



Think Abouts 13

**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,



SCARS IN LIFE

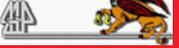
SCARS IN LIFE Some years ago on a hot summer day in south Florida a little boy decided to go for a swim in the old swimming hole behind his house. In a hurry to dive into the cool water, he ran out the back door, leaving behind shoes, socks, and shirt as he went. He flew into the water, not realizing that as he swam toward the middle of the lake, an alligator was swimming toward the shore. His mother in the house was looking out the window saw the two as they got closer and closer together. In utter fear, she ran toward the water, yelling to her son as loudly as she could. Hearing her voice, the little boy became alarmed and made a U-turn to swim to his mother. It was too late. Just as he reached her, the alligator reached him. From the dock, the mother grabbed her little boy by the arms just as the alligator snatched his legs. That began an incredible tug-of-war between the two. The alligator was much stronger than the mother, but the mother was much too passionate to let go. A farmer happened to drive by, heard her screams, raced from his truck, took aim and shot the alligator.

Remarkably, after weeks and weeks in the hospital, the little boy survived. His legs were extremely scarred by the vicious attack of the animal. And, on his arms, were deep scratches where his mother's fingernails dug into his flesh in her effort to hang on to the son she loved. The newspaper reporter who interviewed the boy after the trauma, asked if he would show him his scars. The boy lifted his pantlegs. And then, with obvious pride, he said to the reporter, "But look at my arms. I have great scars on my arms, too. I have them because my Mom wouldn't let go." You and I can identify with that little boy. We have scars, too. No, not from an alligator, but the scars of a painful past. Some of those scars are unsightly and have caused us deep regret. But, some wounds, my friend, are because God has refused to let go. In the midst of your struggle, He's been there holding on to you. The Scripture teaches that God loves you. You are a child of God. He wants to protect you and provide for you in every way. But sometimes we foolishly wade into dangerous situations, not knowing what lies ahead. The swimming hole of life is filled with peril - and we forget that the enemy is waiting to attack. That's when the tug-of-war begins - and if you have the scars of His love on your arms be very, very grateful. He did not and will not ever let you go. Please pass this on to those you love. God has blessed you, so that you can be a blessing to others.

You just never know where a person is in his/her life and what they are going through. Never judge another persons scars, because you don't know how they got them. Also, it is soooo important that we are not selfish to receive the blessings of these messages without forwarding them to someone else. Right now, someone needs to know that God loves them, and you love them too ~~~~~ enough to not let them go. SHMILY

My grandparents were married for over half a century, and played their own special game from the time they had met each other.

The goal of their game was to write the word "shmily" in a surprise place for the other to find. They took turns leaving "shmily" around the house, and as



soon as one of them discovered it, it was their turn to hide it once more. They dragged “shmily” with their fingers through the sugar and flour containers to await whoever was preparing the next meal.

They smeared it in the dew on the windows overlooking the patio where my grandma always fed us warm, homemade pudding with blue food coloring. “Shmily” was written in the steam left on the mirror after a hot shower, where it would reappear bath after bath. At one point, my grandmother even unrolled an entire roll of toilet paper to leave “shmily” on the very last sheet. There was no end to the places “shmily” would pop up. Little notes with “shmily” scribbled hurriedly were found on dashboards and car seats, or taped to steering wheels.

The notes were stuffed inside shoes and left under pillows. “Shmily” was written in the dust upon the mantel and traced in the ashes of the fireplace.

This mysterious word was as much a part of my grandparents’ house as the furniture. It took me a long time before I was able to fully appreciate my grandparents’ game.

Skepticism has kept me from believing in true love-one that is pure and enduring. However, I never doubted my grandparents’ relationship. They had love down pat. It was more than their flirtatious little games; it was a way of life. Their relationship was based on a devotion and passionate affection, which not everyone is lucky enough to experience. Grandma and Grandpa held hands every chance they could. They stole kisses as they bumped into each other in their tiny kitchen. They finished each other’s sentences and shared the daily crossword puzzle and word jumble. My grandma whispered to me about how cute my grandpa was, how handsome and old he had grown to be. She claimed that she really knew “how to pick ‘em.”

