

A
POCKETFUL
OF
Happiness

An uplifting collection of quotes, short stories, and reflection questions to keep you inspired and moving forward in your life.



“AFTER NOURISHMENT, SHELTER AND COMPANIONSHIP, STORIES ARE THE THING WE NEED MOST IN THE WORLD” — PHILIP PULLMAN

INTRODUCTION

Ever since I was young, I've collected a range of inspirational stories and quotes and posted them up on my walls. Whenever I was dealing with feelings or emotions that were difficult to understand, I guess I always found it helpful to seek advice from those who've lived it - the great writers, storytellers, and public figures who've shared their wisdom. Nothing can substitute personal experience, but their teachings offered a new perspective that would often allow me to move through the problems much easier, and make me feel a whole lot less alone in the process.

While many of the stories in this book are widespread fables that have been passed down to convey simple life lessons, I believe that every one of us has a powerful personal story that has the potential to turn someone's life around. Too often, we can get caught up only sharing the positive stuff. And I get it. We don't want to be the bearer of bad news, or bring others down by posting negativity. There's definitely far too much of it on the news already! But those stories - the struggles we've been through, challenges we've faced, and the lessons we learned from them - can be so powerful to hear for those who may be dealing with something similar. Sharing those stories could be the key that unlocks someone else's mental prison, and could provide the simple awareness that they are not alone in their struggle, allowing them to remove layers of shame that may prevent them from moving forward.

While this book is designed to simply bring a smile to your face, it is also a call to action, and a call to share your story with us and the followers of The Kindness Collective that need to hear it. If you feel inspired to do so, below you will find details of where you can contact us, and we will publish it on our blog and social media channels.

Alternatively, if you don't feel comfortable sharing your story with a mass audience, we encourage you to open up to your friends and family through a game of Listen Up. For the past two years, we have developed this board game as a fun way to start the big conversations, and to encourage people to share and celebrate the variety of stories and experiences that comprise a meaningful life.

You can find out more at www.listenupgame.com, and also download a sample PDF of 20 of our favourite questions!



Thanks for reading, and I hope you enjoy the book!

Nate L'Estrange

Founder of The Kindness Collective

How to submit your story:

1. Write your story
2. Email it to nate@kindnesscollective.com.au
3. Please provide the following details:
 - a. Story Title
 - b. Link to your own blog or website (if you have one)
 - c. OPTIONAL - short personal bio, and a relevant picture that fits the story (or we can find one).

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- GRATITUDE -

“SOME PEOPLE GRUMBLE THAT ROSES HAVE THORNS; I AM GRATEFUL THAT THORNS HAVE ROSES.” — ALPHONSE KARR

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FLOWER

The park bench was deserted as I sat down to read,
beneath the long, straggly branches of an old willow tree.
Disillusioned by life with good reason to frown,
for the world was intent on dragging me down.

And if that weren't enough to ruin my day,
a young boy out of breath approached me, all tired from
play.

He stood right before me with his head tilted down
and said with great excitement, "Look what I found!"

In his hand was a flower, and what a pitiful sight,
with its petals all worn - not enough rain, or too little
light.

Wanting him to take his dead flower and go off to play,
I faked a small smile and then shifted away.

But instead of retreating he sat next to my side
and placed the flower to his nose
and declared with overacted surprise,
"It sure smells pretty and it's beautiful, too.
That's why I picked it; here, it's for you."

The weed before me was dying or dead.
not vibrant of colours, orange, yellow or red.
But I knew I must take it, or he might never leave.
So I reached for the flower, and replied, "Just what I
need."

- GRATITUDE -

But instead of him placing the flower in my hand,
he held it midair without reason or plan.

It was then that I noticed for the very first time,
that weed-toting boy could not see: he was blind.

I heard my voice quiver, tears shone like the sun
As I thanked him for picking the very best one.
"You're welcome," he smiled, and then ran off to play,
unaware of the impact he'd had on my day.

I sat there and wondered how he managed to see
a self-pitying woman beneath an old willow tree.
How did he know of my self-indulged plight?
Perhaps from his heart, he'd been blessed with true
sight.

Through the eyes of a blind child, at last I could see
the problem was not with the world; the problem was
me.

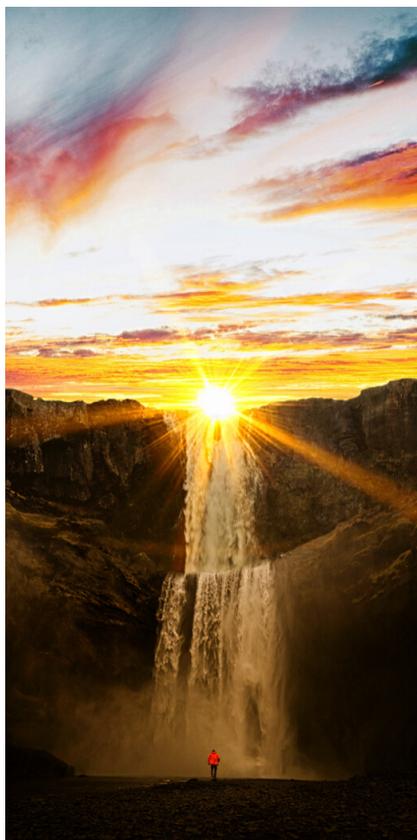
And for all of those times I myself had been blind,
I vowed to see the beauty in life,
and appreciate every second that's mine.

And then I held that wilted flower up to my nose
and breathed in the fragrance of a beautiful rose
And smiled as I watched that young boy, another weed
in his hand, about to change the life of an unsuspecting
old man.



The world has enough beautiful mountains and meadows, spectacular skies and serene lakes. It has enough lush forests, flowered fields, and sandy beaches. It has plenty of stars and the promise of a new sunrise and sunset every day. What the world needs more of is people to appreciate and enjoy it.

