head dropped, the man's lip began to quiver. The father leaned a little closer and asked, "How much did you say?"

The ticket lady again quoted the price.

The man didn't have enough money.

How was he supposed to turn and tell his eight kids that he didn't have enough money to take them to the circus?

Seeing what was going on, my dad put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a \$20 bill and dropped it on the ground. (We were not wealthy in any sense of the word!) My father reached down, picked up the bill, tapped the man on the shoulder and said, "Excuse me, sir, and this fell out of your pocket."

The man knew what was going on. He wasn't begging for a handout but certainly appreciated the help in a desperate, heart-breaking, embarrassing situation. He looked straight into my dad's eyes, took my dad's hand in both of his, squeezed tightly onto the \$20 bill, and with his lip quivering and a tear streaming down his cheek, he replied, "Thank you, thank you, sir. This really means a lot to me and my family."

My father and I went back to our car and drove home. We didn't go to the circus that night, but we didn't go without.



## The Fire

A couple, whom we shall call John and Mary, had a nice home and two lovely children, a boy and a girl. John had a good job and had just been asked to go on a business trip to another city and would be gone for several days. It was decided that Mary needed an outing and would go along too. They hired a reliable woman to care for the children and made the trip, returning home a little earlier than they had planned.

As they drove into their home town feeling glad to be back, they noticed smoke, and they went off their usual route to see what it was. They found a home in flames. Mary said, "Oh well it isn't our fire, let's go home."

But John drove closer and exclaimed, "That home belongs to Fred Jones who works at the plant. He wouldn't be off work yet, maybe there is something we could do." "It has nothing to do with us." Protested Mary. "You have your good clothes on lets not get any closer."

But John drove up and stopped and they were both horror stricken to see the whole house in flames. A woman on the lawn was in hysterics screaming, "The children! Get the children!" John grabbed her by the shoulder saying, "Get a hold of yourself and tell us where the children are!" "In the basement," sobbed the woman, "down the hall and to the left."

In spite of Mary's protests John grabbed the water hose and soaked his clothes, put his wet handkerchief on his head and bolted for the basement which was full of smoke and scorching hot. He found the door and grabbed two children, holding one under each arm like the football player he was. As he left he could hear some more whimpering. He delivered the two badly frightened and nearly suffocated children into waiting arms and filled his lungs with fresh air and started back asking how many more children were down there. They told him two more and Mary grabbed his arm and screamed, "John! Don't go back! It's suicide! That house will cave in any second!"

But he shook her off and went back by feeling his way down the smoke filled hallway and into the room. It seemed an eternity before he found both children and started back. They were all three coughing and he stooped low to get what available air he could. As he stumbled up the endless steps the thought went through his mind that there was something strangely familiar about the little bodies clinging to him, and at last when they came out into the sunlight and fresh air, he found that he had just rescued his own children.

The baby-sitter had left them at this home while she did some shopping.



**We make a living by what we get,  
We make a life by what we give.**

**Winston Churchill**





## God's Power in Action

God has a way of allowing us to be in the right place at the right time.

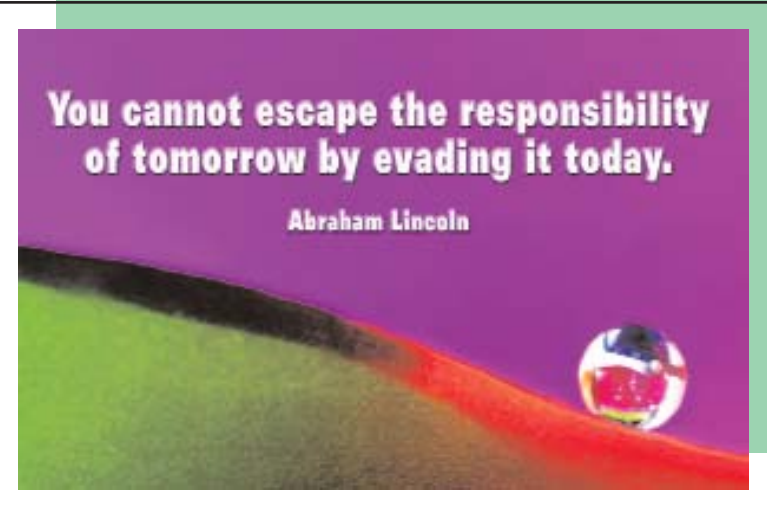
I was walking down a dimly lit street late one evening when I heard muffled screams coming from behind a clump of bushes. Alarmed, I slowed down to listen, and panicked when I realized that what I was hearing were the unmistakable sounds of a struggle: heavy grunting, frantic scuffling, and tearing of fabric.

Only yards from where I stood, a woman was being attacked. Should I get involved? I was frightened for my own safety, and cursed myself for having suddenly decided to take a new route home that night. What if I became another statistic? Shouldn't I just run to the nearest phone and call the police?

Although it seemed an eternity, the deliberations in my head had taken only seconds, but already the girl's cries were growing weaker. I knew I had to act fast. How could I walk away from this? No, I finally resolved, I could not turn my back on the fate of this unknown woman, even if it meant risking my own life.

I am not a brave man, nor am I athletic. I don't know where I found the moral courage and physical strength -- but once I had finally resolved to help the girl, I became strangely transformed. I ran behind the bushes and pulled the assailant off the woman. Grappling, we fell to the ground, where we wrestled for a few minutes until the attacker jumped up and escaped.

Panting hard, I scrambled upright and approached the girl, who was crouched behind a tree, sobbing. In the darkness, I could barely see her outline, but I could certainly sense her trembling shock. Not wanting to frighten her further, I at first spoke to her from a distance. "It's okay," I said soothingly. "The man ran away. You're safe now." There was a long pause and then I heard the words, uttered in wonder, in amazement. "Dad, is that you?" And then, from behind the tree, out stepped my youngest daughter, Katherine.



You cannot escape the responsibility  
of tomorrow by evading it today.

Abraham Lincoln

## He Needed Me

A nurse escorted a tired, anxious young man to the bed side of an elderly man. "Your son is here," she whispered to the patient. She had to repeat the words several times before the patient's eyes opened. He was heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack and he dimly saw the young man standing outside the oxygen tent.

He reached out his hand and the young man tightly wrapped his fingers around it, squeezing a message of encouragement. The nurse brought a chair next to the bedside. All through the night the young man sat holding the old man's hand, and offering gentle words of hope. The dying man said nothing as he held tightly to his son.

As dawn approached, the patient died. The young man placed on the bed the lifeless hand he had been holding, and then he went to notify the nurse.

While the nurse did what was necessary, the young man waited. When she had finished her task, the nurse began to say words of sympathy to the young man.

But he interrupted her. "Who was that man?" He asked.

The startled nurse replied, "I thought he was your father."

"No, he was not my father," he answered. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?" asked the nurse.

He replied, "I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realized he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, I knew how much he needed me..."

## Just a Little Smile

Mark was walking home from school one day when he noticed the boy ahead of him had tripped and dropped all of the books he was carrying, along with two sweaters, a baseball bat, a glove and a small tape recorder. Mark knelt down and helped the boy pick up the scattered articles. Since they were going the same way, he helped to carry part of the burden. As they walked Mark discovered the boy's name was Bill, that he loved video games, baseball and history, and that he was having lots of trouble with his other subjects and that he had just broken up with his girlfriend.

They arrived at Bill's home first and Mark was invited in for a Coke and to watch some television. The afternoon passed pleasantly with a few laughs and some shared small talk, then Mark went home. They continued to see each other around school, had lunch together once or twice, then both graduated from junior high school. They ended up in the same high school where they had brief contacts over the years. Finally the long awaited senior year came and three weeks before graduation, Bill asked Mark if they could talk.