Before every meal they bowed their heads and gave thanks, marveling at their blessings: a wonderful family, good fortune, and each other.

But there was a dark cloud in my grandparents’ life: my grandmother had breast cancer.

The disease had first appeared ten years earlier. As always, Grandpa was with her every step of the way. He comforted her in their yellow room, painted that way so that she could always be surrounded by sunshine, even when she was too sick to go outside.

Now the cancer was again attacking her body. With the help of a cane and my grandfather’s steady hand, they went to church every morning. But my grandmother grew steadily weaker until, finally, she could not leave the house anymore.



For a while, Grandpa would go to church alone, praying to God to watch over his wife. Then one day, what we all dreaded finally happened. Grandma was gone.

“Shmily.” It was scrawled in yellow on the pink ribbons of my grandmother’s funeral bouquet. As the crowd thinned and the last mourners turned to leave, my aunts, uncles, cousins and other family members came forward and gathered around Grandma one last time.

Grandpa stepped up to my grandmother’s casket and, taking a shaky breath, he began to sing to her. Through his tears and grief, the song came, a deep and throaty lullaby. Shaking with my own sorrow, I will never forget that moment. For I knew that, although I couldn’t begin to fathom the depth of their love, I had been privileged to witness its unmatched beauty.

S-h-m-i-l-y:
See How Much I Love You.

“He who loses wealth loses much; he who loses a friend loses more; but he that loses courage loses all.” Simple vs. Real

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.

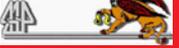
A simple friend seeks to hear about your problems.
A real friend seeks to help you with your problems.

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 themself.

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!



A simple friend will read and throw this letter away.
A real friend will send it back to you until they're sure it's been received.

I've learned....

I've learned....
that the best classroom in the world
is at the feet of an elderly person.

I've learned....
that when you're in love, it shows.

I've learned....
that just one person saying to me,
"You've made my day!" makes my day.

I've learned....
that I feel better about myself when
I make others feel better about themselves.

I've learned....
that what we have done for ourselves
alone dies with us. What we have done
for others and the world remains and
is immortal.

I've learned....
that one sincere apology is worth more
than all the roses money can buy.

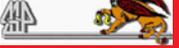
I've learned....
that words harshly spoken are as difficult
to retrieve as feathers in a gale.

I've learned....
that being kind is more important than
being right.

I've learned....
that I can always pray for someone when
I don't have the strength to help him
in some other way.

I've learned....
that no matter how serious your life
requires you to be, everyone needs a
friend to act goofy with.

I've learned....



that sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I've learned....
that simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.

I've learned....
that life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

I've learned....
that we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.

I've learned....
that money doesn't buy class.

I've learned....
that it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

I've learned....
that once a relationship is over, if you experienced more smiles than tears, then it wasn't a waste of time.

I've learned....
that under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

I've learned....
never to humiliate another person. Always give him an honorable way to back down or out of something and still save face.

I've learned....
that the Lord didn't do it all in one day. What makes me think I can?

I've learned....
that if you are still talking about what you did yesterday, you haven't done much today.



I've learned....
that to ignore the facts does not
change the facts.

I've learned....
that when you plan to get even with
someone, you are only letting that
person continue to hurt you.

I've learned....
that it is best to give advice in only
two circumstances; when it is requested
and when it is a life-threatening
situation.

I've learned....
that a good friend is the one who tells
you how you really look in your jeans.

I've learned....
that the less time I have to work with,
the more things I get done.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

“This is the story of four people:
Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.
There was an important job to be done and
Everybody was sure that
Somebody would do it.
Anybody could have done it but
Nobody did it.
Everybody thought that
Somebody would do it.
But Nobody asked Anybody.
It ended up that the job wasn't done and
Everybody blamed Somebody
when actually Nobody asked Anybody.”