Michael Josephson



**ENJOY THE
LITTLE THINGS,
FOR ONE DAY
YOU MAY LOOK
BACK AND
REALISE THEY
WERE THE BIG
THINGS.**

ROBERT BRAULT

- GRATITUDE -

“BE THANKFUL FOR WHAT YOU HAVE; YOU’LL END UP HAVING MORE. IF YOU CONCENTRATE ON WHAT YOU DON’T HAVE, YOU WILL NEVER, EVER HAVE ENOUGH.” — OPRAH WINFREY

THE BLACK DOT

One day, a professor entered his classroom and asked his students to prepare for a surprise test. They all waited anxiously at their desks for the exam to begin.

The professor handed out the exams with the text facing down, as usual. Once he handed them all out, he asked the students to turn over the papers.

To everyone’s surprise, there were no questions—just a black dot in the centre of the paper. The professor, seeing the expression on everyone’s faces, told them the following: “I want you to write about what you see there.” The students, confused, got started on the inexplicable task.

At the end of the class, the professor took all the exams, and started reading each one of them out loud in front of all the students.

All of them, with no exception, defined the black dot, trying to explain its position in the centre of the sheet. After all had been read, the classroom silent, the professor started to explain:

- GRATITUDE -

"I'm not going to grade you on this, I just wanted to give you something to think about. No one wrote about the white part of the paper. Everyone focused on the black dot – and the same thing happens in our lives. However, we insist on focusing only on the black dot – the health issues that bother us, the lack of money, the complicated relationship with a family member, the disappointment with a friend. The dark spots are very small when compared to everything we have in our lives, but they are the ones that pollute our minds. Take your eyes away from the black dots in your lives. Enjoy each one of your blessings, each moment that life gives you. Be happy and live a life filled with love!"



REFLECT: What are three things you are grateful for in your life?

- COURAGE -

"YOU CAN CHOOSE COURAGE, OR YOU CAN CHOOSE COMFORT, BUT YOU CANNOT CHOOSE BOTH." — BRENÉ BROWN

DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow-
You may succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than,
It seems to a faint and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up,
When he might have captured the victor's cup,
And he learned too late when the night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out-
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far,
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit-
It's when things seem worst that you must not quit!

John Greenleaf Whittier

www.kindnesscollective.com.au

**HAVE THE COURAGE TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART AND
INTUITION. THEY SOMEHOW ALREADY KNOW
WHAT YOU TRULY WANT TO BECOME.**

STEVE JOBS



It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best knows achievement and who at the worst if he fails at least fails while daring greatly so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt

- COURAGE -

“YOU CAN’T BE BRAVE IF YOU’VE ONLY HAD WONDERFUL THINGS HAPPEN TO YOU” — MARY TYLER MOORE

A BROTHER'S COURAGEOUS ACT - Author Unknown

Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at a hospital, I got to know a lovely little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare life threatening disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year-old brother, who had somehow survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness.

The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the little boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, "Yes, I'll do it if it will save her."

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the colour returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?".

Being young, the little boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood in order to save her.

REFLECT: What does courage mean to you? When is a time in your life that you have felt the most courageous?

- OVERCOMING OBSTACLES -

"NOBODY CAN GO BACK AND START A NEW BEGINNING, BUT ANYONE CAN START TODAY AND MAKE A NEW ENDING" — MARIA ROBINSON

A BEAUTIFUL STRUGGLE

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

The man decided to help the butterfly and, with a pair of scissors, he cut open the cocoon, thus releasing the butterfly. However, the butterfly's body was very small and wrinkled and its wings were all crumpled.

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

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

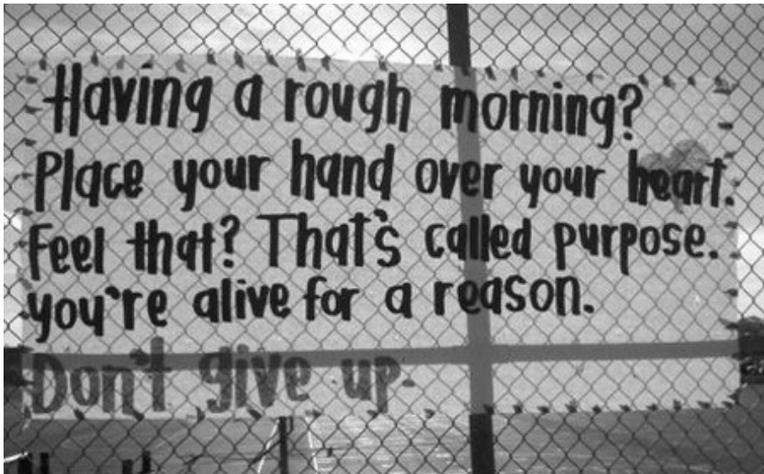
Sometimes, a little extra effort is precisely what prepares us for the next obstacle to be faced. If we went through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. And we could never fly.



- OVERCOMING OBSTACLES -

ONE OF THE FINEST BELIEFS I DEVELOPED YEARS AGO THAT HELPED ME TO ENJOY ALL OF MY LIFE EXPERIENCE WAS THE IDEA THAT THERE ARE NO BAD EXPERIENCES, THAT NO MATTER WHAT I GO THROUGH IN LIFE – WHETHER IT’S A CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE OR A PLEASURABLE ONE – EVERY EXPERIENCE PROVIDES ME SOMETHING OF VALUE IF I LOOK FOR IT.

ANTHONY ROBBINS



THE BRICK WALLS ARE THERE FOR A REASON. THE BRICK WALLS ARE NOT THERE TO KEEP US OUT. THE BRICK WALLS ARE THERE TO GIVE US A CHANCE TO SHOW HOW BADLY WE WANT SOMETHING.