Bill reminded him of the day years ago when they had first met. "Did you ever wonder why I was carrying so many things home that day?" asked Bill. "You see, I cleaned out my locker because I didn't want to leave a mess for anyone else. I had stored away some of my mother's sleeping pills and I was going home to commit suicide. But after we spent some time together talking and laughing, I realized that if I had killed myself, I would have missed that time and so many others that might follow. So you see, Mark, when you picked up those books that day, you did a lot more. You saved my life."

## Pickup in the Rain

One night, at 11:30 PM, an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rain storm.

Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car.

A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxi cab. She seemed to be in a big hurry. She wrote down his address, thanked him, and drove away.

Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read:

Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes but my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others.

Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole.

SMILES ...



ARE CONTAGIOUS!



## A Pillow And a Blanket

A long time ago, a young, wealthy girl was getting ready for bed. She was saying her prayers when she heard a muffled crying coming through her window. A little frightened, she went over to the window and leaned out. Another girl, who seemed to be about her age and homeless, was standing in the alley by the rich girl's house. Her heart went out to the homeless girl, for it was the dead of winter, and the girl had no blanket, only old newspapers someone had thrown out.

The rich girl was suddenly struck with a brilliant idea. She called to the other girl and said, "You there, come to my front door, please."

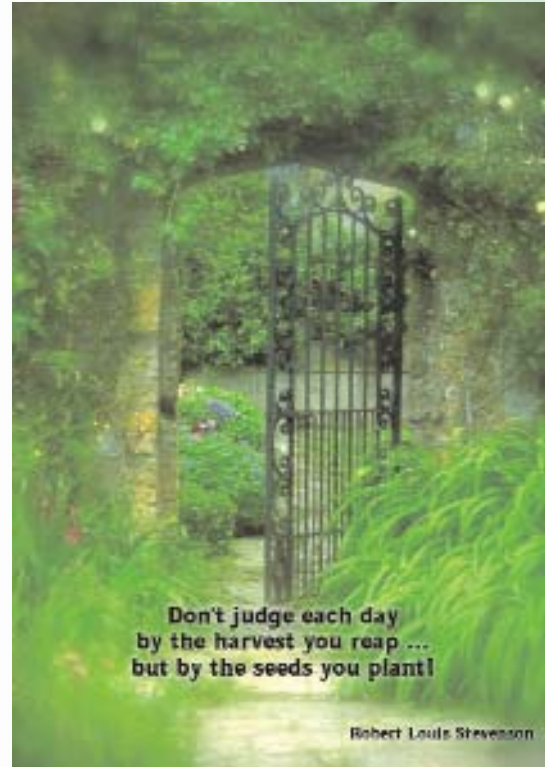
The homeless girl was so startled she could only manage to nod.

As quick as her legs could take her, the young girl ran down the hall to her mother's closet, and picked out an old quilt and a beat up pillow. She had to walk slower down to the front door as to not trip over the quilt which was hanging down, but she made it eventually. Dropping both the articles, she opened the door. Standing there was the homeless girl, looking quite scared. The rich girl smiled warmly and handed both articles to the other girl. Her smile grew wider as she watched the true amazement and happiness alight upon the other girl's face. She went to bed incredibly satisfied.

In mid-morning the next day a knock came to the door. The rich girl flew to the door hoping that it was the other little girl there. She opened the large door and looked outside. It was the other little girl. Her face looked happy, and she smiled. "I suppose you want these back."

The rich little girl opened her mouth to say that she could keep them when another idea popped into her head. "No, I want them back."

The homeless girl's face fell. This was obviously not the answer she had hoped for. She reluctantly laid down the beat up things, and turned to leave when the rich girl yelled, "Wait! Stay right there." She turned in time to see the rich girl running up the stairs and down a long corridor. Deciding whatever the rich little girl was doing wasn't worth waiting



for she started to turn around and walk away. As her foot hit the first step, she felt someone tap her on the shoulder, turning she saw the rich little girl, thrusting a new blanket and pillow at her. "Have these." she said quietly.

These were her personal belongings made of silk and down feathers.

As the two grew older they didn't see each other much, but they were never far from each other's minds. One day, the Rich girl, who was now a Rich woman got a telephone call from someone. A lawyer, saying that she was requested to see him. When she arrived at the office, he told her what had happened. Forty years ago, when she was nine years old, she had helped a little girl in need. That grew into a middle-class woman with a husband and two children. She had recently died and left something for her in her will. "Though," the lawyer said, "it's the most peculiar thing. She left you a pillow and a blanket."



## Winning

His mother told us the story the day after.

Kenneth was in junior high school and was excited and eager about participating in a day of Special Olympics events. While his parents watched expectantly from the stands, he ran and won the first race. He was proud of his ribbon and the cheers from the crowd.

He ran in the second race. Just at the finish line, when he again would have won, he stopped, then stepped off the track. His parents gently questioned him. "Why did you do that, Kenneth? If you had continued running, you would have won another race."

Kenneth innocently replied, "But, Mom, I already have a ribbon. Billy didn't have a ribbon yet."

## Weakness or Strength?

Sometimes your biggest weakness can become your biggest strength. Take, for example, the story of one 10-year-old boy who decided to study judo despite the fact that he had lost his left arm in a devastating car accident.

The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master. The boy was doing well, so he couldn't understand why, after three months of training the master had taught him only one move.

"Sensei," the boy finally said, "Shouldn't I be learning more moves?"

"This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know," the sensei replied.

Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, the boy kept training.



Several months later, the sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third match proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win the match. Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals.

This time, his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened.

"No," the sensei insisted, "Let him continue."

Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. He was the champion.

On the way home, the boy and sensei reviewed every move in each and every match. Then the boy summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind.

"Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?"

"You won for two reasons," the sensei answered. "First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm."

The boy's biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.

## Dig a Little Deeper

There's a story about the California gold rush that tells of two brothers who sold all they had and went prospecting for gold. They discovered a vein of the shining ore, staked a claim, and proceeded to get down to the serious business of getting the gold ore out of the mine. All went well at first, but then a strange thing happened. The vein of gold ore disappeared! They had come to the end of the rainbow, and the pot of gold was no longer there. The brothers continued to pick away, but without success. Finally, they gave up in disgust.

They sold their equipment and claim rights for a few hundred dollars, and took the train back home. Now the man who bought the claim hired an engineer to examine the rock strata of the mine. The engineer advised him to continue digging in the same spot where the former owners had left off. And three feet deeper, the new owner struck gold.

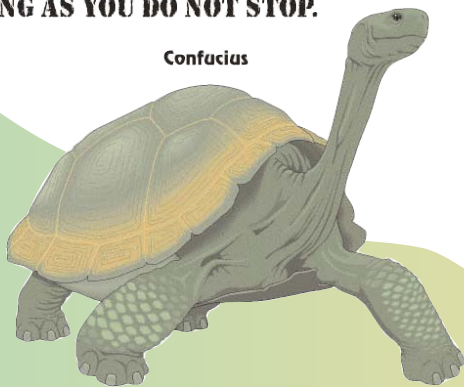
A little more persistence and the two brothers would have been millionaires themselves. That's gold in you too. Do you need to dig three feet farther?

## Don't Give Up

Walt Disney was turned down 302 times before he got financing for his dream of creating the "Happiest Place on Earth". Today, due to his persistence, millions of people have shared 'the joy of Disney'. Colonel Sanders spent two years driving across the United States looking for restaurants to buy his chicken recipe. He was turned down 1,009 times! How successful is Kentucky

**IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW SLOWLY YOU GO,  
SO LONG AS YOU DO NOT STOP.**

Confucius



Fried Chicken today?

