

Think Abouts 02

**Condensed and annotated
by
Jackson Koller**

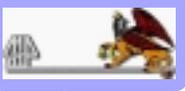


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Introduction

Welcome to this collection, one of several in a series. . .

Mostly about life, and living, but some on Nursing, Religion, etc., no jokes here though. These again are mostly from the email circuit, passed around until their origins are lost in the paperless trail!

I hope that they may cause you to pause and consider them as they did for me.

If I feel strongly enough about any essay my comments will follow it!

In thoughts we live,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackson Koller".



FRIENDS

1. In kindergarten your idea of a good friend was the person who let you have the red crayon when all that was left was the black one.
2. In first grade your idea of a good friend was the person who went to the bathroom with you and held your hand as you walked through the scary halls.
3. In second grade your idea of a good friend was the person who helped you stand up to the class bully.
4. In third grade your idea of a good friend was the person who shared their lunch with you when you forgot yours on the bus.
5. In fourth grade your idea of a good friend was the person who was willing to switch square dancing partners in gym so you wouldn't have to be stuck do-si-do-ing with Nasty Nicky or Smelly Susan.
6. In fifth grade your idea of a friend was the person who saved a seat on the back of the bus for you.
7. In sixth grade your idea of a friend was the person who went up to Nick or Susan, your new crush, and asked them to dance with you, so that if they said no you wouldn't have to be embarrassed.
8. In seventh grade your idea of a friend was the person who let you copy the social studies homework from the night before that you had forgotten.
9. In eighth grade your idea of a good friend was the person who helped you pack up your stuffed animals and old baseball cards so that your room would be a "high schooler's" room, but didn't laugh at you when you finished and broke out into tears.
10. In ninth grade your idea of a good friend was the person who went to that "cool" party thrown by a senior so you wouldn't wind up being the only freshman there.
11. In tenth grade your idea of a good friend was the person who changed their schedule so you would have someone to sit with at lunch.
12. In eleventh grade your idea of a good friend was the person who gave you rides in their new car, convinced your parents that you shouldn't be grounded, consoled you when you broke up with Nick or Susan, and found you a date to the prom.
13. In twelfth grade your idea of a good friend was the person who helped you pick out a college, assured you that you would get into that college, helped you deal with your parents who were having a hard time adjusting to the idea of letting you go...
14. At graduation your idea of a good friend was the person who was crying on the inside but managed the biggest smile one could give as they congratulated you.
15. Now, your idea of a good friend is still the person who gives you the better of two choices, holds your hand when you're scared, helps you fight off those who try to take advantage of you, thinks of you at times when you are not there, reminds you of what you have forgotten, helps you put the past behind you but understands when you need to hold on to it a little longer, stays with you so that you have confidence, goes out of their way to make time for you, helps you clear up your mistakes, helps you deal with pressure from others, smiles for you when



they are sad, helps you become a better person, and most importantly loves you!

Pass this on to those friends of the past, and those of the future...and those you have met along the way. Let it make a difference in your day and theirs. The difference between expressing love and having regrets is that the regrets may stay around forever. Thank you for being a friend. No matter where we go or who we become, never forget who helped us get there.

YOU HAVE JUST BEEN HUGGED

There's something in a simple hug
 That always warms the heart;
 It welcomes us back home
 And makes it easier to part.
 A hug's a way to share the joy
 And sad times we go through,
 Or just a way for friends to say
 They like you 'cause you're you.
 Hugs are meant for anyone
 For whom we really care,
 From your grandma to your neighbor,
 Or a cuddly teddy bear.
 A hug is an amazing thing -
 It's just the perfect way
 To show the love we're feeling
 But can't find the words to say.
 It's funny how a little hug
 Makes everyone feel good;
 In every place and language,
 It's always understood.
 And hugs don't need new equipment,
 Special batteries or parts -
 Just open up your arms
 And open up your hearts.

Keep this hug going :-) Pass it on to your buddies :-)

Amazing how such a simple thing can change a whole situation, day or person!

Big Rocks

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." Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide mouth mason jar and set it on the table in front of him.

Then he 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 said, "Yes."

Then he said, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the space between the big rocks.

Then he 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.

What's important in your life, what's important to you? Make them count!



BUTT PRINTS IN THE SAND

One night I had a wondrous dream,
 One set of footprints there were seen,
 The footprints of my precious Lord,
 But mine were not along the shore.

But then some stranger prints appeared,
 And I asked the Lord, "What have we here?"
 Those prints are large and round and neat,
 "But Lord, they are too big for feet."

"My child," He said in somber tones,
 "For miles I carried you alone.
 I challenged you to walk in faith,
 But you refused and made me wait."

"You disobeyed, you would not grow,
 The walk of faith, you would not know,
 So I got tired, I got fed up,
 And there I dropped you on your butt."

"Because in life, there comes a time,
 When one must fight, and one must climb,
 When one must rise and take a stand,
 Or leave their butt prints in the sand."

This is the original that I referred to in the first collection. Basically, says to get your act together and get moving or even a higher power may get discouraged and frustrated with you!

Yes, we put our faith in a greater force than ourselves, yes, there are times when we feel we need help. But when it comes down to it, our lives are ours to live, to change and fix on our own. We have that much power inside, a higher force is our cheering section, not, a handyman to fix us! Fix yourself. . .

DOGGIE PLEDGE

I will not eat the cats' food, before or after they eat it
 I will not burn rubber through the open car window and into the fast food
 restaurant,
 no matter how good it smells.

The computer's mouse is, unlike a real mouse, inedible.
 I will stop trying to find the few remaining pieces of carpet in
 the house when I am about to throw up.

I will not throw up in the car.

I will scotch my bottom along the grass to rid myself of hangers-on.
 I will not steal used sanitary napkins from the bathroom garbage.



I will not roll on dead seagulls, fish, crabs, etc.
 I will not eat other animals' poop.
 I will not lick my human's face after eating animal poop.
 I will not roll my head around in other animals' poop.
 "Kitty box crunchies" are not food.
 I will not eat any more socks and then re-deposit them in the
 backyard after processing.
 The diaper pail is not a cookie jar.
 I will not eat the disposable diapers, especially the dirty ones.
 I will not wake Mommy up by sticking my cold, wet nose up her bottom end.
 I will not chew my human's toothbrush and not tell them.
 I will not chew crayons or pens, 'specially not the red ones, or my
 people will think I am hemorrhaging.
 When in the car, I will not insist on having the window rolled down
 when it's raining outside.
 I will not drop soggy tennis balls in the underwear of someone who is sitting on
 the toilet.
 We do not have a doorbell. I will not bark each time I hear one on TV.
 I will not steal my Mom's underwear and dance all over the back yard with it.
 The sofa is not a face towel. Neither are Mom and Dad's laps.
 My head does not belong in the refrigerator.
 I will not bite the officer's hand when he reaches in for Mom's
 driver's license and car registration.
 I will not play tug-o'-war with Dad's underwear when he's on the toilet.
 I do not need to suddenly stand straight up when I'm lying under the coffee table.
 I will not roll my toys behind the fridge.
 The garbage collector is NOT stealing our stuff.
 I must shake the rainwater out of my fur BEFORE entering the house.