RANDY PAUSCH. THE LAST LECTURE

- OVERCOMING OBSTACLES -

"I LIKE THE CHALLENGE OF TRYING DIFFERENT THINGS AND WONDERING WHETHER IT'S GOING TO WORK OR WHETHER I'M GOING TO FALL FLAT ON MY FACE" —JOHNNY DEPP

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE UP TO YOUR NECK IN MUD

The ninth week of SEAL training is referred to as Hell Week. It is six days of no sleep, constant physical and mental harassment and one special day at the Mud Flats. The Mud Flats are an area between San Diego and Tijuana where the water runs off and creates the Tijuana slues—a swampy patch of terrain where the mud will engulf you.

It is on Wednesday of Hell Week that you paddle down to the mud flats and spend the next 15 hours trying to survive the freezing-cold mud, the howling wind and the incessant pressure from the instructors to quit. As the sun began to set that Wednesday evening, my training class, having committed some "egregious infraction of the rules" was ordered into the mud. The mud consumed each man till there was nothing visible but our heads. The instructors told us we could leave the mud if only five men would quit—just five men and we could get out of the oppressive cold.

Looking around the mud flat, it was apparent that some students were about to give up. It was still over eight hours till the sun came up—eight more hours of bone-chilling cold. The chattering teeth and shivering moans of the trainees were so loud it was hard to hear anything. And then, one voice began to echo through the night—one voice raised in song. The song was terribly out of tune, but sung with great enthusiasm.

- OVERCOMING OBSTACLES -

One voice became two, and two became three, and before long everyone in the class was singing. We knew that if one man could rise above the misery then others could as well. The instructors threatened us with more time in the mud if we kept up the singing—but the singing persisted. And somehow, the mud seemed a little warmer, the wind a little tamer and the dawn not so far away.

If I have learned anything in my time traveling the world, it is the power of hope. The power of one person—Washington, Lincoln, King, Mandela and even a young girl from Pakistan named Malala—can change the world by giving people hope.

So, if you want to change the world, start singing when you're up to your neck in mud.

Source: The commencement address by Admiral William H. McRaven, ninth commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, at the University of Texas at Austin on 17 May 2014



REFLECT: What is one of the biggest challenges you've had to overcome? What did you learn from it?

- CHANGE -

"THE MOMENT THAT JUDGEMENT STOPS THROUGH ACCEPTANCE OF WHAT IT IS, YOU ARE FREE OF THE MIND. YOU HAVE MADE ROOM FOR LOVE, FOR JOY, FOR PEACE." - ECKHART TOLLE

I wanted to change the world

When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world.

I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation.

When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family.

Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have changed the world.

Author: unknown monk around 1100 AD



- CHANGE -

IF YOU DON'T LIKE
SOMETHING, CHANGE IT;
IF YOU CAN'T CHANGE IT,
CHANGE THE WAY YOU
THINK ABOUT IT.
MARY ENGELBREIT



Only the supremely
wise and the ignorant
do not alter.
Dan Millman

CHANGE IS THE LAW
OF LIFE, AND THOSE
WHO LOOK ONLY
TO THE PAST AND
PRESENT ARE
CERTAIN TO MISS
THE FUTURE.
JOHN F. KENNEDY



- HAPPINESS -

"THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS, YOU SEE, IS NOT FOUND IN SEEKING MORE, BUT IN DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY TO ENJOY LESS" — SOCRATES

A BALANCED LIFE

An accounting professor stood before his class with some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a very large and empty glass mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a jar of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open spaces between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar and of course the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with an unanimous yes.

The professor then produced two cans of beer from under the table and then proceeded to pour the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the grains of sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things -- your family, your partner, your health, your children, your friends, your favorite passions -- things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

- HAPPINESS -

"The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else -- the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out dancing. Play another 18.

"There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first -- the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of beers."



REFLECT: What does happiness mean to you? What do you need in your life to be truly happy?

- HAPPINESS -

Thousands of candles
can be lighted from a
single candle, and the life
of the candle will not be
shortened. Happiness
never decreases by
being shared.

Buddha



**HAPPINESS IS WHEN
WHAT YOU THINK,
WHAT YOU SAY,
AND WHAT YOU DO
ARE IN HARMONY.
MAHATMA GANDHI**

TWO THINGS
PREVENT US FROM
HAPPINESS; LIVING
IN THE PAST AND
OBSERVING OTHERS.



- HAPPINESS -

"THERE IS NO PATH TO HAPPINESS: HAPPINESS IS THE PATH"
—GAUTAMA BUDDHA

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

A shopkeeper sent his son to learn about the secret of happiness from the wisest man in the world. The lad wandered through the desert for 40 days, and finally came upon a beautiful castle, high atop a mountain. It was there that the wise man lived.

Rather than finding a saintly man, though, our hero, on entering the main room of the castle, saw a hive of activity: tradesmen came and went, people were conversing in the corners, a small orchestra was playing soft music, and there was a table covered with platters of the most delicious food in that part of the world. The wise man conversed with everyone, and the boy had to wait for two hours before it was his turn to be given the man's attention.

The wise man listened attentively to the boy's explanation of why he had come, but told him that he didn't have time just then to explain the secret of happiness. He suggested that the boy look around the palace and return in two hours.

"Meanwhile, I want to ask you to do something", said the wise man, handing the boy a teaspoon that held two drops of oil. "As you wander around, carry this spoon with you without allowing the oil to spill".

The boy began climbing and descending the many stairways of the palace, keeping his eyes fixed on the spoon. After two hours, he returned to the room where the wise man was.

- HAPPINESS -

"Well", asked the wise man, "Did you see the Persian tapestries that are hanging in my dining hall? Did you see the garden that it took the master gardener ten years to create? Did you notice the beautiful parchments in my library?"

The boy was embarrassed, and confessed that he had observed nothing. His only concern had been not to spill the oil that the wise man had entrusted to him.

"Then go back and observe the marvels of my world", said the wise man. "You cannot trust a man if you don't know his house".

