

FAMOUS QUOTES

QUOTATIONS ON LIFE, LOVE AND MOTIVATION WITH QUESTIONS TO PONDER



**Inspiration
From
Great
Thinkers
And
Authors**

Dee Cohen, LCSW

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Famous Quotes

Quotes from Western and Eastern Thinkers on Relationships, Work, Self-Growth and Truth

PLUS: Question to Ponder on each topic



by Dee Cohen LCSW

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About the Author

Dee Cohen, LCSW is a licensed social worker and Certified Yoga and Meditation Teacher in Boca Raton, Florida, She incorporates her studies of Western and Eastern Philosophy with techniques from yoga and Meditation in her work with clients and workshops for corporations.

Introduction

Dee Cohen, LCSW

“A quotation at the right moment is like bread to the famished.”

- The Talmud

“One who asks a question is a fool for five minutes; one who does not ask a question remains a fool forever.”

- Chinese proverb

Great ideas creep up on us and can make us squirm, transcend our daily perspective through humor, stop us dead in our tracks and show us a door to another vision. Yogi Bhajan says that a real thought will , “Poke, Provoke to a Reaction, Confront and Elevate.”

The quotes in this book cover topics such as “Work”, “Relationships”, “Love”, “Money”, “Truth” and “Zen” with the intent of illuminating everyday life. I’ve also added questions after each chapter to help stimulate further inquiry.

I find that when I read a book, a phrase or idea will often look hard at me and reverse my ordinary sense of being the “looker”. When we speak of insights, it’s interesting that violent phrases are often used such as “it struck me”, “it hit me”, “I was bowled over” or “it blew me away”. Religiously, some people use the phrase “Chased by Light”.

It's hard to avoid feeling haunted by Nietzsche's line: "The most common lie is the lie one tells to oneself; lying to others is relatively the exception." And when Woody Allen says, "I'm not afraid of death. I just don't want to be there when it happens", we can't help having a sense of relief from the cosmic questions.

I hope this collection of quotes and questions will help to add some wonder to each day, spark new thoughts, create a pause and aid one's walk on the journey. Seeing the courage and efforts of others helps one undergo the trials involved in self-transformation. There are lots of stimulating thoughts from the great minds of the East and West accompanied by questions to consider at the end of each chapter.

The topics are presented in alphabetical order. Great ideas often touch on many categories and are not an exact science to classify. The deep search for meaning, love and wisdom have been with us from the beginning.

I hope this book will connect us to the timeless truths that Eastern and Western thinkers have captured and illuminate our relationships to work, friendship, love and self-transformation.

Action

Do you know that disease and death must needs overtake us, no matter what we are doing? What do you wish to be doing when it overtakes you? If you have anything better to be doing when you are so overtaken, get to work on that.

~ Epicetus ~

How can anyone see straight when he does not see himself and the darkness he unconsciously carries with him into all his dealings?

~ Carl Jung ~

The great end of life is not knowledge but action.

~ Thomas Henry Huxley ~

Action should culminate in wisdom.

~ Bhagavad Gita ~

We cannot put off living until we are ready. The most salient characteristic of life is it's coerciveness: it is always urgent, "here and now" without any possible postponement. Life is fired at us point-blank.

~ Jose Ortega Y Gasset ~

Questions:

1) What is the nature of distraction? Why don't we do what we wish to be doing?

2) What's the relation between action and knowledge? Do we sometimes use one to dodge the other? What is action for the man of wisdom?

Attachment:

If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

~ Marcus Aurelius ~

The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water and breeds reptiles of the mind.

~ William Blake ~

Better shun the bait than struggle in the snare.

~ John Milton ~

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

~ Alan Watts ~

Zen masters hold that an individual's full understanding of Zen is often precipitated by the hearing of a single phrase exactly calculated to destroy his particular demon of ignorance; so they have always favored the brief paradoxical dialogue as a means of instruction; finding it of great value in giving a sudden jolt to a pupil's mind which may propel him towards or over the brink of Enlightenment.

~ John Blofeld ~

Disappointment, always a shock to the feelings, it not only the mother of bitterness but the strongest possible incentive to a differentiation of feeling. The failure of a pet plan, the disappointing behavior of someone one loves, can supply the impulse either for a more or less brutal outburst of affect or for a modification and adjustment of feeling , and hence for higher development. This culminates in wisdom if feeling is supplemented by reflection and rational insight.