Waggily, your dog, if they could

I am very fond of animals in general and even more so when specifically associated with the family. Growing up there was no such thing as 'pets!' The animals in the household were part of the family, not as possessions.

I have never quite come to gripes with people who have 'pets!' A lot of their (the animals) personalities are formed by how their treated and integrated into the family, or not!

Humorous, how people who go out and get a dog, treat it as a dog, and then are surprised when they get a DAWG!

I would no sooner take less care of an animal in the house than a child, nor show it less care or lovin'! Or vice versa. . .

In a broader scope: all living things on this earth belong to one family, this planet is our communal home. As such, treat all as your brothers and sisters. Remember that the next time you start to throw something out the car window: "That's your living room, friend!"



Fascinating facts about Lincoln and Kennedy

Abraham Lincoln was elected to congress in 1846.
John F. Kennedy was elected to congress in 1946.

Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860.
John F. Kennedy was elected President in 1960

The names Lincoln and Kennedy each contain seven letters.

Both were particularly concerned with civil rights.

Both wives lost their children while living in the White House.

Both Presidents were shot on a Friday.

Both were shot in the head.

Here is an interesting one...

Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy.
Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln.

Both were assassinated by Southerners.

Both were succeeded by Southerners.

Both successors were named Johnson.

Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.
Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.

John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839.
Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939.

Both assassins were known by three names.
Both names contain fifteen letters.

Booth ran from the theater and was caught in a warehouse.
Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a theater.

Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials.

There is more in this world that can't be explained away than we like to think, science is answering many questions, but, there is more to learn. I have found many coincidences that point to more order than chaos.

There have been numerous times subtracting a check and ending up with the same number I subtracted than I'd like to think about.



Think about this: the majority of mankind's technological advances have been in the last hundred years, more than all of our previous existence put together.

Try this, imagine going back a hundred years and trying to explain something to a resident of that time that you take for granted today. Explain speed limits to someone who thought 6 miles per day in a covered wagon was good time.

Imagine that the things we are puzzled by today will be common place facts tomorrow. . .

Fog Index

Did you realize that there is a Fog Index used in communication?

It is a mathematical formula for the readability of text (but, can be applied to any medium):

Choose a sample 100-125 words long.

Count the words and sentences. Count the independent clauses as separate sentences. Divide the word count by the sentence count.

Count words of three or more syllables. Divide by the length of the passage to get the percentage. Add this to the average sentence length.

Multiple the total by 0.4.

(Product: the grade level needed for easy comprehension, or the Fog Index.)

For a general audience 10 is about right! Many magazines are 10-12, most best-sellers are 8-10.

Just a point I wanted to add in somewhere. . .

Time and Friends

Imagine there is a bank that credits your account each morning with \$86,400.

It carries over no balance from day to day.

Every evening deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do?

Draw out every cent, of course!!!!

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is TIME.

Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds.

Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose.

It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft.

Each day it opens a new account for you.

Each night it burns the remains of the day.

If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against the "tomorrow."

You must live in the present on today's deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness, and success!

The clock is running. Make the most of today.

To realize the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who failed a grade.

To realize the value of ONE MONTH, ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby.



To realize the value of ONE WEEK, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.
 To realize the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.
 To realize the value of ONE MINUTE, ask a person who missed the train.
 To realize the value of ONE-SECOND, ask a person who just avoided an accident.

To realize the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who won a silver medal in the Olympics.

Treasure every moment that you have! And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time.

And remember that time waits for no one.

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery.

Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present!!!

Time is the one precious commodity that we all share, that can't be replaced, and shouldn't be squandered. . .

FRIENDS WITHOUT FACES

(and some that do)

We sit and we type, and we stare at our screens
 We all have to wonder, what this possibly means.
 With our mouse we roam, through the rooms in a maze
 Looking for something or someone, as we sit in a daze.
 We chat with each other, we type all our woes
 Small groups we do form, and gang up on our foes.
 We wait for somebody, to type out our name
 We want recognition, but it is always the same.
 We give kisses and hugs, and sometimes flirt
 In IMs we chat deeply, and reveal why we hurt.
 We do form friendships - but - why we don't know
 But some of these friendships, will flourish and grow.
 Why is it on screen, we can be so bold
 Telling our secrets, that have never been told.
 Why is it we share, the thoughts in our mind
 With those we can't see, as though we were blind.
 The answer is simple, it is as clear as a bell.
 We all have our problems, and need someone to tell.
 We can't tell real people, but tell someone we must
 So we turn to the 'puter, and to those we can trust.
 Even though it is crazy, the truth still remains
 They are Friends Without Faces, and odd little names.

Take this week to have fun and be sure to let those "friends without faces" know how much you appreciate them. Happy On-line Friendship Week!

We have created a new type of community, the on-line village (that is global).

Within this community without faces, we treat each other equally. We don't know (unless we say) our race, nationality or other trait that gets in the way in the real world, we share a true humanity. . .



Friendship Ball

A ball is a circle,

No beginning, no end.

It keeps us together

Like our Circle of Friends

But the treasure inside

for you to see

is the treasure of friendship

You've granted to me.

Today I pass the friendship ball to you.

Pass it on to someone who is a friend to you...

Don't drop it. . .

A LITTLE FRIENDSHIP TEST

First things first: **NO CHEATING!** Don't cheat.* This is a little game that has a pretty funny/creepy outcome. Don't read ahead, just do it in order. It takes about 3 minutes. It's worth it. It's kinda eerie.

First, Get a blank piece of paper and pen.

P.S. When you are asked to choose names, make sure it's people you **ACTUALLY KNOW**, and go with your first instincts!

Do one line at a time - don't read ahead or you'll ruin the fun!!

- 1.) First, write the numbers 1 through 11 in a column.
- 2.) Then, beside numbers 1 and 2, write any two numbers you want.
- 3.) Beside the 3 and 7, write down the names of members of the opposite sex (or same sex if you're gay).
- 4.) Write anyone's name (like friends or family...) in the 4th, 5th and 6th spots. Don't cheat or you'll be upset that you did.
- 5.) Write down four song titles in 8, 9, 10 and 11.
- 6.) Finally, make a wish.



And here is the key for the game:

- >1.) You must tell (the number in space 2) people about this game.
- >2.) The person in space 3 is the one that you love.
- >3.) The person in 7 is one you like but can't work out.
- >4.) You care most about the person you put in 4.
- >5.) The person you name in number 5 is the one who knows you very well.
- >6.) The person you name in 6 is your lucky star.
- >7.) The song in 8 is the song that matches with the person in number 3
- >8.) The title in 9 is the song for the person in 7.
- >9.) The tenth space is the song that tells you most about your mind.
- >10.) And 11 is the song telling how you feel about life!

Hey, may or may not work, the point is: relax, enjoy life, and have some fun along the way!

What goes around. . .

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer.

One day, while trying to eke out a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of."