Relieved, the boy picked up the spoon and returned to his exploration of the palace, this time observing all of the works of art on the ceilings and the walls. He saw the gardens, the mountains all around him, the beauty of the flowers, and the taste with which everything had been selected. Upon returning to the wise man, he related in detail everything he had seen.

"But where are the drops of oil I entrusted to you?" asked the wise man. Looking down at the spoon he held, the boy saw that the oil was gone.

"Well, there is only one piece of advice I can give you", said the wisest of wise men. "The secret of happiness is to see all the marvels of the world and never to forget the drops of oil on the spoon".

REFLECT: What has been your happiest moment this year?

- PERSPECTIVE -

"A PESSIMIST SEES THE DIFFICULTY IN EVERY OPPORTUNITY; AN OPTIMIST SEES THE OPPORTUNITY IN EVERY DIFFICULTY."

– WINSTON CHURCHILL

GOOD LUCK, BAD LUCK

A farmer and his son had a beloved stallion who helped the family earn a living. One day, the horse ran away and their neighbours exclaimed, "Your horse ran away, what terrible luck!" The farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

A few days later, the horse returned home, leading a few wild mares back to the farm as well. The neighbours shouted out, "Your horse has returned, and brought several horses home with him. What great luck!" The farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

Later that week, the farmer's son was trying to break one of the mares and she threw him to the ground, breaking his leg. The villagers cried, "Your son broke his leg, what terrible luck!" The farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

A few weeks later, soldiers from the national army marched through town, recruiting all the able-bodied boys for the army. They did not take the farmer's son, still recovering from his injury. Friends shouted, "Your boy is spared, what tremendous luck!" To which the farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

- PERSPECTIVE -

The moral of this story, is, of course, that no event, in and of itself, can truly be judged as good or bad, lucky or unlucky, fortunate or unfortunate, but that only time will tell the whole story.

Additionally, no one really lives long enough to find out the 'whole story,' so it could be considered a great waste of time to judge minor inconveniences as misfortunes or to invest tons of energy into things that look outstanding on the surface, but may not pay off in the end.

The wiser thing, then, is to live life in moderation, keeping as even a temperament as possible, taking all things in stride, whether they originally appear to be 'good' or 'bad.' Life is much more comfortable and comforting if we merely accept what we're given and make the best of our life circumstances. Rather than always having to pass judgement on things and declare them as good or bad, it would be better to just sit back and say, "It will be interesting to see what happens."



- PERSPECTIVE -

**I NEVER SAW AN UGLY THING IN MY LIFE: FOR
LET THE FORM OF AN OBJECT BE WHAT IT MAY
— LIGHT, SHADE, AND PERSPECTIVE WILL
ALWAYS MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL.**

JOHN CONSTABLE



**IF YOU BELIEVE IT WILL WORK
OUT, YOU'LL SEE OPPORTUNITIES.
IF YOU BELIEVE IT WON'T, YOU
WILL SEE OBSTACLES.
WAYNE DYER**

- PERSPECTIVE -

“LOOK AT EVERYTHING AS THOUGH YOU ARE SEEING IT EITHER FOR THE FIRST OR LAST TIME, THEN YOUR TIME ON EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH GLORY” — BETTY SMITH

THE MEXICAN FISHERMAN

An American businessman was standing at the pier of a small coastal Mexican village when a small boat with just one fisherman docked. Inside the small boat were several large yellowfin tuna. The American complimented the Mexican on the quality of his fish.



"How long did it take you to catch them?" the American asked.
"Only a little while" the Mexican replied.

"Why don't you stay out longer and catch more fish?" the American then asked.

"I have enough to support my family's immediate needs" the Mexican said.

"But" the American then asked, "What do you do with the rest of your time?"

The Mexican fisherman said: "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take a siesta with my wife, Maria, stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar with my amigos. I have a full and busy life, señor."

- PERSPECTIVE -

The American scoffed: "I am a Harvard MBA and could help you. You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds you could buy a bigger boat and, with the proceeds from the bigger boat, you could buy several boats. Eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. Instead of selling your catch to a middleman, you would sell directly to the consumers, eventually opening your own can factory. You would control the product, processing and distribution. You would need to leave this small coastal fishing village and move to Mexico City, then LA and eventually NYC where you will run your expanding enterprise."

The Mexican fisherman asked: "But senior, how long will this all take?"

To which the American replied: "15-20 years."

"But what then, senior?"

The American laughed and said: "That's the best part. When the time is right, you would announce an IPO - an Initial Public Offering - and sell your company stock to the public and become very rich. You would make millions."

"Millions, senior? Then what?"

The American said slowly: "Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take a siesta with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos..."

- SELF LOVE -

"TO BE BEAUTIFUL MEANS TO BE YOURSELF. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ACCEPTED BY OTHERS. YOU NEED TO ACCEPT YOURSELF"

– THICH NHAT HANH

THE PARABLE OF A RING'S TRUE WORTH

"Once a young man came to a wise man and said, "I've come to you because I feel so worthless that I don't want to live anymore. Everyone around me says that I'm a failure and a fool. I'm begging you, please help me!"

The wise man glanced at him and hurriedly answered, "I'm sorry, but I'm very busy now and can't possibly help you. I have an urgent matter to take care of..." he stopped for a moment, thinking, then added, "But if you agree to help me get this done, then I will gladly help you afterwards."

"Of...of course," murmured the young man, noting bitterly that yet again his concerns had been dismissed as unimportant.

"Great!" said the wise man and took off from his fingers a small ring with a beautiful gem. "Take a horse and go to the market. I have to sell this ring as soon as possible to pay off a debt. Try to get as much as you can for it and, no matter what, do not agree to anything less than a gold coin. Go now and come back as soon as you can!"

The young man took the ring and rode away. When he got to the market, he offered the ring to the merchants and they looked it over with interest. However, as soon as they heard that it will cost at least a gold coin, they lost all interest. Some laughed right in his face, others simply turned away, and only one older merchant kindly explained that a gold coin is too high of a price for such a ring and the most he could get for it would be a silver coin or a bronze.