~ Carl Jung ~

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

~ Arthur Schopenhauer ~

Questions:

1) Watts speaks about attachment as “resistance to life”. What is the relation between desire and resistance?

2) If our pain at loss is a function of our perception (Marcus Aurelius), why do we tend to attribute the pain to something external of our minds?

Character:

Blessed is he who has learned to admire but not envy, to follow but not imitate, to praise but not flatter, and to lead but not manipulate.

~ William Arthur Ward ~

**Take care of your thoughts,
Then, actions will take care of themselves.
You sow an action and reap a tendency.
You sow a tendency and reap a habit.
You sow your habit and reap your character.
You sow your character and reap your destiny.
Therefore, destiny is in your hands.**

~ Sathya Sai Baba ~

Talent is nurtured in solitude; Character is formed in the stormy billows of the world.

~ Goethe ~

It is with trifles and when he is off guard, that a man best reveals his character.

~ Schopenhauer ~

If I try to be like him, who will be like me?

~ Yiddish Proverb ~

You cannot dream yourself into a character, you must hammer and forge yourself one.

~ James Froude ~

Questions:

1) If Schopenhauer is right that one's character is revealed when one is off-guard, then what is it that most people are displaying aware of the other's glance?

2) What do we mean when we see "character" in someone's face?

Courage:

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that things are difficult.

~ Seneca ~

Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson ~

Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore.

~ Andre Gide ~

A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson ~

We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must do that which we think we cannot.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt ~

Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees the others.

~ Aristotle ~

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr. ~

Questions:

- 1) Emerson points out that we are easily discouraged by others' criticisms. How can we not be influenced by their doubts?

 - 2) When we "look fear in the face" how does that transform it? Is fear an illusion? Is it something that looms because we won't tackle it? Is it like looking at the boogey man?

 - 3) Sometimes we lose heart and our will collapses. How can we remember to transcend the immediate response of defeat?
-

Emptiness:

The uniqueness of zazen (zen meditation) lies in this: that the mind is freed from bondage to all thought forms, visions, objects, and imaginings, however sacred or elevating, and brought to a state of absolute emptiness, from which alone it may one day perceive its own true nature, or the nature of the universe.

~ Philip Kapleau ~

The quieter you become, the more you can hear.

~ Ram Dass ~

I took a walk. Suddenly, I stood still, filled with the realization that I had no body or mind. All I could see was one great illuminating Whole-omnipresent, perfect, lucid and serene.

~ Han Shan ~

If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few.

~ Shunryu Suzuki ~

Two monks were arguing about the temple flag. One said the flag moved, the other said the wind moved. Master Eno overheard them and said, "It is neither the wind nor the flag, but your mind that moves." The monks were speechless.

~ Told by Jon Winokur in “Zen to Go” ~

Questions:

1) Can discrimination lead to emptying the mind ?

2) Why do concepts, forms and mental representations rarely appear to us as “bondage” as Kapleau calls it?



Fear:

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is over self.

~ Aristotle ~

It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live.

~ Marcus Aurelius ~

To one who is afraid, everything rustles.

~ Sophocles ~

There is great beauty in going through life without anxiety or fear. Half our fears are baseless and the other half discreditable.

~ Upanishads ~

He who sees all beings in his own Self and his own Self in all beings loses all fear.

~ Upanishads ~

Questions:

1) How can we see that many of our fears are baseless?

2) Why would our inability to see the Self in the other person be related to fear? Is our sense of individuality tied up with feeling over against another, competitive or jealous?

Goals:

Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still.

~ Chinese Proverb ~

Too many business men never stop to ponder what they are doing. They reject the need for self-discipline. They are satisfied to be clever, when they need to be wise.

~ Louis Finkelstein ~

Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging of an uncompleted task.

~ William James ~

Never look down to test the ground before taking the next step; only he who keeps his eyes fixed on the far horizon will find his right road.

~ Dag Hammarskjold ~

The shortest way to live with honor in the world, is to be in reality what we would appear to be; all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves by the practice and experience of them.

~ Socrates ~

If you want the present to be different from the past, study the past.

~ Spinoza ~

Questions:

1) If there is a fatigue when an uncompleted project is on the back burner, why is it so difficult for us to stop procrastinating?

2) Are we afraid to study the past because change is more difficult than repeating a habit?

Gratitude:

To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven.

~ Johannes A. Gaertner ~

Reflect upon your present blessings, of which every man has plenty; not on your past misfortunes of which all men have some.