Source Unknown

Special Olymppics

A few years ago, at the Seattle Special Olymppics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash.

At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run the race to the finish and win. All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry.

The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back.
Then they all turned around and went back.



Every one of them.

One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said: "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line.

Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes. People who were there are still telling the story.

Why? Because deep down we know this one thing: What matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves. What matters in this life is helping others win, even if it means slowing down and changing our course.

Pass it on...we need to change our hearts

The Star Thrower

As the old man walked along the beach he noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea.

Finally, catching up with the youth, he asked him why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if left until the morning sun.

"But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish," countered the other. "How can you make a difference?"

The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and threw it to safety in the waves. "It makes a difference to this one."

-Loren Eisely

When it comes to life, I am much more for quality than quantity.

STUDENT'S PRAYER

Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule.
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.

If Scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a federal matter now.

Our hair can be purple or orange or green,
That's no offense, it's the freedom scene.
The law is specific, the law is precise,
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.

For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all.
In silence alone we must meditate,
We're allowed to cuss & dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks.



They've outlawed guns; bur FIRST the Bible,
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.
We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the unwed daddy, our Senior King.

It's "inappropriate" to teach right from wrong,
We're taught that such "judgements" do not belong,
We can get our condoms, & birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles.

But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,
No Word of God must reach this crowd.
Its scary here I must confess,
When chaos reigns, the school's a mess.

So, Lord, this silent plea I make:
Should I be shot, My soul please take.

Tailhook

I never thought much one way or the other about Drew Carey, but I am now leaning towards becoming a fan after reading this:

Drew Carey on Naval Aviators

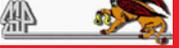
From comedian Drew Carey (former Marine)

"How many militant feminists does it take to change a lightbulb? Two. One to change the bulb, and one to kiss my ass."

That's right. I said kiss my ass. 'Cause I've had it. I'm tired of being pushed around. Tired of being grouped in with all the dead-beat dads and rapists and lecherous bosses just because I'm a man. All men aren't "potential rapists." I'm not a potential rapist. But, I am a potential murderer if all of you don't shut up and get out of my face already.

You've ruined it for everybody. Everybody, do you hear me? Men, women, everybody. Because of you and everyone else in this society that needs to play political victim and go to court instead of just dealing with it themselves, no one can have any kind of fun anymore. Men and women can't flirt, or hug, or look at anyone sideways because of you and your lawyers.

Are you happy? You've used a stink bomb to kill a few ants. And while I'm at it... Naval Aviators, who are willing to die so that we can have low prices at the gas pump, should be able to throw the wildest parties they can manage without one uptight biddy coming in and stopping it. There were scads of women at that Tailhook party who were having the time of their lives, voluntarily being just as debauched as any of the men were. Everyone who flew a plane, or even



knew someone who flew a plane, knew how wild those parties were and what went on. What did she expect? A prayer service?

And why didn't she just throw some punches of her own when these couple of guys groped her? Why didn't she give them what they had coming and just kick them in the balls? Didn't our tax money go to teach her how to fight? I'm not trying to make the idiotic "she had it coming" argument here, which would go something like "of course they grabbed her breasts, look how big they are."

Plus, just reaching out and grabbing some boob is wrong no matter what. When I was in college, even at our most drunken fraternity parties we never acted like that. No matter how hard I try I can't think of an excuse good enough to do something like that. But it's still nothing to lose a career over.

Besides, fighter pilots are supposed to be aggressive assholes. That's what we pay them for. I don't know about you, but I don't want a navy full of fighter pilots who are gifted at giving sensitivity seminars. I want mad-dog, rabid killers going to battle for me and mine. Man or woman. When our stable gas prices are threatened by a Middle-Eastern Madman, when we want to force our form of government on some poor, unsuspecting Latin American country, when uppity foreign diplomats "forget" to pay their parking tickets, I want to be able to call on men and women who like to fight and drink.