- SELF LOVE -

When the young man heard that, he was distraught, remembering the wise man's directions to not take any less than a gold coin.

He went through the entire market and offered the ring to over a hundred people, but nothing changed. He got on his horse and rode back to the wise man.

"I wasn't able to sell your ring," he said with sadness. "No one was willing to pay me a gold coin for it. I could have gotten a silver coin, but that's not what this ring is worth."

"Now that's a very important point, my son!" said the wise man. "Before trying to sell a ring, you should find out what it's worth! And who can know better than a jeweller? Go to the jeweller and ask him what he will offer us for the ring. But no matter what he says, don't sell him the ring, just come back to me right away."

The young man jumped on his horse and rode to the jeweller. The jeweller carefully and patiently examined the ring, weighed it on his scale, then turned to the young man. "Tell your master that right now I can't give him more than 58 gold coins. But if he gives me sometime, I'll buy it for 70, to compensate for the wait!"

"70 gold coins!" the young man exclaimed. He laughed, thanked the jeweller and raced back to the wise man.

The wise man listened to the account of what happened and looked at the young man in the eyes. "Remember this, my son. You are like this ring — precious and unique! And only a real expert can appreciate your true worth. So why are you wasting your time going to random people to find out what your worth is?"

REFLECT: What is something you like about yourself?

- SELF LOVE -



**YOU ARE IMPERFECT, YOU ARE
WIRED FOR STRUGGLE, BUT YOU
ARE WORTHY OF LOVE AND
BELONGING.**

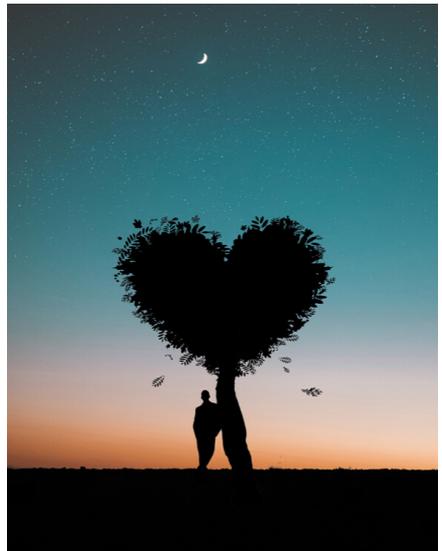
BRENE BROWN

**In order to love who you are, you cannot hate
the experiences that shaped you.**

Andrea Dykstra

**WHEN YOU RECOVER OR
DISCOVER SOMETHING THAT
NOURISHES YOUR SOUL AND
BRINGS JOY, CARE ENOUGH
ABOUT YOURSELF TO MAKE
ROOM FOR IT IN YOUR LIFE.**

JEAN SHINODA BOLEN



- LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS -

“FOR BEAUTIFUL EYES, LOOK FOR THE GOOD IN OTHERS; FOR BEAUTIFUL LIPS, SPEAK ONLY WORDS OF KINDNESS; AND FOR POISE, WALK WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU ARE NEVER ALONE.” — AUDREY HEPBURN

WE ARE NEVER ALONE

Do you know the story about the Cherokee Indian youth's rite of passage?

When a youth reaches the age of manhood, his father takes him into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the morning sun shines through it. He cannot cry out for help to anyone. Once he survives the night, he is a Man. He cannot tell the other boys of this experience, because each lad must come into manhood on his own.

The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human who might do him harm. The wind blows the grass and earth and shakes his stump, but he must sit stoically, never uncovering his eyes. Finally, after a horrific night, the sun appeared and he removes his blindfold.

It is then he discovers he is not alone. His father is sitting on the stump next to him, having been at watch the entire night, protecting his son from harm.

Remember that we are never truly alone. Even when we do not know it, our family, friends, and communities are watching out for us.

REFLECT: Do the people in your life know how much they mean to you? How do you show them you care?

- LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS -

"To love someone fiercely, to believe in something with your whole heart, to celebrate a fleeting moment in time, to fully engage in a life that doesn't come with guarantees – these are risks that involve vulnerability and often pain. But, I'm learning that recognising and leaning into the discomfort of vulnerability teaches us how to live with joy, gratitude and grace."

Brene Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection*



"SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN RELATIONSHIPS COME FROM THE FACT THAT MOST PEOPLE ENTER A RELATIONSHIP IN ORDER TO GET SOMETHING. THEY'RE TRYING TO FIND SOMEONE WHO'S GOING TO MAKE THEM FEEL GOOD. IN REALITY, THE ONLY WAY A RELATIONSHIP WILL LAST IS IF YOU SEE YOUR RELATIONSHIP AS A PLACE THAT YOU GO TO GIVE, AND NOT A PLACE THAT YOU GO TO TAKE"

ANTHONY ROBBINS

- LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS -

"IF YOU GO LOOKING FOR A FRIEND, YOU'RE GOING TO FIND THEY'RE VERY SCARCE. IF YOU GO OUT TO BE A FRIEND, YOU'LL FIND THEM EVERYWHERE." – ZIG ZIGLAR

THE TWO BROTHERS

Once upon a time, two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side by side, sharing machinery, and trading labour and goods as needed without a hitch. Then the long collaboration fell apart. It began with a small misunderstanding and it grew into a major difference, and finally it exploded into an exchange of bitter words followed by weeks of silence.

One morning there was a knock on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox. "I'm looking for a few days work," he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there. Could I help you?" "Yes," said the older brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbour. In fact, it's my younger brother. Last week there was a meadow between us and he took his bulldozer to the river levee and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll go him one better. See that pile of lumber curing by the barn? I want you to build me a fence - an 8-foot fence - so I won't need to see his place anymore. Cool him down anyhow."