~ Charles Dickens ~

In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit.

~ Albert Schweitzer ~

Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; but remember that what you now have was once among the things only hoped for.

~ Epicurus ~

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

~ Melody Beattie ~

There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.

~ Albert Einstein ~

If the only prayer you say in your whole life is 'thank you,' that would suffice.

~ Meister Eckhart ~

Questions:

1) Why is it that we forget the insight of Epicurus that what we have now is one of the things which we once hoped for?

2) What makes a realized hope fade as an object of desire?

Growth:

The key to growth is the introduction of higher dimensions of consciousness into our awareness.

~ Pir Vilayat Khan ~

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

~ William James ~

Life can only be understood backwards, but must be lived forwards.

~ Soren Kierkegaard ~

Experience is not what happens to a man. It is what a man does with what happens to him.

~ Aldous Huxley ~

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is the victory over self.

~ Aristotle ~

It is the task of the conscious mind to understand these hints. If this does not happen, the process of individuation will nevertheless continue. The only difference is that we become its victims and are dragged along by fate

towards that inescapable goal which we might have reached walking upright, if only we had taken the trouble and been patient enough to understand the meaning of what crosses our path.

~ Carl Jung ~

Questions:

1) What is the connection between self-growth and self-overcoming? How are we related to the self that we are over-coming?

2) How can we use the thorns and disappointments of life for growth without becoming bitter or disillusioned?

Habit:

Habit is a cable; we weave a thread of it each day, and at last we cannot break it.

~Horace Mann~

Such as are your habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of your mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts.

~ Marcus Aurelius ~

**Take care of your thoughts,
Then, actions will take care of themselves.
You sow an action and reap a tendency.
You sow a tendency and reap a habit.
You sow your habit and reap your character.
You sow your character and reap your destiny.
Therefore, destiny is in your hands.**

~ Sathya Sai Baba ~

One will seldom go wrong if one attributes extreme actions to vanity, average ones to habit and petty ones to fear.

~ Friedrich Nietzsche ~

Buddha's doctrine: man suffers because of his craving to possess and keep forever things which are essentially impermanent. Chief among these

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

~ Alan Watts ~

Questions:

- 1) Watts makes an interesting point that our habits actually are a means of keeping life out. What are we trying to keep out?
 - 2) Is habit hard to break primarily because of the history of repetition or is it tied up with a hope that the repetition appears to solve?
-

Hope:

Isn't it the moment of most profound doubt that gives birth to new certainties? Perhaps hopelessness is the very soil that nourishes human hope; perhaps one could never find sense in life without first experiencing its absurdity.

~Vaclav Havel ~

Hope is the most treacherous of human fancies.

~ James Fenimore Cooper ~

Hope is merely disappointment deferred

~ W.Burton Baldry ~

We love to expect, and when expectation is either disappointed or gratified, we want to be again expecting.

~ Samuel Johnson ~

Prayer is not an old woman's idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.

~ Mahatma Gandhi ~

We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr. ~

Questions:

1) Kierkegaard and Baldry see hope as taking away a chance for us to let go of a solution that isn't working (i.e. a certain habit of mind or pattern that always gets us up against the wall). Many speak of a calamity or a crisis in the soul as the greatest motivator. Is this despair the basis for self-transformation?

2) The opposite philosophies speak of NOT losing hope, but persevering. Do these two philosophies conflict or is the conflict one of appearance? For example, many in the motivational and affirmation tradition speak of examining one's motives, goals and plans to see if they are worth pursuing.

Love:

When we treat man as he is, we make him worse than he is when we treat him as if he already were what he potentially could be, we make him what he should be.

~ Goethe ~

Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?

~ Henry David Thoreau ~

For neither birth, nor wealth, nor honors, can awaken in the minds of men the principles which should guide those who from their youth aspire to an honorable and excellent life, as Love awakens them.

~ Plato ~

Women have a tendency to assess their sense of self-worth in relation to the condition of their intimate relationships.

~ Maggie Scarf ~

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

~ Lao Tzu ~

The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him/her his/her own.

~Benjamin Disraeli ~

In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two

~ Eric Fromm ~

In any relationship in which two people become one, the end result is two half people.

~ Wayne Dwyer ~

Questions:

- 1) What is the difference between immature love and mature love?
 - 2) Is it true as is commonly thought that women use relationships for self-worth while men use personal achievement for self-worth?
-

Men and Women:

Until we take how we see ourselves (and how we see others) into account, we will be unable to understand how others see and feel about themselves and their world. Unaware, we will project our intentions on their behavior and call ourselves objective.