I want a naval officer who knows how to whack some drunk in the balls when he grabs her tits, not call a press conference and a lawyer. If you're a wimp who doesn't know how to find the exit at a rowdy party, go fly a kite, not a jet fighter." -So there, Drew

I may not agree completely with Drew's assessment of the particular situation, but, I do agree with the basic sentiment here.

Get over it, not every one fits into a group just because they have a similarity! It is prejudice and fear that groups a 'set' of people together as behaviorally the same.

The issue here is sexual "harrasment" not playful innocent behavior.

When I was in orientation here, I came back form lunch, my preceptor was standing at a chart rack with her back to me. I placed my hand on her shoulder and announced "I'm back." Quite frankly used that approach as I had completely forgotten her name.

She thought later that maybe that wasn't appropriate, I had to meet with my supervisor for a very brief counseling session to be careful about touching in a friendly non-sexual manner as it could be misconstrued.

I feel very strongly that 90% of harrasment is nothing more than innocent flirtation. The majority of women I know, can take it, give it, and realize it is not meant as anything more than play. Yes, I agree that harrasment is a forceful pursuit of another against their will, and should not be allowed. But, adults should also be able to handle a little play without being insecure and take a panic response.

Course, I tend to get to know the women I work with before I assume they can have innocent fun, guage how much is playful and how much is over the line,



the difference between play and a power play can be a thin grey area in today's society.

There was one instance when I worked an extra evening shift, the charge nurse come up to me in the hall and said, "Time for a quicky?"

Now, however that may sound, I couldn't resist responding jokingly by turning and starting to walk away saying "Where's the harrassment papers?" Her sentence was an abreaveated version of: "Do you have time to give me a quick report?" She laughed I laughed and everybody was OK! Neither of us were so insecure that we couldn't a little harmless play.

Not withstanding that this charge nurse was younger and quite pretty, we are friends and comfortable with our relationship enough that it turned into a funny instance. Instead of one running off to HR to REPORT it.

That is my point, are we such a paranoid society that we have to control all interactions. One of the things that gets us through the shift is being able to joke as well as being serious.

This is not to say, that their are not inappropriate people out there, but leave us normals out of your twisted world.

The Americans

by Gordon Sinclair

Widespread but only partial news coverage was given recently to a remarkable 1973 editorial broadcast from Toronto by Gordon Sinclair, a Canadian television commentator. This is the full text of his trenchant remarks as printed in the congressional Record:

"This Canadian thinks it is time to speak up for the Americans as the most generous and possibly the least appreciated people on all the earth.

Germany, Japan and, to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy were lifted out of the debris of war by the Americans who poured in billions of dollars and forgave other billions in debts.

None of these countries is today paying even the interest on its remaining debts to the United States.

When the franc was in danger of collapsing in 1956, it was the Americans who propped it up, and their reward was to be insulted and swindled on the streets of Paris. I was there. I saw it.

When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries in to help.

This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped.

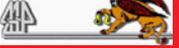
The Marshall Plan and the Truman Policy pumped billions of dollars into discouraged countries.

Now newspapers in those countries are writing about the decadent, war-mongering Americans.

I'd like to see just one of those countries that is gloating over the erosion of the United States Dollar build its own airplane.

Does any other country in the world have a plane to equal the Boeing Jumbo Jet, the Lockheed Tri-Star, or the Douglas! 0?

If so, why don't they fly them? Why do all the International lines except



Russia fly American planes?

Why does no other land on earth even consider putting a man or woman on the moon?

You talk about Japanese technocracy, and you get radios.

You talk about German technocracy, and you get automobiles.

You talk about American technocracy, and you find men on the moon-not once, but several times-and safely home again.

You talk about scandals, and the Americans put theirs right in the store window for everybody to look at.

Even their draft-dodgers are not pursued and hounded. They are here on our streets, and most of them, unless they are breaking Canadian laws, are getting American dollars from ma and pa at home to spend here.