The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails and the post hole digger and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you." The older brother had to go to town for supplies, so he helped the carpenter get the materials ready and then he was off for the day.

- LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS -

The carpenter worked hard all that day measuring, sawing, and nailing. About sunset when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job. The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge - a bridge stretching from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work - handrails and all - and the neighbour, his younger brother, was coming across, his hand outstretched. "You are quite a fellow to build this bridge after all I've said and done." The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in the middle, taking each other's hand.

They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox on his shoulder. "No, wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother. "I'd love to stay on," the carpenter said, " but I have many more bridges to build."

Everyday we have the choice of building fences or bridges. One leads to isolation and the other to openness.



REFLECT: What do you seek most in your relationships with others? Are you fulfilled in this area of your life?

- GRIEF -

"I DON'T THINK OF ALL THE MISERY, BUT OF ALL THE BEAUTY THAT REMAINS." — ANNE FRANK

THE MAGICAL MUSTARD SEED

There is an old Chinese tale about a woman whose only son died. In her grief, she went to the holy man and asked, "What prayers, what magical incantations do you have to bring my son back to life?"

Instead of sending her away or reasoning with her, he said to her, "Fetch me a mustard seed from a home that has never known sorrow. We will use it to drive the sorrow out of your life." The woman went off at once in search of that magical mustard seed.

She came first to a splendid mansion, knocked at the door, and said, "I am looking for a home that has never known sorrow. Is this such a place? It is very important to me."

They told her, "You've certainly come to the wrong place," and began to describe all the tragic things that recently had befallen them.

The woman said to herself, "Who is better able to help these poor, unfortunate people than I, who have had misfortune of my my own?"

She stayed to comfort them, then went on in search of a home that had never known sorrow. But wherever she turned, in hotels and in other places, she found one tale after another of sadness and misfortune.

The woman became so involved in helping others cope with their sorrows that she eventually let go of her own. She would later come to understand that it was the quest to find the magical mustard seed that drove away her suffering.

- GRIEF -

"THE RISK OF LOVE IS LOSS, AND THE PRICE OF LOSS IS GRIEF -- BUT THE PAIN OF GRIEF IS ONLY A SHADOW WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PAIN OF NEVER RISKING LOVE." - HILARY STANTON ZUNIN

RIDING THE WAVES OF GRIEF: A Personal Story - Author Unknown

I wish I could say you get used to people dying. I never did. I don't want to. It tears a hole through me whenever somebody I love dies, no matter the circumstances. But I don't want it to "not matter". I don't want it to be something that just passes. My scars are a testament to the love and the relationship that I had for and with that person. And if the scar is deep, so was the love. So be it. Scars are a testament to life. Scars are a testament that I can love deeply and live deeply and be cut, or even gouged, and that I can heal and continue to live and continue to love. And the scar tissue is stronger than the original flesh ever was. Scars are a testament to life. Scars are only ugly to people who can't see.

As for grief, you'll find it comes in waves. When the ship is first wrecked, you're drowning, with wreckage all around you. Everything floating around you reminds you of the beauty and the magnificence of the ship that was, and is no more. And all you can do is float. You find some piece of the wreckage and you hang on for a while. Maybe it's some physical thing. Maybe it's a happy memory or a photograph. Maybe it's a person who is also floating. For a while, all you can do is float. Stay alive.

- GRIEF -

In the beginning, the waves are 100 feet tall and crash over you without mercy. They come 10 seconds apart and don't even give you time to catch your breath. All you can do is hang on and float. After a while, maybe weeks, maybe months, you'll find the waves are still 100 feet tall, but they come further apart. When they come, they still crash all over you and wipe you out. But in between, you can breathe, you can function. You never know what's going to trigger the grief. It might be a song, a picture, a street intersection, the smell of a cup of coffee. It can be just about anything...and the wave comes crashing. But in between waves, there is life.

Somewhere down the line, and it's different for everybody, you find that the waves are only 80 feet tall. Or 50 feet tall. And while they still come, they come further apart. You can see them coming. An anniversary, a birthday, or Christmas, or landing at O'Hare. You can see it coming, for the most part, and prepare yourself. And when it washes over you, you know that somehow you will, again, come out the other side. Soaking wet, sputtering, still hanging on to some tiny piece of the wreckage, but you'll come out.

Take it from an old guy. The waves never stop coming, and somehow you don't really want them to. But you learn that you'll survive them. And other waves will come. And you'll survive them too. If you're lucky, you'll have lots of scars from lots of loves. And lots of shipwrecks.

- ATTITUDE -

"A BAD ATTITUDE IS LIKE A FLAT TYRE. YOU WON'T GET ANYWHERE UNTIL YOU CHANGE IT." – UNKNOWN

THE LAW OF THE GARBAGE TRUCK

One day I hopped in a taxi and we took off for the airport. We were driving in the right lane when suddenly a black car jumped out of a parking space right in front of us. My taxi driver slammed on his brakes, skidded, and missed the other car by just inches!

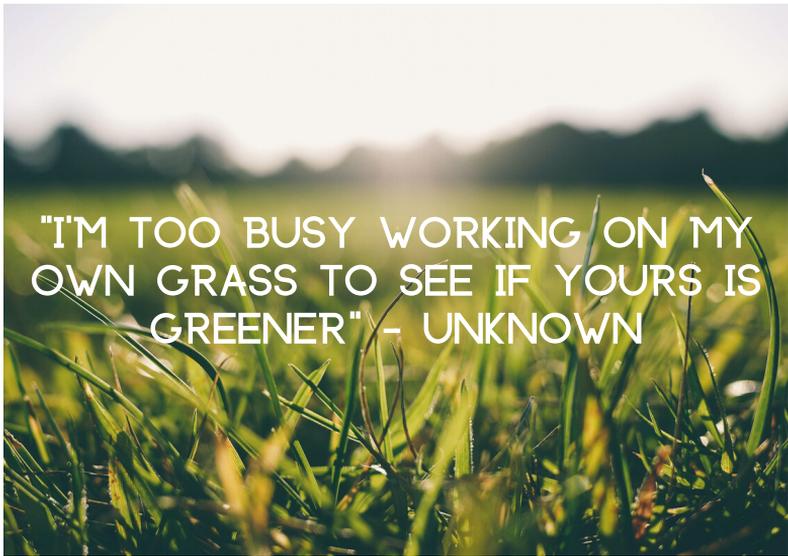
The driver of the other car whipped his head around and started yelling at us. My taxi driver just smiled and waved at the guy. And I mean, he was really friendly. So I asked, 'Why did you just do that? This guy almost ruined your car and sent us to the hospital!' This is when my taxi driver taught me what I now call, 'The Law of the Garbage Truck'.