~ Stephen Covey ~

When women love us, they forgive us everything, even our crimes; when they do not love us, they give us credit for nothing, not even our virtues.

~ Balzac ~

My wife and I were happy for 20 years. Then we met.

~ Rodney Dangerfield ~

When women are depressed, they either eat or go shopping. Men invade another country. It's a whole different way of thinking.

~ Elaine Boosler ~

A Psychiatrist is a person who will give you expensive answers that your wife will give you for free.

~ Anon ~

What can a man say about woman, his own opposite? I mean of course

something sensible that is outside the sexual program, free of resentment, illusion and theory. Where is the man to be found capable of such superiority? Women always stand just where the man's shadow falls, so that he is only too liable to confuse the two. Then, when he tries to repair this misunderstanding, he overvalues her and believes her the most desirable thing in the world.

~ Carl Jung ~

Everyone is seeking his soul mate, but no one wants to meet his own soul.

~ Yogi Bhanjan ~

Marriage is more than finding the right person. It is being the right person.

~ Anonymous ~

Questions:

1) Do women and men have different coping skills for stress? IF so how can we understand each other? Or is our spouse the best psychiatrist and the one who truly understands us the best?

2) Do we prefer to find the right person rather than to be the right person? Why is it easy to idealize someone initially?

Money:

Honesty pays dividends both in dollars and in peace of mind.

~ B.C. Forbes ~

Money is a singular thing. It ranks with love as man's greatest source of joy and with death as his greatest source of anxiety.

~ John Kenneth Galbraith ~

As regards our own welfare, there are only two ways in which we can use wealth. We can either spend it in ostentatious pomp and feed on the cheap respect which our image and glory will bring us from the infatuated crowd, or be avoiding all expenditure that will do us no good, we can let our wealth grow so that we have a bulwark against misfortune and want that shall be stronger and better everyday.

~ Arthur Schopenhauer ~

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

~ James Baldwin ~

Money is human happiness in the abstract; he then who is no longer capable of enjoying human happiness in the concrete devotes himself utterly to money.

~ Arthur Schopenhauer ~

Questions:

1) What is the ground of the anxiety with respect to the absence of money?

2) Why do we think of other things when we have it? Is this the nature of desire? Is it the difference between our image of something before versus the actuality?

Meaning:

He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.

~ Fredrich Nietzsche ~

You must not count overmuch on your reality as you feel it today, since, like that of yesterday, it may prove an illusion for you tomorrow.

~ Luigi Pirandello ~

The wise only possess ideas; the greater part of mankind are possessed by them.

~ Samuel Taylor Coleridge ~

Birth is not one act; it is a process. The aim of life is to be fully born, though its tragedy is that most of us die before we are thus born. To live is to be born every minute. Death occurs when birth stops.

~ Eric Fromm ~

It takes a very unusual mind to undertake the analysis of the obvious.

~ Alfred North Whitehead ~

A man must elevate himself by his own mind, not degrade himself. The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and the enemy as well.

~ Bhagavad Gita ~

Knowledge is an infinite series of images in the memory. Understanding, which penetrates into their significance, is the power to perceive their essence and interrelationship.

~ Kabbalah ~

Questions:

- 1) It has been said that meaning is outside of time and purpose is in time. What does this mean?
 - 2) How do we find meaning in an age where everything is viewed as relative?
-

Motivation:

I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for circumstances they want.

~ George Bernard Shaw ~

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.

~ Helen Keller ~

Failure is nature's plan to prepare you for great responsibilities.

~ Napoleon Hill ~

Experience is not what happens to a man. It is what a man does with what happens to him.

~ Aldous Huxley ~

The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.

~ Socrates ~

Failure is only the opportunity to begin again, more intelligently.

~ Henry Ford ~

Because your own strength is unequal to the task, do not assume that it is beyond the powers of man; but if anything is within the powers and province of man, believe that it is within your own compass also.

~ Marcus Aurelius ~

Start by doing what's necessary, then what's possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

~ Francis of Assisi ~

Questions:

- 1) How is the dark side of our experience the ground for self-transformation?
 - 2) Can losing our ground be fruitful since it is questioning an older orientation that might be unexamined?
-

Patience:

If I have made any valuable discoveries, it has been owing more to patient attention than to any other talent.