Having said this, keep in mind that you must constantly reevaluate your circumstances and the approach you are using to reach your goal. There is no sense in being persistent at something that you are doing incorrectly! Sometimes you have to modify your approach along the way. Every time you do something you learn from it, and therefore find a better way to do it the next time.

## Never Give Up!

There was this museum laid with beautiful marble tiles, with a huge marble statue displayed in the middle of the lobby. Many people came from all over the world just to admire this beautiful marble statue.

One night, the marble tiles started talking to the marble statue. Marble tile: "Marble statue, it's just not fair, it's just not fair! why does everybody from all over the world come all the way here just to step on me while admiring you? Not fair!".

Marble statue: "My dear friend, marble tile. Do you still remember that we were actually from the same cave?"

Marble tile: "Yeah! That's why I feel it is even more unfair. We were born from the same cave and yet we receive different treatment now. Not fair!" he cried again.

Marble statue: "Then, do you still remember the day when the designer tried to work on you, but you resisted the tools?"

Marble tile: "Yes, of course I remember. I hate that guy! How could he use those tools on me, it hurt so badly."

Marble statue: "That's right! He couldn't work on you at all as you resisted being worked on."

Marble tile: "So???"

Marble statue: "When he decided to give up on you and start working on me instead, I knew at once that I would be something different after his efforts. I did not resist his tools, instead I bore all the painful tools he used on me.."

Marble tile: "Mmmmm....."

Marble statue: "My friend, there is a price to everything in life. Since you decided to give up half way, you can't blame anybody who steps on you now."



## Keep On, Keeping On

Colonel Sanders went to more than 1,000 places trying to sell his chicken recipe before he found an interested buyer. The fact that we can buy Kentucky Fried Chicken today attests to his perseverance. Thomas Edison tried almost 10,000 times before he succeeded in creating the electric light. If he had given up, you would be reading this in the dark!

The original business plan for what was to become Federal Express was given a failing grade on Fred Smith's college exam. And, in the early days, their employees would cash their pay checks at retail stores, rather than banks. This meant it would take longer for the money to clear, thereby giving Fed Ex more time to cover their payroll.

Sylvester Stallone had been turned down a thousand times by agents and was down to his last \$600 before he found a company that would produce Rocky. The rest is history! To truly succeed requires a total commitment to

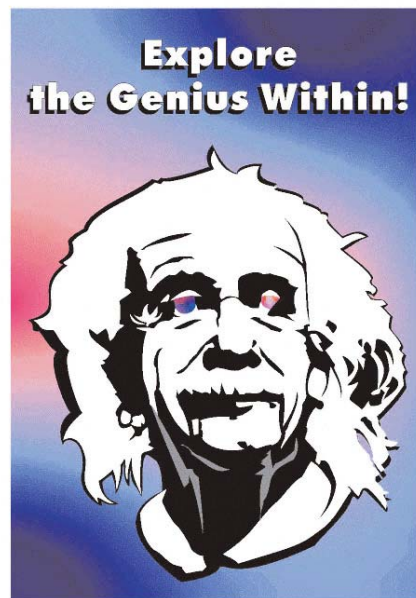
your goal. Too many people make the mistake of quitting just short of success. Keep going no matter what. If you really believe in what you are doing, give it all you've got and don't give up.

You will succeed. There is no such thing as failure. Every action produces an outcome. It may not always be the outcome you are looking for, but it is an outcome nonetheless. If you monitor the results of your actions and keep correcting what is not working, you will eventually produce the outcome you are looking for.

Be Persistent - Ray Kroc, the late founder of McDonalds, put it best when he said: "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common

than unsuccessful men with great talent. Genius will not. Un-rewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not. The world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence, determination and love are omnipotent."

Don't quit before the miracle happens!



## The Chicken

Once upon a time, there was a large mountainside, where an eagle's nest rested. The eagle's nest contained four large eagle eggs. One day an earthquake rocked the mountain causing one of the eggs to roll down the mountain, to a chicken farm, located in the valley below. The chickens knew that they must protect and care for the eagle's egg, so an old hen volunteered to nurture and raise the large egg.

One day, the egg hatched and a beautiful eagle was born. Sadly, however, the eagle was raised to be a chicken. Soon, the eagle believed he was nothing more than a chicken. The eagle loved his home and family, but his spirit cried out for more. While playing a game on the farm one day, the eagle looked

to the skies above and noticed a group of mighty eagles soaring in the skies. "Oh," the eagle cried, "I wish I could soar like those birds." The chickens roared with laughter, "You cannot soar with those birds. You are a chicken and chickens do not soar."

The eagle continued staring, at his real family up above, dreaming that he could be with them. Each time the eagle would let his dreams be known, he was told it couldn't be done. That is what the eagle learned to believe. The eagle, after time, stopped dreaming and continued to live his life like a chicken. Finally, after a long life as a chicken, the eagle passed away.

The moral of the story: You become what you believe you are; so if you ever dream to become an eagle follow your dreams, not the words of a chicken.





## I Can Make It Happen

History abounds with tales of experts who were convinced that the ideas, plans, and projects of others could never be achieved. However, accomplishment came to those who said, "I can make it happen."

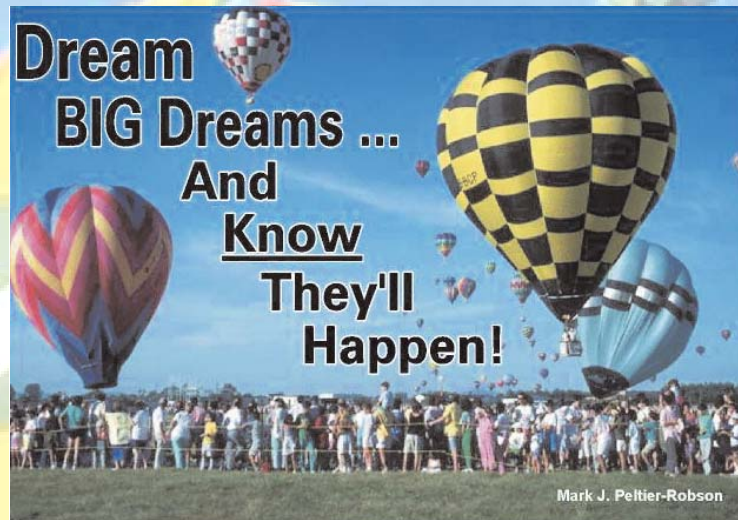
The Italian sculptor Agostino d'Antonio worked diligently on a large piece of marble. Unable to produce his desired masterpiece, he lamented, "I can do nothing with it." Other sculptors also worked this difficult piece of marble, but to no avail. Michelangelo discovered the stone and visualized the possibilities in it. His "I-can-make-it-happen" attitude resulted in one of the world's masterpieces - David.

The experts of Spain concluded that Columbus's plans to discover a new and shorter route to the West Indies was virtually impossible. Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand ignored the report of the experts. "I can make it happen," Columbus persisted. And he did. Everyone knew the world was flat, but not Columbus. The Nina, the Pinta, the Santa Maria, along with Columbus and his small band of followers, sailed to "impossible" new lands and thriving resources.

Even the great Thomas Alva Edison discouraged his friend, Henry Ford, from pursuing his fledgling idea of a motorcar. Convinced of the worthlessness of the idea, Edison invited Ford to come and work for him. Ford remained committed and tirelessly pursued his dream. Although his first attempt resulted in a vehicle without reverse gear, Henry Ford knew he could make it happen. And, of course, he did.

"Forget it," the experts advised Madame Curie. They agreed radium was a scientifically impossible idea. However, Marie Curie insisted, "I can make it happen."