And that he did. In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin! The name of the nobleman was Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name: Sir Winston Churchill.

Someone once said what goes around comes around.

Work like you don't need the money.

Love like you've never been hurt.

Dance like nobody's watching.



HEALTH WARNING

C.N.N. REPORTS A NEW VIRUS HAS BEEN DISCOVERED RECENTLY. ONE PERSON CAN PASS IT ON TO MILLIONS AS IT IS VERY CONTAGIOUS. THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL HAS REPORTED THIS WEEK THAT THE VIRUS SPREADS VERY RAPIDLY FROM ONE PERSON TO THE NEXT.

THEY HAVE PUT A VERY INTERESTING NAME ON THIS VIRUS. IT IS CALLED.....

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A SMILE

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UH! OH! TOO LATE!!!
I SEE IT ON YOUR FACE ALREADY!

YOU'VE GOT THE VIRUS!!!!!!

HAVE A GREAT DAY AND PASS IT ON!!!

Ditto. . .

The Hospital Window

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window.

The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back. The men talked for hours on end.

They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation. And every afternoon when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window.

The man in the other bed began to live for those one-hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers



walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every color of the rainbow. Grand old trees graced the landscape, and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance.

As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine the picturesque scene. One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man couldn't hear the band - he could see it in his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words.

Then unexpectedly, a sinister thought entered his mind. Why should the other man alone experience all the pleasures of seeing everything while he himself never got to see anything? It didn't seem fair.

At first thought the man felt ashamed. But as the days passed and he missed seeing more sights, his envy eroded into resentment and soon turned him sour. He began to brood and he found himself unable to sleep. He should be by that window - that thought, and only that thought now controlled his life.

Late one night as he lay staring at the ceiling, the man by the window began to cough. He was choking on the fluid in his lungs. The other man watched in the dimly lit room as the struggling man by the window groped for the button to call for help. Listening from across the room he never moved, never pushed his own button which would have brought the nurse running in. Less than five minutes later, the coughing and choking stopped, along with the sound of breathing. Now there was only silence.

The following morning the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths. When she found the lifeless body of the man by the window, she was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take it away. As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone. Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the world outside. Finally, he would have the joy of seeing it all himself. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed.

It faced a blank wall.

The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall. She said, "Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you."

Epilogue. . . .

You can interpret the story in any way you like. But one moral stands out: There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations. Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled. If you want to feel rich, just count all of the things you have that money can't buy.

Don't lose sight of what the first man did because of what the second didn't do. Keep in mind that a good deed is it's own reward. . .



Intelligence test - try it

This has got to be one of the most interesting intelligence tests I have ever seen. It's very short so try it, you may be amazed. A quick test of intelligence. Don't cheat! Because if you did, the test would be no fun. I promise, there are no tricks to the test.

>>> Read this sentence:
 >>> FINISHED FILES ARE THE RE-
 >>> SULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIF-
 >>> IC STUDY COMBINED WITH
 >>> THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

Now count **ALoud** the **F's** in that sentence. Count them **ONLY ONCE**: do not go back and count them again. See below...

Answer below:

There are six **F's** in the sentence. One of average intelligence finds three of them. If you spotted four, you're above average. If you got five, you can turn your nose at most anybody. If you caught six, you are a genius.

There is no catch. Many people forget the **OF's**. The human brain tends to see them as **V's** and not **F's**. Pretty weird, huh?

It fools almost everybody.

First time through I only caught five of them, I had to really concentrate to find all six.

Be safe on-line!

This message is not just to warn kids about the dangers. We should all take the advice. About a month ago a woman in San Diego wound up in the hospital because a man she met on the internet attempted to kill her. A lot of people feel safe confiding personal information to "friends" we meet on the internet, yet we really know nothing about them. All we know is what they tell us. So everyone should be careful. That person you are talking to on the other side of the United States could be someone that lives only a few hours away. That kind "friend" could be a deranged person. You never know and it is always better to be safe than sorry!

Shannon could hear the footsteps behind her as she walked toward home. The thought of being followed made her heart beat faster. "You're being silly,"



she told herself, “no one is following you.”

To be safe, she began to walk faster, but the footsteps kept up with her pace. She was afraid to look back, and she was glad she was almost home.

Shannon said a quick prayer, “God please get me home safe.” She saw the porch light burning, and ran the rest of the way to her house.

Once inside, she leaned against the door for a moment, relieved to be in the safety of her home. She glanced out the window to see if anyone was there. The sidewalk was empty.

After tossing her books on the sofa, she decided to grab a snack and get on-line. She logged on under her screen name ByAngel213. She checked her Buddy List, and saw GoTo123 was on. She sent him an instant message:

ByAngel213: Hi I’m glad you are on! I thought someone was following me home today. It was really weird!

GoTo123: LOL. You watch too much TV. Why would someone be following you? Don’t you live in a safe neighborhood?

ByAngel213: Of course I do. LOL I guess it was my imagination cuz’ I didn’t see anybody when I looked out.

GoTo123: Unless you gave your name out on-line. You haven’t done that have you?

ByAngel213: Of course not. I’m not stupid you know.

GoTo123: Did you have a softball game after school today?

ByAngel213: Yes and we won!!

GoTo123: That’s great! Who did you play?

ByAngel213: We played the Hornets. LOL. Their uniforms are so gross! They look like bees. LOL

GoTo123: What is your team called?

ByAngel213: We are the Canton Cats. We have tiger paws on our uniforms. They are really cute.

GoTo123: Did you pitch?

ByAngel213: No I play second base. I got to go. My homework has to be done before my parents get home. I don’t want them mad at me. Bye

GoTo123: Catch you later.. Bye

Meanwhile.....

GoTo123 went to the member menu and began to search for her profile. When it came up, he highlighted it and printed it out. He took out a pen, and began to write down what he knew about Angel so far.

Her name: Shannon. Birthday: Jan. 3, 1985. Age: 13 State where she lived: North Carolina.

Hobbies: softball, chorus, skating and going to the mall.

Besides this information, he knew she lived in Canton because she had just told him. He knew she stayed by herself until 6:30 p.m. every afternoon until her parents came home from work.

He knew she played softball on Thursday afternoons on the school team, and the team was named the Canton Cats.



Her favorite number 7 was printed on her jersey.

He knew she was in the seventh grade at the Canton Junior High School. She had told him all this in the conversations they had on-line. He had enough information to find her now.

Shannon didn't tell her parents about the incident on the way home from the ball park that day. She didn't want them to make a scene and stop her from walking home from the softball games.

Parents were always overreacting, and hers were the worst. It made her wish she was not an only child. Maybe if she had brothers and sisters, her parents wouldn't be so overprotective.

By Thursday, Shannon had forgotten about the footsteps following her.

Her game was in full swing when suddenly she felt someone staring at her. It was then that the memory came back. She glanced up from her second base position to see a man watching her closely. He was leaning against the fence behind first base, and he smiled when she looked at him.

He didn't look scary, and she quickly dismissed the fear she had felt.