~ Sir Isaac Newton ~

Only those who have the patience to do simple things perfectly will acquire the skill to do difficult things easily.

~ Johann Friedrich Von Schiller ~

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.

~ Aristotle ~

With time and patience the mulberry leaf becomes a silk gown.

~ Chinese Proverb ~

Questions:

- 1) What concept of time do we have that makes patience so difficult?
 - 2) How can we see waiting on line, being caught in traffic, the long never-ending winter etc. in a different light so that it is a step or stage rather than a disappointment?
-

Perseverance:

We have not passed that subtle line between childhood and adulthood until we move from the passive voice to the active voice—that is, until we stop saying ‘It got lost,’ and say ‘I lost it.’

~ Sydney J. Harris ~

Diamonds are pieces of coal that stuck to their job.

~ Anonymous ~

Neither snow, nor rain, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.

~ Herodotus (main Post Office in NYC) ~

When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, till it seems that you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.

~ Harriet Beecher Stowe ~

He who does not tire, tires adversity.

~ Tupper ~

Patience and perseverance are essential in the inner fight. The higher self’s war with the lower self is a great struggle. Develop these two virtues

to the maximum degree and strengthen them by all manner of intelligent discipline and constant exercise.

~ Sivananda ~

Some men give up their designs when they have almost reached their goals; while others on the contrary, obtain a victory by exerting, at the last moment, more vigorous efforts than before.

~ Polybius ~

Questions:

- 1) What is the difference between the classical advice on perseverance and patience and the modern day success and motivational seminars?
 - 2) Why does the hero so often fall right before he reaches the door?
-

Recognition:

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

~ Lao Tzu ~

Glory, like a shadow, flieth from him who pursueth it: but it followeth at the heels of him who would fly from it; if thou courtest it without merit, thou shalt never attain unto it, if thou deservest it, thou hidest thyself, it will never forsake thee.

~ Akhenaton ~

Fame is an illusive thing-here today, gone tomorrow . The fickle, shallow mob raises its heroes to the pinnacle of approval today and hurls them into oblivion tomorrow at the slightest whim: cheers today, hisses tomorrow; utter forgetfulness in a few months.

~ Henry Miller ~

I am not concerned that I am not known, I seek to be worthy to be known.

~ Confucious ~

When you meet someone better than yourself, turn your thoughts to becoming his equal. When you meet someone not as good as you are, look within and examine your own self.

~ Confucius ~

Fame has also this great drawback, that if we pursue it, we must direct our lives so as to please the fancy of men.

~ Spinoza ~

A celebrity is a person who works hard all his life to become well known, and then wears dark glasses to avoid being recognized.

~ Fred Allen ~

Fame creates it's own standards. A guy who twitches is lips is just another guy with a lip twitch- unless he's Humphrey Bogart.

~ Sammy Davis Jr. ~

Questions:

- 1) Is seeking fame something present in everyone to the same degree or do people differ in seeking freedom through fame versus fortune?
 - 2) Does a celebrity set the standard or must he meet the standard?
-

Solitude:

Solitude is fine, but you need someone to tell you that solitude is fine.

~ Honore de Balzac ~

It would do the world good if every man would compel himself occasionally to be absolutely alone. Most of the world's progress has come out of such loneliness.

~ Bruce Barton ~

If we are incapable of finding peace in ourselves, it is pointless to search elsewhere.

~ Francois de la Rochefoucauld ~

One of the greatest necessities in America is to discover creative solitude.

~ Carl Sandburg ~

In the world a man lives in his own age; in solitude in all ages.

~ W. Matthews ~

I entered (into my inward self) and beheld with the eye of my soul...the Light Unchangeable.

~ Saint Augustine ~

Questions:

- 1) What does solitude bring up for us that is prevented by the company of another?
 - 2) Are there things that the presence of another can reveal to us which solitude cannot?
-

Wisdom:

The ultimate value of life depends upon awareness and the power of contemplation rather than upon mere survival.

~ Aristotle ~

The man who views the world at fifty the same way he did at twenty has wasted thirty years of his life.

~ Muhammad Ali ~

True and lasting happiness begins with the sudden all-encompassing realization by each member of the human family, that we are truly all limbs of one body, that we cannot find our true selves until we recognize that everyone is us and we are everyone. In truth there is no separation.

~ Maya Sarada Devi ~

Before the enlightenment, carry the water, till the soil. After enlightenment, carry the water, till the soil.