Let's not forget our friends Orville and Wilbur Wright. Journalists, friends, armed forces specialists, and even their father laughed at the idea of an airplane. "What a silly and insane way to spend money. Leave flying to the birds," they jeered. "Sorry," the Wright brothers responded. "We have a dream, and we can make it happen." As a result, a place called Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, became the setting for the launching of their "ridiculous" idea.



Finally, as you read these accounts under the magnificent lighting of your environment, consider the plight of Benjamin Franklin. He was admonished to stop the foolish experimenting with lighting. What an absurdity and waste of time! Why, nothing could outdo the fabulous oil lamp. Thank goodness Franklin knew he could make it happen. You too can make it happen!

## The Mental Chain

Most people are like the circus elephant. Have you ever seen a giant elephant in an indoor arena tied to a little wooden stake. That huge creature can pick up two thousand pounds with its trunk, yet it calmly stays tied. Why?

When that elephant was just a baby, and not very strong, it was tied by a huge chain to an iron stake that could not be moved. Regardless of how hard it tried, it could not break the chain and run free. After a while it just gave up. Later, when it is strong, it never attempts to break free. The "imprint" is permanent. "I can't! I can't!" it says.

There are millions of people who behave like this creature of the circus. They have been bound, tied and told "You'll never make it," so many times they finally call it quits. They may have dreams, but the "imprinting" keeps pulling them back.

Today, eliminate the source of your limitations. When you mentally break free, the boundaries will be removed from your future.

## Busy

Once upon a time a very strong woodcutter asked for a job in a timber merchant, and he got it. The paid was really good and so were the work conditions. For that reason, the woodcutter was determined to do his best.

His boss gave him an axe and showed him the area where he was supposed to work.

The first day, the woodcutter brought 18 trees

"Congratulations," the boss said. "Go on that way!"

Very motivated for the boss's words, the woodcutter tried harder the next day, but he only could bring 15 trees. The third day he tried even harder, but he only could bring 10 trees. Day after day he was bringing less and less trees.

"I must be losing my strength", the woodcutter thought. He went to the boss and apologized, saying that he could not understand what was going on.

"When was the last time you sharpened your axe?" the boss asked.

"Sharpen? I had no time to sharpen my axe. I have been very busy trying to cut trees..."

## Become What You Want to Be

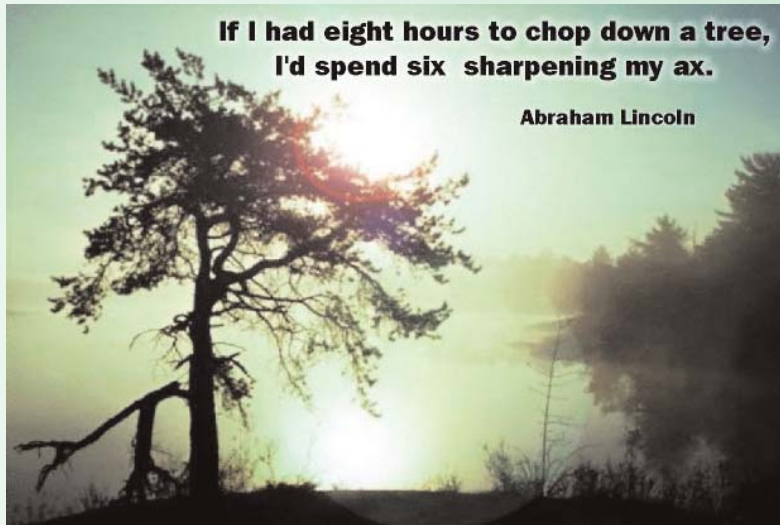
Let me tell you about a little girl who was born into a very poor family in a shack in the Backwoods of Tennessee. She was the 20th of 22 children, prematurely born and frail. Her survival was doubtful. When she was four years old she had double pneumonia and scarlet fever - a deadly combination that left her with a paralyzed and useless left leg. She had to wear an iron leg brace. Yet she was fortunate in having a mother who encouraged her.

Well, this mother told her little girl, who was very bright, that despite the brace and leg, she could do whatever she wanted to do with her life. She told her that all she needed to do was to have faith, persistence, courage and indomitable spirit.

So at nine years of age, the little girl removed the leg brace, and she took the step the doctors told her she would never take normally. In four

**If I had eight hours to chop down a tree,  
I'd spend six sharpening my ax.**

**Abraham Lincoln**



years, she developed a rhythmic stride, which was a medical wonder. Then this girl got the notion, the incredible notion that she would like to be the world's greatest woman runner. Now, what could she mean - be a runner with a leg like that?

At age 13, she entered a race. She came in last - way, way last. She entered every race in high school, and in every race she came in last. Everyone begged her quit! However, one day, she came in next to last. And then there came a day when she won a race. From then on, Wilma Rudolph won every race that she entered.

Wilma went to Tennessee State University, where she met a coach named Ed Temple. Coach Temple saw the indomitable spirit of the girl, that she was a believer and that she had great natural talent. He trained her so well that she went to the Olympic Games.

There she was pitted against the greatest woman runner of the day, a German girl named Jutta Heine. Nobody had ever beaten Jutta. But in the 100-meter dash, Wilma Rudolph won. She beat Jutta again in the 200-meters. Now Wilma had two Olympic gold medals.

Finally came the 400-meter relay. It would be Wilma against Jutta once again. The first two runners on Wilma's team made perfect handoffs with the baton. But when the third runner handed the baton to Wilma, she was so excited she dropped it, and Wilma saw Jutta taking off down the track. It was impossible that anybody could catch this fleet and nimble girl. But Wilma did just that! Wilma Rudolph had earned three Olympic gold medals.





## Time Management Parable

One day, an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said,

"Okay, time for a quiz" and he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouth mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. He also produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar.

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class yelled, "Yes."

The time management expert replied, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. He dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. He then asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?"

By this time the class was on to him. "Probably not," one of them answered.

"Good!" he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He

started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?" "No!" the class shouted.

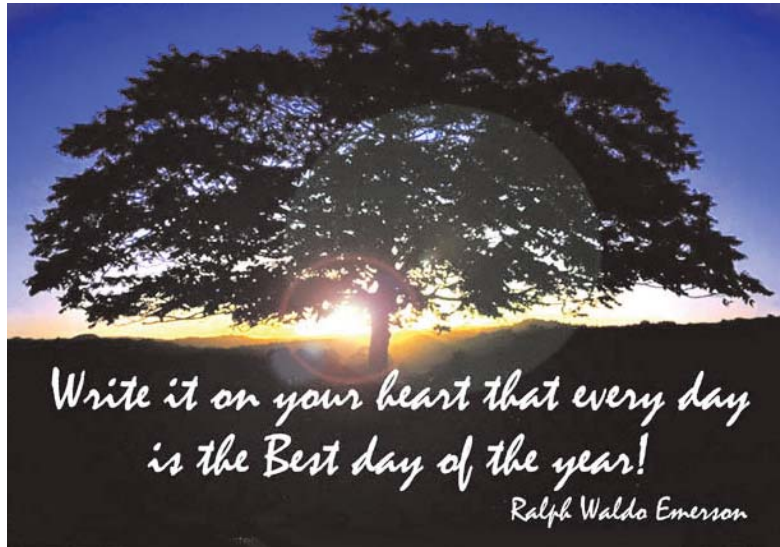
Once again he said, "Good." Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?"

One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."

What are the 'big rocks' in your life, time with your loved ones, your faith, your education, your dreams, a worthy cause, teaching or mentoring others? Remember to put these big rocks in first or you'll never get them in at all. So, tonight, or in

the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the 'big rocks' in my life? Then, put those in your jar first.