After the game, he sat on a bleacher while she talked to the coach. She noticed his smile once again as she walked past him. He nodded and she smiled back. He noticed her name on the back of her shirt. He knew he had found her.

Quietly, he walked a safe distance behind her. It was only a few blocks to Shannon's home; and once he saw where she lived, he quickly returned to the park to get his car. Now he had to wait. He decided to get a bite to eat until the time came to go to Shannon's house.

He drove to a fast food restaurant and sat there until time to make his move.

Shannon was in her room later that evening when she heard voices in the living room.

"Shannon, come here," her father called. He sounded upset, and she couldn't imagine why.

She went into the room to see the man from the ballpark sitting on the sofa. "Sit down," her father began, "this man has just told us a most interesting story about you."

Shannon moved cautiously to a chair across from the man. How could he tell her parents anything? She had never seen him before today!

"Do you know who I am Shannon?" The man asked. "No", Shannon answered.

"I am a police officer and your online friend, GoTo123."

Shannon was stunned. "That's impossible! GoTo is a kid my age! He's 14; and he lives in Michigan!"

The man smiled. "I know I told you all that, but it wasn't true. You see, Shannon, there are people on-line who pretend to be kids. I was one of them.

But while others do it to find kids and hurt them, I belong to a group of parents who do it to protect kids from predators. I came here to find you to teach you how dangerous it is to give out too much information to people on-line.

You told me enough about yourself to make it easy for me to find you. Your name, the school you went to, the name of your ball team, and the position you played. The number and name on your jersey just made finding you a breeze."



Shannon was stunned. “You mean you don’t live in Michigan?” He laughed. “No, I live in Raleigh. It made you feel safe to think I was so far away, didn’t it?” She nodded.

“I had a friend whose daughter was like you. Only she wasn’t as lucky. The guy found her and murdered her while she was home alone. Kids are taught not to tell anyone when they are alone, yet they do it all the time on-line. The wrong people trick you into giving out information a little here and there on-line. Before you know it, you have told them enough for them to find you without even realizing you have done it.

I hope you’ve learned a lesson from this and won’t do it again.”

“I won’t,” Shannon promised solemnly.

“Will you tell others about this so they will be safe too?”

“It’s a promise!”

Please send this to as many people as you can, to teach them not to give any information about themselves. This world we live in today is too dangerous to even give out your age, let alone anything else. Be safe.

Well, in our paranoid world of today this is just another example of what to guard against. I find it such a shame that we have to go to such lengths. There have always been doubtful people around, it just seems like there are more nowadays. Yes, please BE SAFE!

Attitudes

Jerry is the kind of guy you love to hate. He is always in a good mood and always has something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply, “If I were any better, I would be twins!”

He was a unique manager because he had several waiters who had followed him around from restaurant to restaurant. The reason the waiters followed Jerry was because of his attitude. He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Jerry was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Jerry and asked him, I don’t get it! You can’t be a positive person all of the time.

How do you do it?”

Jerry replied, “Each morning I wake up and say to myself, Jerry, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood. I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it.

I choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life.

“Yeah, right, it’s not that easy,” I protested.

“Yes, it is,” Jerry said. “Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people will affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or



bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live life." I reflected on what Jerry said. Soon thereafter, I left the restaurant industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but I often thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it.

Several years later, I heard that Jerry did something you are never supposed to do in a restaurant business: he left the back door open one morning and was held up at gun point by three armed robbers. While trying to open the safe, his hand, shaking from nervousness, slipped off the combination.

The robbers panicked and shot him. Luckily, Jerry was found relatively quickly and rushed to the local trauma center.

After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Jerry was released from the hospital with fragments of the bullets still in his body.

I saw Jerry about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied, "If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?"

I declined to see his wounds, but did ask him what had gone through his mind as the robbery took place. "the first thing that went through my mind was that I should have locked the back door," Jerry replied. "Then, as I lay on the floor, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live or I could choose to die. I chose to live."

"Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked.

Jerry continued, "...the paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the ER and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared.

In their eyes, I read 'he's a dead man. I knew I needed to take action.'

"What did you do?" I asked.

"Well, there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Jerry. "She asked if I was allergic to anything. 'Yes,' I replied. The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled, 'Bullets!' Over their laughter, I told them, 'I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead'."

Jerry lived thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully. Attitude, after all, is everything.

Enough said, live life. . .

Keep It Short, Dummie!

Keep it short and concise!

The Gettysburg Address required only 266 words; the Ten Commandments, 297 words; the Declaration of Independence, 300 words, and the order of the U. S. Office of Price Administration to reduce the price of cabbage, 26,911 words.

Draw your own conclusions. . .

I just love this one for showing how our government has gotten out of control, plagued with verbosity!



The Important Things Life Teaches You...

1 ~ Most Important Question

During my second month of nursing school, our professor gave us a pop quiz.

I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions, until I read the last one: "What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?"

Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50s, but how would I know her name?

I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade. "Absolutely," said the professor. "In your careers you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say 'hello'."

I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

2 ~ 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

3 ~ Always remember those who serve

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10 year old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. "How much is an ice cream sundae?"

"Fifty cents," replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied a number of coins in it. "How much is a dish of plain ice cream?" he inquired.

Some people were now waiting for a table and the waitress was a bit impatient. "Thirty-five cents," she said brusquely. The little boy again counted the coins.

"I'll have the plain ice cream," he said. The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and departed.

When the waitress came back, she began wiping down the table and then swallowed hard at what she saw. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish,



were two nickels and five pennies - her tip.

4 ~ The Obstacle in Our Path

In ancient times, a king had a boulder placed on a roadway.

Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock.

Some of the King's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the king for not keeping the roads clear, But none did anything about getting the big stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables.

On approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. As the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been.

The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the king indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway.

The peasant learned what many others never understand. Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve one's condition.

5 ~ Giving Blood

Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at Stanford Hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year old brother, who had miraculously 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 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 Liz."

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color 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 boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood. Attitude, after all, is everything.

The point of most of these is thinking of others first, and the sacrifices we are willing to make!

"The Lil' Girl in the Park"

There was this lil' girl sitting by herself in the park. Everyone passed by her and never stopped to see why she looked so sad.

Dressed in a worn pink dress, bare foot and dirty, the girl just sat and watched the people go by. She never tried to speak, she never said a word.

Many people passed, but no one would stop.

The next day I decided to go back to the park, in curiosity, to see if the lil' girl would still be there.

Yes, she was there, right in the very spot as she was yesterday, and still with the sad look in her eyes.



Today I was to make my own move and walk over to the lil' girl.

For as we all know a park full of strange people is not a place for young children to play alone. As I got closer I could see the back of the lil' girl's dress was obscenely shaped.

I figured that was a reason the people just passed by and made no effort to help. Deformities are a low blow to our society and so help you if you make a step toward assisting someone who is different.

As I got closer the lil' girl lowered her eyes slightly to avoid my intent stare. As I approached her, I could see the obscene shape of her back more clearly.

Grotesquely shaped in a humped over form.

I smiled to let her know it was OK, I was there to help, to talk.