He explained that many people are like garbage trucks. They run around full of garbage, full of frustration, full of anger, and full of disappointment. As their garbage piles up, they need a place to dump it and sometimes they'll dump it on you. Don't take it personally, just smile, wave, wish them well, and move on. Don't take their garbage and spread it to other people at work, at home, or on the streets.

REFLECT: When you're having a bad day, what do you do to make yourself feel better?

**KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS POSITIVE BECAUSE YOUR THOUGHTS
BECOME YOUR WORDS. KEEP YOUR WORDS POSITIVE BECAUSE
YOUR WORDS BECOME YOUR BEHAVIOR. KEEP YOUR BEHAVIOR
POSITIVE BECAUSE YOUR BEHAVIOR BECOMES YOUR HABITS.
KEEP YOUR HABITS POSITIVE BECAUSE YOUR HABITS BECOME
YOUR VALUES. KEEP YOUR VALUES POSITIVE BECAUSE YOUR
VALUES BECOME YOUR DESTINY.**

MAHATMA GANDHI



"We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that **everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way**" - Viktor E. Frankl

- ATTITUDE -

“DO NOT PRAY FOR AN EASY LIFE, PRAY FOR THE STRENGTH TO ENDURE A DIFFICULT ONE.” —BRUCE LEE

THE FENCE

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily, gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said “you have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one.” You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there. Make sure you control your temper the next time you are tempted to say something you will regret later.

- KINDNESS -

"WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET, BUT WE MAKE A LIFE BY
WHAT WE GIVE" - WINSTON CHURCHILL

THE STARFISH

Once a man was walking along a beach. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. Off in the distance he could see a person going back and forth between the surf's edge and the beach. Back and forth this person went. As the man approached, he could see that there were hundreds of starfish stranded on the sand as the result of the natural action of the tide.

The man was stuck by the the apparent futility of the task. There were far too many starfish. Many of them were sure to perish. As he approached, the person continued the task of picking up starfish one by one and throwing them into the surf.

As he came up to the person, he said: "You must be crazy. There are thousands of miles of beach covered with starfish. You can't possibly make a difference." The person looked at the man. He then stooped down to pick up one more starfish and threw it back into the ocean. He turned back to the man and said: "It sure made a difference to that one!"



- KINDNESS -

“REMEMBER THERE’S NO SUCH THING AS A SMALL ACT OF KINDNESS. EVERY ACT CREATES A RIPPLE WITH NO LOGICAL END.” – SCOTT ADAMS

THE THREE RACES

There was once a young athletic boy who was hungry for success, for whom winning was everything and success was measured by such a result.

One day, the boy was preparing himself for a running competition in his small native village, where himself and two other young boys would compete. A large crowd had congregated to witness the sporting spectacle and a wise old man, upon hearing of the little boy, had travelled far to bear witness also.

The race commenced, looking like a level heat at the finishing line, but sure enough the boy dug deep and called on his determination, strength and power .. he took the finishing line and was first. The crowd was ecstatic and cheered and waved at the boy. The wise man remained still and calm, expressing no sentiment. The little boy, however, felt proud and important.

A second race was called, and two new young, fit challengers came forward to run with the little boy. The race was started and sure enough the little boy came through and finished first once again. The crowd was ecstatic again and cheered and waved at the boy. The wise man remained still and calm, again expressing no sentiment. The little boy, however, felt proud and important.

- KINDNESS -

"Another race, another race!" pleaded the little boy. The wise old man stepped forward and presented the little boy with two new challengers, an elderly frail lady and a blind man. "What is this?", quizzed the little boy. "This is no race" he exclaimed. "Race!", said the wise man. The race was started and the boy was the only finisher, the other two challengers left standing at the starting line. The little boy was ecstatic, he raised his arms in delight. The crowd, however, was silent showing no sentiment toward the little boy.

"What has happened? Why not do the people join in my success?" he asked the wise old man. "Race again", replied the wise man, "...this time, finish together, all three of you, finish together" continued the wise man. The little boy thought a little, stood in the middle of the blind man and the frail old lady, and then took the two challengers by the hand. The race began and the little boy walked slowly, ever so slowly, to the finishing line and crossed it. The crowd were ecstatic and cheered and waved at the boy. The wise man smiled, gently nodding his head. The little boy felt proud and important.

"Old man, I understand not! Who are the crowd cheering for? Which one of us three?", asked the little boy. The wise old man looked into the little boy's eyes, placing his hands on the boy's shoulders, and replied softly .. "Little boy, for this race you have won much more than in any race you have ever ran before, and for this race the crowd cheer not for any winner!"

- JUST FOR FUN -

“LAUGH LOUDLY, LAUGH OFTEN, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, LAUGH AT YOURSELF.” ~ CHELSEA HANDLER

An elderly man in Phoenix calls his son in New York and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing, forty-five years of misery is enough."

"Pop, what are you talking about?" the son screams.

"We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the old man says.

"We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Chicago and tell her," and he hangs up.

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like heck they're getting divorced," she shouts, "I'll take care of this." She calls Phoenix immediately, and screams at the old man, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. "Okay," he says, "They're coming for Thanksgiving and paying their own fares. Now what do we tell them for Christmas?"