## Sparky - Charlie Brown

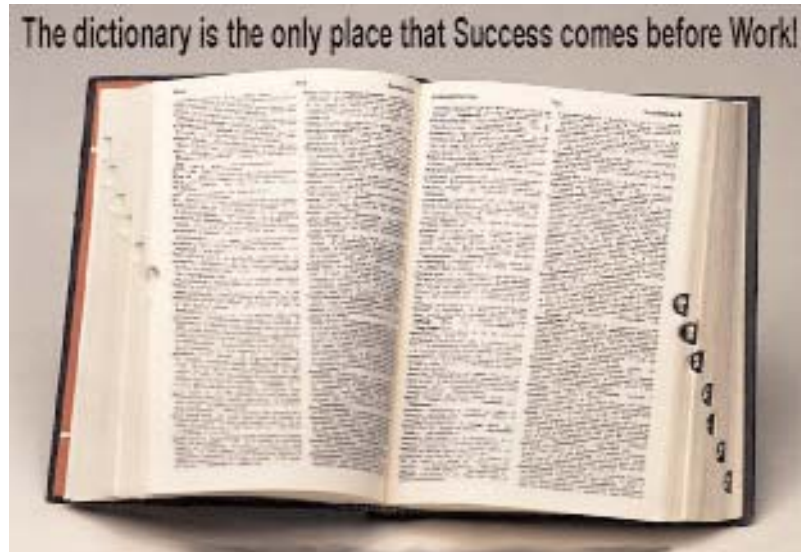
A story is told about a boy named Sparky. For Sparky school was all but impossible. He failed every subject in the eighth grade. He flunked physics in high school. Receiving a flat zero in the course, he distinguished himself as the worst physics student in the school's history. Sparky also flunked Latin, algebra and English. He didn't do much better in sports. Although he did manage to make the school's golf team, he promptly lost the only important match of the season. There was a consolation match; he lost that, too.

Throughout his youth Sparky was awkward socially. He was not actually disliked by the other students; no one cared that much. He was astonished if a classmate ever said hello to him outside of school hours. There's no way to tell how he might have done at dating. Sparky never once asked a girl to go out in high school. He was too afraid of being turned down.

Sparky was a loser. He, his classmates... everyone knew it. So he rolled with it. Sparky had made up his mind early in life that if things were meant to work out, they would. Otherwise he would content himself with what appeared to be his inevitable mediocrity.

However, one thing was important to Sparky - drawing. He was proud of his artwork. Of course, no one else appreciated it. In his senior year of high school, he submitted some cartoons to the editors of the yearbook. They were turned down. Despite this particularly painful rejection, Sparky was so convinced of his ability that he decided to become a professional artist.

Upon graduating from high school, he wrote a letter to Walt Disney Studios. He was told to send some samples of his artwork, and the subject matter for a cartoon was suggested. Sparky drew the proposed cartoon. He spent a great deal of time on it and on all the other drawings he submitted.



Finally the reply came from Disney Studios; he had been rejected once again. Another loss for the loser.

So Sparky decided to write his own autobiography in cartoons. He described his childhood self - a little-boy loser and chronic underachiever. The cartoon character would soon become famous worldwide. For Sparky, the boy who had failed every subject in the eight grade and whose work was rejected again and again, was Charles Schulz. He created the "Peanuts" comic strip and the little cartoons boy whose kite would never fly and who never succeeded in kicking the football - Charlie Brown.

### The Ants and the Grasshopper

The Ants were spending a fine winter's day drying grain collected in the summertime. A Grasshopper, perishing with famine, passed by and earnestly begged for a little food. The Ants inquired of him, "Why did you not treasure up food during the summer?" He replied, "I had not leisure enough. I passed the days in singing." They then said in derision: "If you were foolish enough to sing all the summer, you must dance supperless to bed in the winter."



## The Rebellion Against the Stomach

Once a man had a dream in which his hands and feet and mouth and brain all began to rebel against his stomach.

"You good-for-nothing sluggard!" the hands said. "We work all day long, sawing and hammering and lifting and carrying. By evening we're covered with blisters and scratches, and our joints ache, and we're covered with dirt. And meanwhile you just sit there, hogging all the food."

"We agree!" cried the feet. "Think how sore we get, walking back and forth all day long. And you just stuff yourself full, you greedy pig, so that you're that much heavier to carry about."

"That's right!" whined the mouth. "Where do you think all that food you love comes from? I'm the one who has to chew it all up, and as soon as I'm finished you suck it all down for yourself. Do you call that fair?"

"And what about me?" called the brain. "Do you think it's easy being up here, having to think about where your next meal is going to come from? And yet I get nothing at all for my pains."

And one by one the parts of the body joined the complaint against the stomach, which didn't say anything at all.

"I have an idea," the brain finally announced. "Let's all rebel against the lazy belly, and stop working for it."

"Superb idea!" all the other members and organs agreed. "We'll teach you how impor-

tant we are, you pig. Then maybe you'll do a little work of your own."

So they all stopped working. The hands refused to do lifting and carrying. The feet refused to walk. The mouth promised not to chew or swallow a single bite. And the brain swore it wouldn't come up with any more bright ideas. At first the stomach growled a bit, as it always did when it was hungry. But after a while it was quiet.

Then, to the dreaming man's surprise, he found he could not walk. He could not grasp anything in his hand. He could not even open his mouth. And he suddenly began to feel rather ill.

The dream seemed to go on for several days. As each day passed, the man felt worse and worse. "This rebellion had better not last much longer," he thought to himself, "or I'll starve."

Meanwhile, the hands and feet and mouth and brain just lay there, getting weaker and weaker. At first they roused themselves just enough to taunt the stomach every once in a while, but before long they didn't even have the energy for that.

Finally the man heard a faint voice coming from the direction of his feet.

"It could be that we were wrong," they were saying. "We suppose the stomach might have been working in his own way all along."

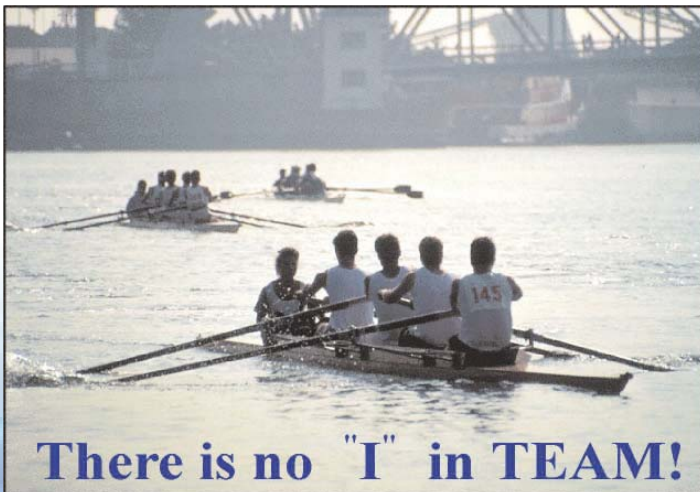
"I was just thinking the same thing," murmured the brain. "It's true that he's been getting all the food. But it seems he's been sending most of it right back to us."

"We might as well admit our error," the mouth said. "The stomach has just as much work to do as the hands and feet and brain and teeth."

"Then let's get back to work," they cried together. And at that the man woke up.

To his relief, he discovered his feet could walk again. His hands could grasp, his mouth could chew, and his brain could now think clearly. He began to feel much better.

"Well, there's a lesson for me," he thought as he filled his stomach at breakfast. "Either we all work together, or nothing works at all."



## Blurred Vision

A businessman was highly critical of his competitors' storefront windows. "Why, they are the dirtiest windows in town," he claimed. Fellow business people grew tired of the man's continual criticism and nitpicking comments about the windows. One day over coffee, the businessman carried the subject just too far.