I sat down beside her and opened with a simple Hello.

The lil' girl acted shocked, and stammered a 'hi,' after a long stare into my eyes. I smiled and she shyly smiled back.

We talked till darkness fell and the park was completely empty.

I asked the girl why she was so sad. The lil' girl looked at me and with a sad face said, "Because I'm different." I immediately said, "That you are!" and smiled.

The lil' girl acted even sadder, she said, "I know."

"Lil' girl," I said, "you remind me of an angel, sweet and innocent." She looked at me and smiled.

Slowly she got to her feet, and said, "Really?"

"Yes, you're like a Lil' Guardian Angel sent to watch over all those people walking by,"

She shook her head, yes and smiled. With that she spread her wings and said, "I am, I'm your Guardian Angel", with a twinkle in her eye.

I was speechless, sure I was seeing things.

She said, "for once you thought of someone other than yourself, my job here is done".

I got to my feet and said, "wait, so why did no one stop to help an angel?" She looked at me and smiled, "You're the only one that could see me, and then she was gone.

And with that my life was changed dramatically.

So, When you think you're all you have, remember, your angel is always watching over you.

Every one of your friends is an Angel in their own way.

Regardless of whether or not you believe it is a true story, it continues the thoughts of thinking and acting beyond yourself! ! !

THE CARPENTER

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 that 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.

Words Of Wisdom

1994 Inaugural Speech - Nelson Mandela

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are
powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness,
that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be
brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are the child of God.

Your playing small doesn't serve
the world.

There's nothing enlightening about
shrinking so that other people
won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest the
glory of God that is within us.

It's not just some of us, it's in everyone.

And as we let our light shine, we
unconsciously give other people
permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own
fear, our presence automatically
liberates others.



My Mother Told me so..

A Story To Live By, by Ann Wells (Los Angeles Times)

My brother-in-law opened the bottom drawer of my sister's bureau and lifted out a tissue-wrapped package. "This," he said, "is not a slip."

"This is lingerie." He discarded the tissue and handed me the slip.

It was exquisite; silk, handmade and trimmed with a cobweb of lace.

The price tag with an astronomical figure on it was still attached.

"Jan bought this the first time we went to New York, at least 8 or 9 years ago.

She never wore it. She was saving it for a special occasion. Well, I guess this is the occasion."

He took the slip from me and put it on the bed with the other clothes we were taking to the mortician.

His hands lingered on the soft material for a moment, then he slammed the drawer shut and turned to me. "Don't ever save anything for a special occasion. Every day you're alive is a special occasion."

I remembered those words through the funeral and the days that followed when I helped him and my niece attend to all the sad chores that follow an unexpected death. I thought about them on the plane returning to California from the Midwestern town where my sister's family lives.

I thought about all the things that she hadn't seen or heard or done.

I thought about the things that she had done without realizing that they were special.

I'm still thinking about his words, and they've changed my life.

I'm reading more and dusting less. I'm sitting on the deck and admiring the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden. I'm spending more time with my family and friends and less time in committee meetings.

Whenever possible, life should be a pattern of experience to savor, not endure. I'm trying to recognize these moments now and cherish them.

I'm not "saving" anything; we use our good china and crystal for every special event - such as losing a pound, getting the sink unstopped, the first camellia blossom. I wear my good blazer to the market if I feel like it. My theory is if I look prosperous, I can shell out \$28.49 for one small bag of groceries without wincing. I'm not saving my good perfume for special parties; clerks in hardware stores and tellers in banks have noses that function as well as my party-going friends.

"Someday" and "one of these days" are losing their grip on my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing or hearing or doing, I want to see and hear and do it now. I'm not sure what my sister would've done had she known that she wouldn't be here for the tomorrow that we all take for granted. I think she would have called family members and a few close friends. She might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles. I like to think she would have gone out for a Chinese dinner, her favorite food. I'm guessing - I'll never know.

It's those little things left undone that would make me angry if I knew that my hours were limited. Angry because I put off seeing good friends whom I was going to get in touch with - someday. Angry because I hadn't written certain



letters that I intended to write - one of these days.

Angry and sorry that I didn't tell my husband and daughter often enough how much I truly love them. I'm trying very hard not to put off, hold back, or save anything that would add laughter and luster to our lives.

And every morning when I open my eyes, I tell myself that it is special. Everyday, every minute, every breath truly is... a gift from God.

“People say true friends must always hold hands, but true friends don't need to hold hands because they know the other hand will always be there.

Things are not what they seem!

Justice - When you get what you deserve

Mercy - When you don't get what you deserve

Grace - When you get what you don't deserve

Two traveling angels stopped to spend the night in the home of a wealthy family. The family was rude and refused to let the angels stay in the mansion's guest room. Instead the angels were given a space in the cold basement. As they made their bed on the hard floor, the older angel saw a hole in the wall and repaired it. When the younger angel asked why, the older angel replied...Things aren't always what they seem.

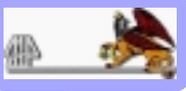
The next night the pair came to rest at the house of a very poor, but very hospitable farmer and his wife. After sharing what little food they had the couple let the angels sleep in their bed where they could have a good night's rest.

When the sun came up the next morning the angels found the farmer and his wife in tears. Their only cow, whose milk had been their sole income, lay dead in the field. The younger angel was infuriated and asked the older angel how could you have let this happen! The first man had everything, yet you helped him. The second family had little but was willing to share everything, and you let their cow die.

Things aren't always what they seem,” the older angel replied. When we stayed in the basement of the mansion, I noticed there was gold stored in that hole in the wall. Since the owner was so obsessed with greed and unwilling to share his good fortune, I sealed the wall so he wouldn't find it.

Then last night as we slept in the farmer's bed, the angel of death came for his wife. I told him to take the cow instead.

Things aren't always what they seem. Sometimes this is exactly what happens when things don't turn out the way we think they should. If you have faith in God, just trust that every outcome is always to your advantage. You might not realize it until much later.



Personality quiz

Here's something fun to do, but you must follow the directions closely. Try it, and don't cheat by looking ahead! You will be surprised at some of the answers. The Mind is like a parachute; it works much better when it's open.

Warning! Do take the quiz as you read. There are only 4 questions, and if you scan all the way to the end before finishing you won't get the honest results.

Don't look ahead.

Get pencil and paper to write down your answers.

You will need it at the end.

This is an honest quiz, that will tell you about your true self. Enjoy!

Chapter I.

Arrange the following 5 animals according to your preference:

Cow

Tiger

Sheep

Horse

Monkey

Chapter II

Write one word to describe each of the following:

Dog

Cat

Rat

Coffee

Ocean

Chapter III

Think of somebody (who also knows you, don't repeat your answer twice. Name only one person for each color.) that you can relate to the following colors:

Yellow

Orange

Red

White

Green

Are you done?? Make sure your answers are what you TRULY feel.....

Last chance.....

See interpretations next page!