- JUST FOR FUN -

"MOTHER TERESA DIDN'T WALK AROUND COMPLAINING ABOUT HER THIGHS - SHE HAD SHIT TO DO!" - SARAH SILVERMAN

"IF YOU EVER START TAKING THINGS TOO SERIOUSLY, JUST REMEMBER THAT WE ARE TALKING MONKEYS ON AN ORGANIC SPACESHIP FLYING THROUGH THE UNIVERSE" - JOE ROGAN

"You should bring something into the world that wasn't in the world before. It doesn't matter what that is. It doesn't matter if it's a table or a film or gardening—everyone should create. You should do something, then sit back and say 'I did that.' - Ricky Gervais

"'I'm bored' is a useless thing to say. I mean, you live in a great, big, vast world that you've seen none percent of. Even the inside of your own mind is endless; it goes on forever, inwardly, do you understand? The fact that you're alive is amazing, so you don't get to say 'I'm bored.'"
Louis C. K.

- JUST FOR FUN -

“NORMAL IS NOTHING MORE THAN A CYCLE ON A WASHING MACHINE” ~ WHOOP! GOLDBERG

A young woman is seated next to a lawyer on a flight from LA to NY. The lawyer asks if she would like to play a fun game?

The woman, tired, just wants to take a nap, politely declines and rolls over to the window to catch a few winks.

The lawyer persists and explains that the game is easy and a lot of fun. He explains, “I ask you a question, and if you don’t know the answer, you pay me \$5.00, and vice versa.

“Again, she declines and tries to get some sleep.

The lawyer, now agitated, says, “Okay, if you don’t know the answer you pay me \$5.00, and if I don’t know the answer, I will pay you \$500.00.”

This catches the woman's attention and, figuring there will be no end to this torment unless she plays, agrees to the game.

The lawyer asks the first question. “What’s the distance from the earth to the moon?”

The blonde doesn’t say a word, reaches into her purse, pulls out a \$5.00 bill and hands it to the lawyer.

“Okay” says the lawyer, “your turn.

- JUST FOR FUN -

"She asks the lawyer, "What goes up a hill with three legs and comes down with four legs?"

The lawyer, puzzled, takes out his laptop computer and searches all his references, no answer. He taps into the air phone with his modem and searches the net and the library of congress, no answer.

Frustrated, he sends e-mails to all his friends and coworkers, to no avail. After an hour, he wakes the woman, and hands her \$500.00. The woman says, "Thank you," and turns back to get some more sleep.

The lawyer, who is more than a little miffed, wakes her and asks, "Well, what's the answer?"

Without a word, the blonde reaches into her purse, hands the lawyer \$5.00, and goes back to sleep.



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www.listenupgame.com**

Want to chat to a professional? Below is a list of some of Australia's top organisations to reach out to for help on a range of different issues.

☐ **beyondblue Support Service - Support. Advice. Action**

Information and referral to relevant services for depression and anxiety related matters. Phone: 1300 22 46 36

(www.beyondblue.org.au)

☐ **Black Dog Institute**

The Black Dog Institute is a world leader in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mood disorders such as depression and bipolar disorder.

(www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)

☐ **Blue Knot Foundation Helpline (formerly Adults Surviving Child Abuse)**

The Blue Knot Helpline provides information and short term counselling nationally via telephone for adults survivors of childhood trauma on 1300 657 380 and email

helpline@blueknot.org.au. 7 days a week 9am to 5pm AEST.

(www.blueknot.org.au).

☐ **The Butterfly Foundation**

Butterfly provides support for Australians who suffer from eating disorders and negative body image issues. Phone: 1800 33 4673

(www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/)

☐ **Carer Gateway**

Are you one of the 2.5 million Australians who care for a loved one, friend or neighbour? Find out information about the support services available to you on the Carer Gateway.

(www.carergateway.gov.au)

☐ **Headspace**

Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. We help young people who are going through a tough time.

(www.headspace.org.au/)

☐ **Kids Help Line**

Confidential and anonymous, telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between 5 and 25. Phone: 1800 55 18 00 (www.kidshelpline.com.au/)

☐ **Lifeline**

24 hour telephone counselling service. Phone: 13 11 14 (www.lifeline.org.au/)

☐ **Mensline Australia**

A dedicated service for men with relationship and family concerns. Phone: 1300 78 9978 (www.mensline.org.au/)

☐ **1800RESPECT**

National sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling and information referral service, available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Phone: 1800 737 732 (www.1800respect.org.au/)

☐ **PANDA - National Perinatal Depression Helpline**

PANDA's National Perinatal Depression Helpline, funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments, provides vital support, information, referral and counselling to thousands of Australian parents and their families. Phone: 1300 726 306 (www.panda.org.au/)

☐ **ReachOut.com**

ReachOut.com is Australia's leading online youth mental health service. ReachOut.com is an initiative of the Inspire Foundation, an Australian non-profit with a mission to help young people lead happier lives. (www.reachout.com/)

☐ **Relationships Australia**

Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities. Phone: 1300 364 277 (www.relationships.org.au/)

☐ **SANE Australia**

SANE Australia is a national charity helping all Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life – through campaigning, education and research. SANE conducts innovative programs and campaigns to improve the lives of people living with mental illness, their family and friends. It also operates a busy Helpline and website, which have thousands of contacts each year from around Australia. Phone: 1800 187 263 (www.sane.org/index.php)

☐ **Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service**

(VCS) Provides counselling and group programs to Australian veterans and peacekeepers and their families. Phone: 1800 011 046 (www.dva.gov.au)

☐ **Legal Aid Queensland**

Free information on a range of legal issues. Call 1300 65 11 88 or visit the website. <https://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/Home>

This is also a link to a range of free health services offered by the Queensland government -

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/news-alerts/news/free-health-care-services-Queensland>