Before leaving, a fellow store owner suggested the man get his own windows washed. He followed the advice, and the next day at coffee, he exclaimed, "I can't believe it. As soon as I washed my windows, my competitor must have cleaned his too. You should see them shine."

Confucius once declared, "Don't complain about the snow on your neighbor's roof when your own doorstep is unclean."

## Don't Change the World

Once upon a time, there was a king who ruled a prosperous country. One day, he went for a trip to some distant areas of his country. When he was back to his palace, he complained that his feet were very painful, because it was the first time that he went for such a long trip, and the road that he went through was very rough and stony. He then ordered his people to cover every road of the entire country with leather. Definitely, this would need thousands of cows' skin, and would cost a huge amount of money.

Then one of his wise servants dared himself to tell the king, "Why do you have to spend that unnecessary amount of money? Why don't you just cut a little piece of leather to cover your feet?"

The king was surprised, but he later agreed to his suggestion, to make a "shoe" for himself.

There is actually a valuable lesson of life in this story: to make this world a happy place to live, you better change yourself - your heart; and not the world.

## The Father and his sons

A father had a family of sons who were perpetually quarreling among themselves. When he failed to heal their disputes by his exhortations, he determined to give them a practical illustration of the evils of disunion; and for this purpose he one day told them to bring him a bundle of sticks. When they had done so, he placed the faggot into the hands of each of them in succession, and ordered them to break it in pieces. They tried with all their strength, and were not able to do it. He next opened the faggot, took the sticks separately, one by one, and

again put them into his sons' hands, upon which they broke them easily. He then addressed them in these words: "My sons, if you are of one mind, and unite to assist each other, you will be as this faggot, uninjured by all the attempts of your enemies; but if you are divided among yourselves, you will be broken as easily as these sticks."

## The House of 1000 Mirrors

Long ago in a small, far away village, there was place known as the House of 1000 Mirrors. A small, happy little dog learned of this place and decided to visit. When he arrived, he bounced happily up the stairs to the doorway of the house. He looked through the doorway with his ears lifted high and his tail wagging as fast as it could. To his great surprise, he found himself staring at 1000 other happy little dogs with their tails wagging just as fast as his. He smiled a great smile, and was answered with 1000 great smiles just as warm and friendly. As he left the House, he thought to himself, "This is a wonderful place. I will come back and visit it often."

In this same village, another little dog, who was not quite as happy as the first one, decided to visit the house. He slowly climbed the stairs and hung his head low as he looked into the door. When he saw the 1000 unfriendly looking dogs staring back at him, he growled at them and was horrified to see 1000 little dogs growling back at him. As he left, he thought to himself, "That is a horrible place, and I will never go back there again."

All the faces in the world are mirrors. What kind of reflections do you see in the faces of the people you meet?

## SEE YOURSELF



**FOR WHO YOU ARE!**





## Abraham Lincoln Didn't Quit

Probably the greatest example of persistence is Abraham Lincoln. If you want to learn about somebody who didn't quit, look no further. Born into poverty, Lincoln was faced with defeat throughout his life. He lost eight elections, twice failed in business and suffered a nervous breakdown. He could have quit many times - but he didn't and because he didn't quit, he became one of the greatest presidents in the history of our country. Lincoln was a champion and he never gave up.

Here is a sketch of Lincoln's road to the White House:

1816: His family was forced out of their home. He had to work to support them.

1818: His mother died.

1831: Failed in business.

1832: Ran for state legislature - lost.

1832: Also lost his job - wanted to go to law school but couldn't get in.

1833: Borrowed some money from a friend to begin a business and by the end of the year he was bankrupt. He spent the next 17 years of his life paying off this debt.

1834: Ran for state legislature again - won.

1835: Was engaged to be married, sweetheart died and his heart was broken.

1836: Had a total nervous breakdown and was in bed for six months.

1838: Sought to become speaker of the state legislature - defeated.

1840: Sought to become elector - defeated.

1843: Ran for Congress - lost.

1846: Ran for Congress again - this time he won - went to Washington and did a good job.

1848: Ran for re-election to Congress - lost.

1849: Sought the job of land officer in his home state - rejected.

1854: Ran for Senate of the United States - lost.

1856: Sought the Vice-Presidential nomination at his party's national convention - got less than 100 votes.

1858: Ran for U.S. Senate again - again he lost.

1860: Elected president of the United States.

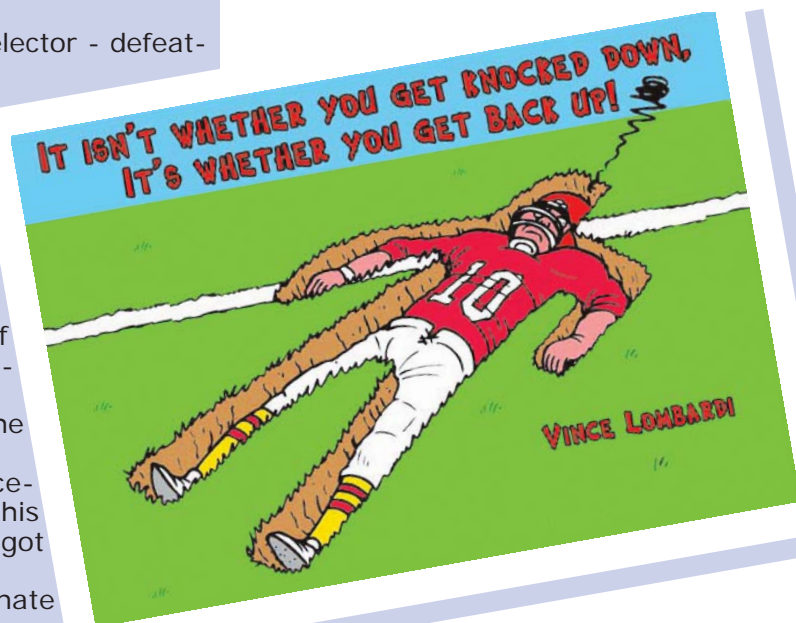
## Great Value in Disaster

Thomas Edison's laboratory was virtually destroyed by fire in December 1914. Although the damage exceeded \$2 million, the buildings were only insured for \$238,000 because they were made of concrete and thought to be fireproof. Much of Edison's life's work went up in spectacular flames that December night.

At the height of the fire, Edison's 24-year-old son, Charles, frantically searched for his father among the smoke and debris. He finally found him, calmly watching the scene, his face glowing in the reflection, his white hair blowing in the wind.

"My heart ached for him," said Charles. "He was 67-no longer a young man-and everything was going up in flames. When he saw me, he shouted, 'Charles, where's your mother?' When I told him I didn't know, he said, 'Find her. Bring her here. She will never see anything like this as long as she lives.'"

The next morning, Edison looked at the ruins and said, "There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start a new." Three weeks after the fire Edison managed to deliver his first phonograph.



## Bag Lady

She used to sleep in the Fifth Street Post Office. I could smell her before I rounded the entrance to where she slept, standing up, by the public phones. I smelled the urine that seeped through the layers of her dirty clothing and the decay from her nearly toothless mouth. If she was not asleep, she mumbled incoherently.

Now they close the post office at six to keep the homeless out, so she curls up on the sidewalk, talking to herself, her mouth flapping open as though unhinged, her smells diminished by the soft breeze.

One Thanksgiving we had so much food left over, I packed it up, excused myself from the others and drove over to Fifth Street.

It was a frigid night. Leaves were swirling around the streets and hardly anyone was out, all but a few of the luckless in some warm home or shelter. But I knew I would find her.