Chapter I
 This will define your priorities in life
 Cow means career
 Tiger means pride
 Sheep means love
 Horse means family
 Monkey means money

Chapter II
 Your description of Dog implies your own personality
 Your description of Cat implies your partner's personality
 Your description of Rat implies your enemy's personality
 Your description of Coffee is how you interpret sex
 Your description of Ocean implies your own life

Chapter III
 Yellow - somebody who will never forget you
 Orange - someone whom you can consider as your real friend
 Red - someone you really love
 White - your soulmate
 Green - a person whom you will always remember for the rest of your life.

Just another fun exercise. . .

Roses For Her

Red roses were her favorites.
 And every year her husband sent them, tied with pretty bows.
 The year he died, the roses were delivered to her door.
 The card said, "Be my Valentine," like all the years before.

Each year he sent her roses, and the note would always say,
 "I love you even more this year, than last year on this day."
 "My love for you will always grow, with every passing year."
 She knew this was the last time that the roses would appear.

She thought, he ordered roses in advance before this day.
 Her loving husband did not know, that he would pass away.
 He always liked to do things early, way before the time.
 Then, if he got too busy, everything would work out fine.

She trimmed the stems, and placed them in a very special vase.
 Then, sat the vase beside the portrait of his smiling face.
 She would sit for hours, in her husband's favorite chair.
 While staring at his picture, and the roses sitting there.

A year went by, and it was hard to live without her mate.
 With loneliness and solitude, that had become her fate.
 Then, the very hour, as on Valentines before,



The doorbell rang, and there were roses, sitting by her door.

She brought the roses in, and then just looked at them in shock.
Then, went to get the telephone, to call the florist shop.
The owner answered, and she asked him, if he would explain,
Why would someone do this to her, causing her such pain?

“I know your husband passed away, more than a year ago,”
The owner said, “I knew you’d call, and you would want to know.”
“The flowers you received today, were paid for in advance.”
“Your husband always planned ahead, he left nothing to chance.”

“There is a standing order, that I have on file down here,
And he has paid, well in advance, you’ll get them every year.
There also is another thing, that I think you should know,
He wrote a special little card...he did this years ago.”

“Then, should ever, I find out that he’s no longer here,
That’s the card...that should be sent, to you the following year.”
She thanked him and hung up the phone, her tears now flowing hard.
Her fingers shaking, as she slowly reached to get the card.

Inside the card, she saw that he had written her a note.
Then, as she stared in total silence, this is what he wrote...
“Hello my love, I know it’s been a year since I’ve been gone,
I hope it hasn’t been too hard for you to overcome.”

“I know it must be lonely, and the pain is very real.
For if it was the other way, I know how I would feel.
The love we shared made everything so beautiful in life.
I loved you more than words can say, you were the perfect wife.”

“You were my friend and lover, you fulfilled my every need.
I know it’s only been a year, but please try not to grieve.
I want you to be happy, even when you shed your tears.
That is why the roses will be sent to you for years.”

“When you get these roses, think of all the happiness,
That we had together, and how both of us were blessed.
I have always loved you and I know I always will.
But, my love, you must go on, you have some living still.”

“Please...try to find happiness, while living out your days.
I know it is not easy, but I hope you find some ways.
The roses will come every year, and they will only stop,
When your door’s not answered, when the florist stops to knock.”

“He will come five times that day, in case you have gone out.



But after his last visit, he will know without a doubt,
To take the roses to the place, where I've instructed him,
And place the roses where we are.....together once again."

SIMPLE FRIEND/REAL FRIEND

Anyone can stand by you when you are right,
but a friend will stand by you even when you are wrong...

A simple friend identifies himself when he calls.
A real friend doesn't have to.

A simple friend opens a conversation with a full news bulletin on his life.
A real friend says, "What's new with you?"

A simple friend thinks the problems you whine about are recent.
A real friend says, "You've been whining about the same thing for 14 years.
Get off your duff and do something about it."

A simple friend has never seen you cry.
A real friend has shoulders soggy from your tears.

A simple friend doesn't know your parents' first names.
A real friend has their phone numbers in his address book.

A simple friend brings a bottle of wine to your party.
A real friend comes early to help you cook and stays late to help you clean.

A simple friend hates it when you call after he has gone to bed.
A real friend asks you why you took so long to call.

A simple friend seeks to talk with you about your problems.
A real friend seeks to help you with your problems.

A simple friend wonders about your romantic history.
A real friend could blackmail you with it.

A simple friend, when visiting, acts like a guest.
A real friend opens your refrigerator and helps himself.

A simple friend thinks the friendship is over when you have an argument.
A real friend knows that it's not a friendship until after you've had a fight.

A simple friend expects you to always be there for them.
A real friend expects to always be there for you!



*This is a very Special gift
that you can never see. The
reason it's so Special is it's
just for you from me.*

*When ever you are lonely
or even feeling blue, you only
have to hold this gift and
know that I think of you.*

You never need to unwrap it.

*Please leave the ribbon
tied. Just hold the box
next to your heart. It's
filled with love inside.*

Love,

Special Gift

This is a specialty saying, clip it out: wrap a small box with something special OF YOU inside. Wrap the box with a ribbon and paste the saying to the outside. And then of course, give it to someone you love.

Speeding!

Jack took a long look at his speedometer before slowing down: 73 in a 55 zone. Fourth time in as many months. How could a guy get caught so often? When his car had slowed to 10 miles an hour, Jack pulled over, but only partially. Let the cop worry about the potential traffic hazard. Maybe some other car will tweak his backside with a mirror.

The cop was stepping out of his car, the big pad in hand. Bob? Bob from church? Jack sunk farther into his trench coat. This was worse than the coming ticket. A Christian cop catching a guy from his own church. A guy who happened to be a little anxious to get home after a long day at the office. A guy he was about to play golf with tomorrow. Jumping out of the car, he approached a man he saw every Sunday, a man he'd never seen in uniform.

"Hi, Bob. Fancy meeting you like this." "Hello, Jack."

No smile. "Guess you caught me red-handed in a rush to see my wife and kids." "Yeah, I guess." Bob seemed uncertain. Good. "I've seen some long days at the office lately. I'm afraid I bent the rules a bit—just this once." Jack toed at a pebble on the pavement. "Diane said something about roast beef and potatoes tonight. Know what I mean?"



“I know what you mean. I also know that you have a reputation in our precinct.”

Ouch! This was not going in the right direction.

Time to change tactics. “What’d you clock me at?”

“Seventy-one. Would you sit back in your car, please?” “Now wait a minute here, Bob. I checked as soon as I saw you. I was barely nudging 65.” The lie seemed to come easier with every ticket.

“Please, Jack, in the car.”

Flustered, Jack hunched himself through the still-open door. Slamming it shut, he stared at the dashboard. He was in no rush to open the window. The minutes ticked by. Bob scribbled away on the pad. Why hadn’t he asked for a driver’s license? Whatever the reason, it would be a month of Sundays before Jack ever sat near this cop again. A tap on the door jerked his head to the left. There was Bob, a folded paper in hand. Jack rolled down the window a mere two inches, just enough room for Bob to pass him the slip. “Thanks.” Jack could not quite keep the sneer out of his voice.