When the railways of France, Germany and India were breaking down through age, it was the American who rebuilt them.

When the Pennsylvania Railroad and the New York Central went broke, nobody loaned them an old caboose.

Both are still broke.

I can name you 5000 times when the Americans raced to the help of other people in trouble.

Can you name me even one time when someone else raced to the Americans in trouble?

I don't think there was outside help even during the San Francisco earthquake.

Our neighbors have faced it alone, and I'm one Canadian who is damned tired of hearing them get kicked around.

They will come out of this thing with their flag high. And when they do, they are entitled to thumb their nose at the lands that are gloating over their present troubles.

I hope Canada is not one of those.

I'm sure I'm repeating this one but it is worth repeating!

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE

Falling in love.

Laughing so hard your face hurts.

A hot shower.

No lines at the Super Walmart.

A special glance.

Getting mail.

Taking a drive on a pretty road.

Hearing your favorite song on the radio.

Lying in bed listening to the rain outside.

Hot towels out of the dryer.

Finding the sweater you want is on sale for half price.

Chocolate milkshake.

A long distance phone call.

A bubble bath.

Giggling.



A good conversation.
 The beach.
 Finding a \$20 bill in your coat from last winter.
 Laughing at yourself.
 Midnight phone calls that last for hours.
 Running through sprinklers.
 Laughing for absolutely no reason at all.
 Having someone tell you that you're beautiful.
 Laughing at an inside joke.
 Friends.
 Falling in love for the first time.
 Accidentally overhearing someone say something nice about you.
 Waking up and realizing you still have a few hours left to sleep.
 Your first kiss.
 Making new friends or spending time with old ones.
 Playing with a new puppy.
 Late night talks with your roommate that keep you from sleeping.
 Having someone play with your hair.
 Sweet dreams.
 Hot chocolate.
 Road trips with friends.
 Swinging on swings.
 Watching a good movie cuddled up on a couch with someone you love.
 Wrapping presents under the Christmas tree while eating cookies and drinking eggnog.
 Song lyrics printed inside your new CD so you can sing along without feeling stupid.
 Going to a really good concert.
 Getting butterflies in your stomach every time you see that one person.
 Making eye contact with a cute stranger.
 Winning a really competitive game.
 Making chocolate chip cookies!
 Having your friends send you homemade cookies!
 Spending time with close friends!
 Seeing smiles and hearing laughter from your friends...
 Holding hands with someone you care about.
 Running into an old friend and realizing that some things (good or bad) never change.
 Discovering that love is unconditional and stronger than time.
 Riding the best roller coasters over and over.
 Hugging the person you love.
 Watching the expression someone's face as they open a much-desired present from you.
 Watching the sunrise.
 Getting out of bed every morning and thanking God for another beautiful day.

The Builder

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

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

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

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

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

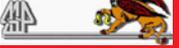
Think of yourself as the carpenter. Think about your house. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. Build wisely. It is the only life you will ever build. Even if you live it for only one day more, that day deserves to be lived graciously and with dignity. The plaque on the wall says,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

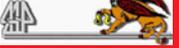
Who could say it more clearly? Your life today is the result of your attitudes and choices in the past. Your life tomorrow will be the result of your attitudes and the choices you make today.

God gives us the materials (our bodies, life), the tools (knowledge of right and wrong, free choice) to build our own houses (our souls) the way we choose. How does your house look?

The Dime

Bobby was getting cold sitting out in his back yard in the snow. Bobby didn't wear boots; he didn't like them and anyway he didn't own any. The thin sneakers he wore had a few holes in them and they did a poor job of keeping out the cold. Bobby had been in his backyard for about an hour already. And, try as he might, he could not come up with an idea for his mother's Christmas gift. He shook his head as he thought, "This is useless, even if I do come up





with an idea, I don't have any money to spend."