She was dressed as she always was, even in summer: The warm woolly layers concealing her old, bent body. Her bony hands clutched the precious shopping cart. She was squatting against a wire fence in front of the playground next to the post office. "Why didn't she choose some place more protected from the wind?" I thought, and assumed she was so crazy she did not have the sense to huddle in a doorway.

I pulled my shiny car to the curb, rolled down the window and said, "Mother . . . would you . . ." and was shocked at the word "Mother." But she was . . . is ... in some way I cannot grasp.

I said, again, "Mother, I've brought you some food. Would you like some turkey and stuffing and apple pie?"

At this the old woman looked at me and said quite clearly and distinctly, her two loose lower teeth wobbling as she spoke, "Oh, thank you very much, but I'm quite full now. Why don't you take it to someone who really needs it?" Her words were clear, her manners gracious. Then I was dismissed: Her head sank into her rags again.

## Start With Yourself

The following words were written on the tomb of an Anglican Bishop in the Crypts of Westminster Abbey:

When I was young and free and my imagination had no limits, I dreamed of changing the world. As I grew older and wiser, I discovered the world would not change, so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country.

But it, too, seemed immovable.

As I grew into my twilight years, in one last desperate attempt, I settled for changing only my family, those closest to me, but alas, they would have none of it.

And now as I lie on my deathbed, I suddenly realize: If I had only changed my self first, then by example I would have changed my family.

From their inspiration and encouragement, I would then have been able to better my country and, who knows, I may have even changed the world.



## Rescue at Sea

Years ago, in a small fishing village in Holland, a young boy taught the world about the rewards of unselfish service. Because the entire village revolved around the fishing industry, a volunteer rescue team was needed in cases of emergency. One night the winds raged, the clouds burst and a gale force storm capsized a fishing boat at sea. Stranded and in trouble, the crew sent out the S.O.S. The captain of the rescue rowboat team sounded the alarm and the villagers assembled in the town square overlooking the bay. While the team launched their rowboat and fought their way through the wild waves, the villagers waited restlessly on the beach, holding lanterns to light the way back.

An hour later, the rescue boat reappeared through the fog and the cheering villagers ran to greet them. Falling exhausted on the sand, the volunteers reported that the rescue boat could not hold any more passengers and they had to leave one man behind. Even one more passenger would have surely capsized the rescue boat and all would have been lost.

Frantically, the captain called for another volunteer team to go after the lone survivor. Sixteen-year-old Hans stepped forward. His mother grabbed his arm, pleading, "Please don't go. Your father died in a shipwreck 10 years ago and your older brother, Paul, has been lost at sea for three weeks. Hans, you are all I have left."

Hans replied, "Mother, I have to go. What if everyone said, 'I can't go, let someone else do it'? Mother, this time I have to do my duty. When the call for service comes, we all need to take our turn and do our part." Hans kissed his mother, joined the team and disappeared into the night.

Another hour passed, which seemed to Hans' mother like an eternity. Finally, the rescue boat darted through the fog with Hans standing up in the bow. Cupping his hands, the captain called, "Did you find the lost man?" Barely able to contain himself, Hans excitedly yelled back, "Yes, we found him. Tell my mother it's my older brother, Paul!"

## A Life Worth Saving

A man risked his life by swimming through the treacherous riptide to save a youngster being swept out to sea. After the child recovered from the harrowing experience, he said to the man, "Thank you for saving my life."

The man looked into the boy's eyes and said, "That's okay, kid. Just make sure your life was worth saving."

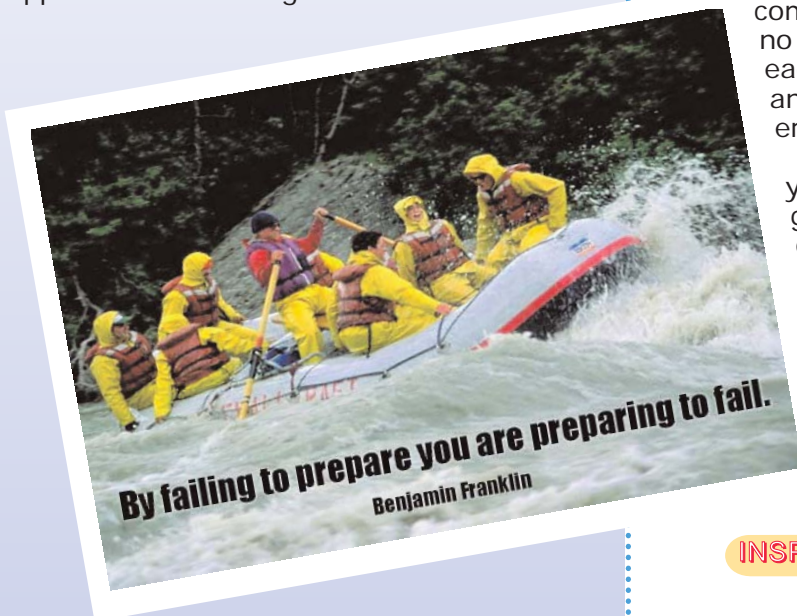
## Two Brothers

Two brothers worked together on the family farm. One was married and had a large family. The other was single. At the day's end, the brothers shared everything equally, produce and profit.

Then one day the single brother said to himself, "It's not right that we should share equally the produce and the profit. I'm alone and my needs are simple." So each night he took a sack of grain from his bin and crept across the field between their houses, dumping it into his brother's bin.

Meanwhile, the married brother said to himself, "It's not right that we should share the produce and the profit equally. After all, I'm married and I have my wife and children who can look after me in years to come. My brother has no one, and no one to take care of his future." So each night he took a sack of grain and dumped it into his single brother's bin.

Both men were puzzled for years because their supply of grain never dwindled. Then one dark night the two brothers bumped into each other. Slowly it dawned on them what was happening. They dropped their sacks and embraced one another.



**By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.**  
Benjamin Franklin



## Difference

It was a sunny Saturday afternoon in Oklahoma City. My friend and proud father Bobby Lewis was taking his two little boys to play miniature golf. He walked up to the fellow at the ticket counter and said, "How much is it to get in?"

The young man replied, "\$3.00 for you and \$3.00 for any kid who is older than six. We let them in free if they are six or younger. How old are they?"

Bobby replied, "The lawyer's three and the doctor is seven, so I guess I owe you \$6.00."

The man at the ticket counter said, "Hey, Mister, did you just win the lottery or something? You could have saved yourself three bucks. You could have told me that the older one was six; I wouldn't have known the difference." Bobby replied, "Yes, that may be true, but the kids would have known the difference."

## Puppies For Sale

A storeowner was tacking a sign above his door that read "Puppies For Sale." Signs like that have a way of attracting small children, and sure enough, a little boy appeared under the storeowner's sign. "How much are you going to sell the puppies for?" he asked.

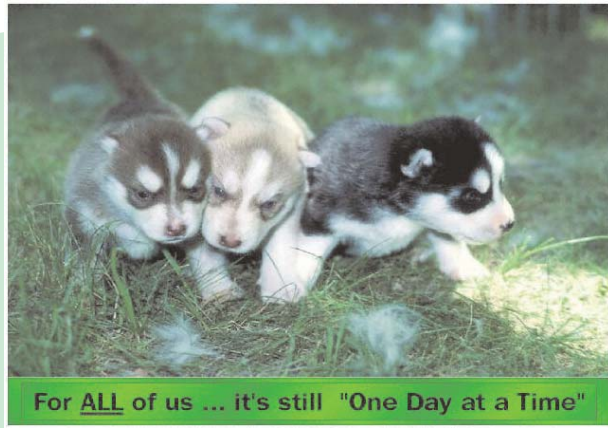
The storeowner replied, "Anywhere from \$30 to \$50."