Bob returned to his car without a word. Jack watched his retreat in the mirror. Jack unfolded the sheet of paper. How much was this one going to cost? Wait a minute. What was this? Some kind of joke? Certainly not a ticket. Jack began to read: “Dear Jack, Once upon a time I had a daughter. She was six when killed by a car. You guessed it — a speeding driver. A fine and three months in jail, and the man was free. Free to hug his daughters. All three of them. I only had one, and I’m going to have to wait until heaven before I can ever hug her again. A thousand times I’ve tried to forgive that man. A thousand times I thought I had. Maybe I did, but I need to do it again. Even now. . . Pray for me. And be careful. My son is all I have left.

“Bob”

Jack twisted around in time to see Bob’s car pull away and head down the road. Jack watched until it disappeared. A full 15 minutes later, he, too, pulled away and drove slowly home, praying for forgiveness and hugging a surprised wife and kids when he arrived.

Life is precious. Handle with care.

Even if you don’t value your own, try hard to value others lives!

Another cool test!

Make sure to answer questions 1-11 before moving on...

Read the following questions, imaging the scenes in your mind, and write down the FIRST thing that you visualize. Do not think about the question excessively.

1. You are walking in the woods. Who are you walking with?
2. You are walking in the woods. You see an animal. What kind of animal is it?
3. What interaction takes place between you and the animal?
4. You walk deeper in to the woods. You enter a clearing and before you is your dream house. Describe it’s size.



5. Is your dream house surrounded by a fence?
6. You enter the house. You walk to the dining area and see the dining table. Describe what you see on and around the table.
7. You exit the house through the back door. Lying in the grass is a cup. What material is the cup made of?
8. What do you do with the cup?
9. You walk to the edge of the property. Where you find yourself standing at the edge of a body of water. What type of body of water is it?
10. How will you cross the water?

The whole purpose of this test was to find yourself and who you really are...

1. The person you are walking with is the most important person in your life.
2. The size of the animal represents the size of your problems.
3. The interaction you have with the animal represents how you deal with your problems. (passive/aggressive)
4. The size of your dream house is the size of your ambition to resolve your problems.
5. No fence indicates an open personality, and a fence indicates a closed personality.
6. If your answer did not include food, people or flowers then you are generally unhappy.
7. The durability of the material the cup is made of is the durability of your relationship with the person in question 1.
8. Your disposition of the cup represents your attitude towards the person in question 1.
9. The size of the body of water represents the size of your sexual desire.
10. How wet you get crossing the water is the importance of your sex life.

The Miracle of Love

A very powerful message...please take a minute to read.

Like any good mother, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her 3-year-old son, Michael, prepare for a new sibling. They found out that the new baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sang to his sister in Mommy's tummy. He was building a bond of love with his little sister before he even met her.

The pregnancy progressed normally for Karen, an active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee. In time, the labor pains came. Soon it was every five minutes ...every three....every minute. But serious complications arose during delivery and Karen found herself in hours of labor. Would a C-section be required? Finally, after a long struggle, Michael's little sister was born.

But she was in very serious condition. With a siren howling in the night, the ambulance rushed the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary's



Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The days inched by. The little girl got worse. The pediatric specialist regretfully had to tell the parents, “There is very little hope. Be prepared for the worst.”

Karen and her husband contacted a local cemetery about a burial plot. They had fixed up a special room in their home for the new baby - but now they found themselves having to plan for a funeral.

Michael, however, kept begging his parents to let him see his sister. “I want to sing to her,” he kept saying. Week two in intensive care looked as if a funeral would come before the week was over. Michael kept nagging about singing to his sister, but kids are never allowed in Intensive Care.

Karen made up her mind, though. She would take Michael whether they liked it or not! If he didn’t see his sister right then, he may never see her alive. She dressed him in an oversized scrub suit and marched him into ICU. He looked like a walking laundry basket. But the head nurse recognized him as a child and bellowed, “Get that kid out of here now! No children are allowed.

The mother rose up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glared steel-eyed right into the head nurse’s face, her lips a firm line. “He is not leaving until he sings to his sister!”

Karen towed Michael to his sister’s bedside. He gazed at the tiny infant losing the battle to live. After a moment, he began to sing. In the pure-hearted voice of a 3-year-old, Michael sang: “You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are grey —” Instantly the baby girl seemed to respond. The pulse rate began to calm down and become steady. “Keep on singing, Michael,” encouraged Karen with tears in her eyes. “You never know, dear, how much I love you, Please don’t take my sunshine away-” As Michael sang to his sister, the baby’s ragged, strained breathing became as smooth as a kitten’s purr. “Keep on singing, sweetheart!!!” “The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping, I dreamed I held you in my arms...”

Michael’s little sister began to relax as rest, healing rest, seemed to sweep over her. “Keep on singing, Michael.” Tears had now conquered the face of the bossy head nurse. Karen glowed. “You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. Please don’t, take my sunshine away...”

The next, day...the very next day...the little girl was well enough to go home! Woman’s Day Magazine called it “The Miracle of a Brother’s Song.” The medical staff just called it a miracle. Karen called it a miracle of God’s love!

**NEVER GIVE UP ON THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE.
LOVE IS SO INCREDIBLY POWERFUL.**

To Remember Me

The day will come when my body will lie upon a white sheet neatly tucked under four corners of a mattress located in a hospital busily occupied with the living and the dying.

At a certain moment a doctor will determine that my brain has ceased to function and that, for all intents and purposes, my life has stopped.

When that happens, do not attempt to instill artificial life into my body by the use of a machine. And don't call this my deathbed. Let it be called the Bed of Life, and let my body be taken from it to help others lead fuller lives.

Give my sight to the man who has never seen a sunrise, a baby's face or love in the eyes of a woman. Give my heart to a person whose own heart has caused nothing but endless days of pain. Give my blood to the teenager who was pulled from the wreckage of his car, so that he might live to see his grandchildren play. Give my kidneys to one who depends on a machine to exist from week to week. Take my bones, every muscle, every fiber and nerve in my body and find a way to make a crippled child walk.

Explore every corner of my brain. Take my cells, if necessary, and let them grow so that someday, a speechless boy will shout at the crack of a bat and a deaf girl will hear the sound of rain against her window.

Burn what is left of me and scatter the ashes to the winds to help the flowers grow.

If you must bury something, let it be my faults, my weaknesses and all prejudice against my fellow man.

Give my sins to the devil. Give my soul to God.

If, by chance, you wish to remember me, do it with a kind deed or word to someone who needs you. If you do all I have asked, I will live forever.

By Robert N. Test

"People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. When you figure out which it is, you know exactly what to do." - Michelle Ventor

Sound like fiction but, who knows????