~ Zen Teachings ~

Work out your own salvation. Do not depend on others.

~ Buddha ~

Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every

preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever or whatever abysses nature leads, or you will learn nothing.

~ Thomas H. Huxley ~

Let us accept truth, even when it surprises us and alters our views.

~ George Sand ~

Disappointment, always a shock to the feelings, it not only the mother of bitterness but the strongest possible incentive to a differentiation of feeling. The failure of a pet plan, the disappointing behavior of someone one loves, can supply the impulse either for a more or less brutal outburst of affect or for a modification and adjustment of feeling, and hence for higher development. This culminates in wisdom if feeling is supplemented by reflection and rational insight. Wisdom is never violent: where wisdom reigns there is no conflict between thinking and feeling.

~ Carl Jung ~

Questions:

- 1) What is the Zen Master saying about the relation of the ordinary life and the awakened life? What is non-dual awareness?
 - 2) How do we have the perspective to be able to give up our pre-conceived notions when we naively take them as part of our identity?
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Zen and Cosmic Humor Anecdotes:

A young girl who became pregnant out of wedlock falsely identified Master Hakuin (1685-1768) as the father. When the girl's parents confronted him, Hakuin said only, "Is that so?" When the child was born, Hakuin cared for it as lovingly as if it was his own son until the girl finally admitted that she had lied. When the girl's parents apologized and begged his forgiveness, Hakuin said, "Is that so?"

Tale about Hakuin:

A little old man was sitting on a bus humming, “Dee dee dum dum, dee dee dum.” The bus driver turned around and noticed a suitcase blocking the aisle. He turned to the old man and said, “Would you mind moving the suitcase?” to which the old man replied, “Dee dee dum dum, dee dee dum.” In complete frustration, the bus driver jumped up and took the suitcase and threw it out the bus window and glared at the old man and shouted, “Now what do you have to say?” The old man looked at him and smiled and said, “Dee dee dum dum, dee dee dum — it’s not my suitcase.

~ Osho ~

Mulla Nasrudin’s face lit up as he recognized the man who was walking ahead of him down the subway stairs. He slapped the man so heartily on the back that the man nearly collapsed, and cried, “Goldberg, I hardly recognized you! Why, you have gained thirty pounds since I saw you last. And you have had your nose fixed, and I swear you are about two feet taller.” The man looked at him angrily. “I beg your pardon,” he said in icy tones, “but I do not happen to be Goldberg.” “Aha!” said Mulla Nasrudin, “so you have even changed your name?

~ Osho ~

In Eastern Europe, half a century ago, when marriages were still arranged by marriage-brokers, young Samuel had been introduced to the young woman of whom the marriage-broker had sung a gorgeous hymn of praise. After a short interview, Samuel motioned the marriage-broker into a corner and said to him, in a furious whisper, ‘What is this woman you have brought me? She is ugly. She has a cast in one eye. She’s unintelligent and she is covered with warts. ‘ The marriage-broker said, ‘But why are you whispering? She’s deaf also.’

~ Osho ~

A rabbi threw himself on the ground in total despair, “I am a worm, a worthless one teach me how to be worthy.” The cantor following him beat his chest and looked up towards the heavens,” I am a wretch. I am a zero. Open my heart and save me from myself.” The temple janitor cried out in genuine despair, ” I am a nothing. I am beyond redemption. Liberate me from this horrible state.” The cantor looked at the rabbi pointing at the janitor, “Who is he to think he’s a nobody?”

~ Jewish Tale ~

On a long train ride in the hot afternoon, one of the passengers kept repeating aloud, “God, I am thirsty! God, I am thirsty! God, I am thirsty!” Annoyed by such mantric repetitions, the traveler sitting in front of him brought the thirsty man a large bottle of cold soda at the coming station. With eyes beaming in gratitude, the thirsty man stood up, grabbed the bottle, and drank it at once. For a split moment he seemed happy, satisfied, content. Then he sat down again and started repeating aloud, “God, I was thirsty! God, I was thirsty! God, I was so thirsty!”

~ Hindu Tale ~



Remembering:

I recommend you refer to these quotes often to help keep life in perspective. Remember that each day can be enhanced by reflecting on a quote and the possible meanings. Share them with family and co-workers and you may be surprised by the responses. People enjoy looking at things in more depth and exploring life's mysteries.

“The love of beauty in its multiple forms is the noblest gift of the human cerebrum.”

Alexis Carrel

Dee Cohen, LCSW

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