The little boy reached in his pocket and pulled out some change. "I have \$2.37," he said. "Can I please look at them?"

The storeowner smiled and whistled and out of the kennel came Lady, who ran down the aisle of his store followed by five teeny, tiny balls of fur. One puppy was lagging considerably behind. Immediately the little boy singled out the lagging, limping puppy and said, "What's wrong with that little dog?"

The storeowner explained that the veterinarian had examined the little puppy and had discovered it didn't have a hip socket. It would always limp. It would always be lame. The little boy became excited. "That is the little puppy that I want to buy."

The storeowner said, "No, you don't want to buy that little dog. If you really want him, I'll just give him to you." The little boy got quite upset. He looked straight into the storeowner's eyes, pointing his finger, and said, "I don't want you to give him to me.



For ALL of us ... it's still "One Day at a Time"

That little dog is worth every bit as much as all the other dogs and I'll pay full price. In fact, I'll give you \$2.37 now, and 50 cents a month until I have him paid for."

The storeowner countered, "You really don't want to buy this little dog. He is never going to be able to run and jump and play with you like the other puppies."

To this, the little boy reached down and rolled up his pant leg to reveal a badly twisted, crippled left leg supported by a big metal brace. He looked up at the storeowner and softly replied, "Well, I don't run so well myself, and the little puppy will need someone who understands!"

## What's Really Important

A few years ago at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with the relish to run the race to the finish and win.

All, that is, except one boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and paused. Then they all turned around and went back. Every one of them. One girl with Down's syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line.

Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for 10 minutes.



## The Stonecutter

There was once a stonecutter who was dissatisfied with himself and with his position in life.

One day, he passed a wealthy merchant's house and through the open gateway saw many fine possessions and important visitors. "How powerful that merchant must be!" thought the stonecutter. He became very envious, and wished that he could be like the merchant. Then he would no longer have to live the life of a mere stonecutter.

To his great surprise, he suddenly became the merchant, enjoying more luxuries and power than he had ever dreamed of, envied and detested by those less wealthy than himself. But soon a high official passed by, carried in a sedan chair, accompanied by attendants, and escorted by soldiers beating gongs. Everyone, no matter how wealthy, had to bow low before the procession. "How powerful that official is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be a high official!"

Then he became the high official, carried everywhere in his embroidered sedan chair, feared and hated by the people all around, who had to bow down before him as he passed. It was a hot summer day, and the official felt very uncomfortable in the sticky sedan chair. He looked up at the sun. It shone proudly in the sky, unaffected by his presence. "How powerful the sun is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be the sun!"

Then he became the sun, shining fiercely down on everyone, scorching the fields, cursed by the farmers and laborers. But a huge black cloud moved between him and the earth, so that his light could no longer shine on everything below. "How powerful that storm cloud is!" he thought. "I wish that

I could be a cloud!"

Then he became the cloud, flooding the fields and villages, shouted at by everyone. But soon he found that he was being pushed away by some great force, and realized that it was the wind. "How powerful it is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be the wind!"

Then he became the wind, blowing tiles off the roofs of houses, uprooting trees, hated and feared by all below him. But after a while, he ran up against something that would not move, no matter how forcefully he blew against it—a huge, towering stone. "How powerful that stone is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be a stone!"

Then he became the stone, more powerful than anything else on earth. But as he stood there, he heard the sound of a hammer pounding a chisel into the solid rock and felt himself being changed. "What could be more powerful than I, the stone?" he thought. He looked down and saw far below him the figure of a stonecutter.

## My Father When I Was ...

4 years old: My daddy can do anything.

5 years old: My daddy knows a whole lot.

6 years old: My dad is smarter than your dad.

8 years old: My dad doesn't know exactly everything.

10 years old: In the olden days when my dad grew up, things were sure different.

12 years old: Oh, well, naturally, father doesn't know anything about that. He is too old to remember his childhood.

14 years old: Don't pay any attention to my father. He is so old-fashioned!

21 years old: Him? My Lord, he's hopelessly out-of-date.

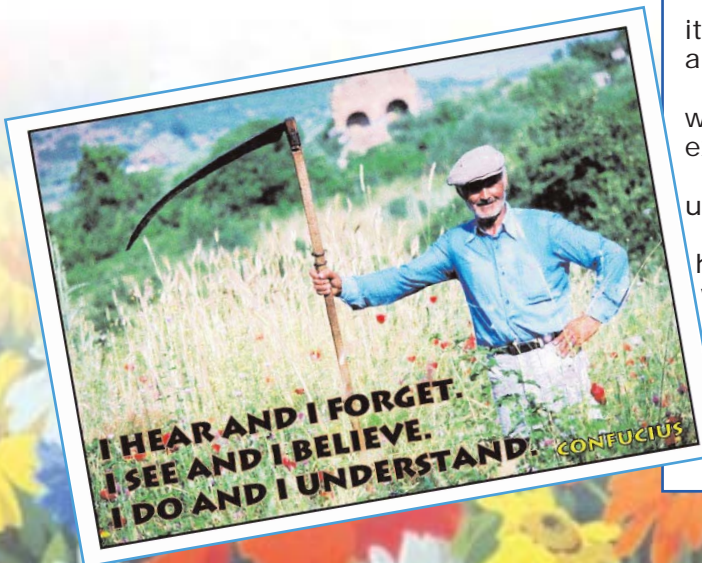
25 years old: Dad knows a little bit about it, but then he should because he has been around so long.

30 years old: Maybe we should ask Dad what he thinks. After all, he's had a lot of experience.

35 years old: I'm not doing a single thing until I talk to Dad.

40 years old: I wonder how Dad would have handled it. He was so wise and had a world of experience.

50 years old: I'd give anything if Dad were here now so I could talk this over with him. Too bad I didn't appreciate how smart he was. I could have learned a lot from him.





## The Window

There were once two men, both seriously ill, in the same small room of a great hospital. Quite a small room, it had one window looking out on the world. One of the men, as part of his treatment, was allowed to sit up in bed for an hour in the afternoon (something to do with draining the fluid from his lungs). His bed was next to the window. But the other man had to spend all his time flat on his back.

Every afternoon when the man next to the window was propped up for his hour, he would pass the time by describing what he could see outside. The window apparently overlooked a park where there was a lake. There were ducks and swans in the lake, and children came to throw them bread and sail model boats. Young lovers walked hand in hand beneath the trees, and there were flowers and stretches of grass, games of Softball. And at the back, behind the fringe of trees, was a fine view of the city skyline.

The man on his back would listen to the other man describe all of this, enjoying every minute. He heard how a child nearly fell into the lake, and how beautiful the girls were in their summer dresses. His friend's descriptions eventually made him feel he could almost see what was happening outside. Then one fine afternoon, the thought struck him: Why should the man next to the window have all the pleasure of seeing what was going on? Why shouldn't he get the chance? He felt ashamed, but the more he tried not to think like that, the worse he wanted a change. He'd do anything! One night as he stared at the ceiling, the other man suddenly woke up, coughing and choking, his hands groping for the button that would bring the nurse running. But the man watched without

moving-even when the sound of breathing stopped. In the morning, the nurse found the other man dead, and quietly took his body away.

As soon as it seemed decent, the man asked if he could be switched to the bed next to the window. So they moved him, tucked him in, and made him quite comfortable. The minute they left, he propped himself up on one elbow, painfully and laboriously, and looked out the window. It faced a blank wall.

## A Sense of a Goose

Next fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in "V" formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily, because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those people who are headed the same way we are. When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.

It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs, whether with people or with geese flying south.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

What messages do we give when we honk from behind?

Finally-and this is important-when a goose gets sick or is wounded by gunshot, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies; and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.