This is better than Great.... It's TRUE! Having her hair done at a West Hempstead, NY, beauty parlor, a woman told a cautionary tale about racial prejudice. The story deserves a wider audience. On a recent weekend in Atlantic City the woman related, she won a bucketful of quarters at a slot machine. She took a break from the slots for dinner with her husband in the hotel dining room. But first she would stash the quarters in her room. "I'll be right back and we'll go to eat," she told her husband and she carried the coin-laden bucket to the elevator. As she was about to walk into the elevator she noticed two men already aboard. Both were black. One of them was big... Very big... An intimidating figure. The woman froze. Her first thought was: These two are going to rob me. Her next thought was: Don't be a bigot, they look like perfectly nice gentlemen, But racial stereotypes are powerful, and fear immobilized her.



She stood and stared at the two men. She felt anxious, flustered, ashamed. She hoped they didn't read her mind but knew they surely did; her hesitation about joining them on the elevator was all too obvious. Her face burned. She couldn't just stand there, so with a mighty effort of will she picked up one foot and stepped forward and followed with the other foot and was on the elevator. Avoiding eye contact, she turned around stiffly and faced the elevator doors as they closed. A second passed, and then another second, and then another. The elevator didn't move. Panic consumed her. My God, she thought, I'm trapped and about to be robbed! Her heart plummeted. Perspiration poured from every pore. Then one of the men said, "Hit the floor." Instinct told her: Do what they tell you. The bucket of quarters flew upwards as she threw out her arms and collapsed on the elevator carpet. A shower of coins rained down on her. Take my money and spare me, she prayed.

More seconds passed. She heard one of the men say politely, "Ma'am, if you'll just tell us what floor you're going to, we'll push the button." The one who said it had a little trouble getting the words out. He was trying mightily to hold in a belly laugh. She lifted her head and looked up at the two men. They reached down to help her up. Confused, she struggled to her feet. "When I told my man here to hit the floor," one of the men, the average sized one, told her, "I meant that he should hit the elevator button for our floor. I didn't mean for you to hit the floor, ma'am. He spoke genially. He bit his lip. It was obvious he was having a hard time not laughing. She thought: My God, what a spectacle I've made of myself. She was too humiliated to speak. She wanted to blurt out an apology, but words failed her. How do you apologize to two perfectly respectable gentlemen for behaving as though they were robbing you? She didn't know. The three of them gathered up the strewn quarters and refilled her bucket. When the elevator arrived at her floor they insisted on walking her to her room. She seemed a little unsteady on her feet, and they were afraid she might not make it down the corridor. At her door they bid her good evening. As she slipped into her room she could hear them laughing while they walked back to the elevator. The woman brushed herself off. She pulled herself together and went downstairs for dinner with her husband. The next morning flowers were delivered to her room ~ a dozen roses. Attached to each rose was a crisp one hundred dollar bill. A card said: "Thanks for the best laugh we've had in years". It was signed, Eddie Murphy and Bodyguard.

Nursing Practice!

We don't practice in isolation; we depend on each other to keep our department functional and presentable. If you take the last one, restock. If you fill it up, empty it. If you notice it's missing, try to find it. If it's on the floor, pick it up. If it didn't get done before, do it now. If you say "it's a bad day", it is (so stop saying that). If you say "it was tough and we worked together and got it done" our world is a much better place to be.

Practice Humility: Humility and inner peace go hand in hand. The less compelled you are to prove yourself to others, the easier it is to feel peaceful inside. Proving yourself is a dangerous trap. It takes an enormous amount of energy to



continually point out your accomplishments, bragging, or trying to convince others of your worth as a human being. Bragging actually dilutes the positive feelings you receive from an accomplishment or something you are proud of. The more you try to prove yourself, the more others will avoid you, talk behind your back about your insecure need to brag, and perhaps even resent you. Ironically, the less you seem to care about approval, the more approval you seem to get. People are drawn to those with a quiet inner confidence, people who don't need to make themselves look good, be right all the time, tell a better story, or steal the glory. Most people love a person who doesn't need to brag, a person who shares from the heart, not from the ego. The way to develop genuine humility is to practice. It's nice because you will get immediate feedback in the way of calm, easy feelings. The next time you have an opportunity to brag or gloat, don't. Instead, take a moment to notice someone else.

Words of Wisdom

In a university commencement address several years ago, Brian Dyson, of Coca Cola Enterprises, spoke of the relation of work to one's other commitments.

Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them-work, family, health, friends and spirit and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls—family, health, friends and spirit—are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged, or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life.

How?

Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others. It is because we are different that each of us is special. Don't set your goals by what other people deem important. Only you know what is best for you. Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart. Cling to them as if they were your life, for without them, life is meaningless.

Don't let your life slip through your fingers by living in the past or for the future. By living your life one day at a time you live ALL the days of your life.

Don't give up when you still have something to give.

Nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying. Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect. It is this fragile thread that binds us to each other and together. Don't be afraid to encounter risks. It is by taking chances that we learn how to be brave.

Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find. The quickest way to receive love is to give; the fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly, and the best way to keep love is to give it wings. Don't run through life so fast that you forget not only where you've been, but also where you are going. Don't forget, a person's greatest emotional need is to feel appreciated. Don't be afraid to learn.

Knowledge is weightless, a treasure you can always carry easily. Don't use



time or words carelessly. Neither can be retrieved.

Life is not a race, but a journey to be savored each step of the way. Yesterday is History, Tomorrow is a Mystery and Today is a gift....that's why we call it The Present."

The Xmas Envelope

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas—oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it—overspending...the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma—the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike.

The inspiration came in an unusual way.

Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended; and shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford. Well, we ended up walloping them.

We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat.

Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them."

Mike loved kids—all kids—and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came. That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me.

His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition—one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on.

The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning and our children, ignoring their new toys, would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from



the tree to reveal its contents.

As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure. The story doesn't end there. You see, we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree, and in the morning, it was joined by three more.

Each of our children, unbeknownst to the others, had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing around the tree with wide-eyed anticipation watching as their fathers take down the envelope. Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.

May we all remember the reason for the season, and the true Christmas spirit this year and always. God bless—pass this along to your friends and loved ones.
Merry Christmas!

My hope is that someday the 'seasons' spirit will get carried through the whole year!

Your rainbow.....

IF I COULD CATCH A RAINBOW
I WOULD DO IT JUST FOR YOU
AND SHARE WITH YOU ITS BEAUTY
ON THE DAYS YOU'RE FEELING BLUE
IF I COULD BUILD A MOUNTAIN
YOU COULD CALL YOUR VERY OWN
A PLACE TO FIND SERENITY
A PLACE TO BE ALONE
IF I COULD TAKE YOUR TROUBLES
I WOULD TOSS THEM IN THE SEA
BUT ALL THESE THINGS
I'M FINDING ARE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME
I CANNOT BUILD A MOUNTAIN
OR CATCH A RAINBOW FAIR
BUT LET ME BE WHAT I KNOW BEST
A FRIEND THAT'S ALWAYS THERE.

This is a hug certificate. Send one to all of your friends you think deserve a hug. Be aware you are promising your friend a virtual hug and a real hug. There is no chain letter to this. It just makes a person feel better. This one I am giving to you because you are a great friend of mine.

Well, that wraps it up for volume 2, see ya in 3. . .

Think and live. . .