Ever since his father had passed away three years ago, the family of five had struggled. It wasn't because his mother didn't care, or try, there just never seemed to be enough. She worked nights at the hospital, but the small wage that she was earning could only be stretched so far. What the family lacked in money and material things, they more than made up for in love and family unity. Bobby had two older and one younger sister, who ran the household in their mother's absence. All three of his sisters had already made beautiful gifts for their mother. Somehow it just wasn't fair. Here it was Christmas Eve already, and he had nothing. Wiping a tear from his eye, Bobby kicked the snow and started to walk down to the street where the shops and stores were. It wasn't easy being six without a father, especially when he needed a man to talk to. Bobby walked from shop to shop, looking into each decorated window. Everything seemed so beautiful and so out of reach. It was starting to get dark and Bobby reluctantly turned to walk home when suddenly his eyes caught the glimmer of the setting sun's rays reflecting off of something along the curb. He reached down and discovered a shiny dime.

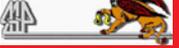
Never before has anyone felt so wealthy as Bobby felt at that moment. As he held his new found treasure, a warmth spread throughout his entire body and he walked into the first store he saw. His excitement quickly turned cold when the salesperson told him that he couldn't buy anything with only a dime. He saw a flower shop and went inside to wait in line. When the shop owner asked if he could help him, Bobby presented the dime and asked if he could buy one flower for his mother's Christmas gift. The shop owner looked at Bobby and his ten cent offering. Then he put his hand on Bobby's shoulder and said to him, "You just wait here and I'll see what I can do for you."

As Bobby waited he looked at the beautiful flowers and even though he was a boy, he could see why mothers and girls liked flowers. The sound of the door closing as the last customer left, jolted Bobby back to reality. All alone in the shop, Bobby began to feel alone and afraid.

Suddenly the shop owner came out and moved to the counter. There, before Bobby's eyes, lay twelve long stem, red roses, with leaves of green and tiny white flowers all tied together with a big silver bow. Bobby's heart sank as the owner picked them up and placed them gently into a long white box.

"That will be ten cents young man," the shop owner said reaching out his hand for the dime. Slowly, Bobby moved his hand to give the man his dime. Could this be true? No one else would give him a thing for his dime! Sensing the boy's reluctance, the shop owner added, "I just happened to have some roses on sale for ten cents a dozen. Would you like them?" This time Bobby did not hesitate, and when the man placed the long box into his hands, he knew it was true. Walking out the door that the owner was holding for Bobby, he heard the shop keeper say, "Merry Christmas, son."

As he returned inside, the shop keeper's wife walked out. "Who were you talking to back there and where are the roses you were fixing?" Staring out the window, and blinking the tears from his own eyes, he replied, "A strange thing happened to me this morning. While I was setting up things to open the shop, I thought I heard a voice telling me to set aside a dozen of my best roses for a special gift. I wasn't sure at the time whether I had lost my mind or what, but I



set them aside anyway. Then just a few minutes ago, a little boy came into the shop and wanted to buy a flower for his mother with one small dime. When I looked at him, I saw myself, many years ago. I too, was a poor boy with nothing to buy my mother a Christmas gift. A bearded man, whom I never knew, stopped me on the street and told me that he wanted to give me ten dollars. When I saw that little boy tonight, I knew who that voice was, and I put together a dozen of my very best roses.” The shop owner and his wife hugged each other tightly, and as they stepped out into the bitter cold air, they somehow didn’t feel cold at all.

May this story instill the spirit of CHRISTmas in you enough to pass this act along.

Have a Joyous and Peace-filled season.

Whether or not these stories of this type that circulate around on the email circuit are true or pure fiction, is not important. Neither the details, the characters, or even the incident are important either.

What is really important in them is the MESSAGE they have imbedded within the story. Do you hear it?

This message is of giving, giving to the less fortunate. Passing on your blessings to make another happy.

Especially if they don’t know that your giving from the heart.

The shop keeper gave not for himself, but because he knew what it would mean to the mother and the boy, thus he gave himself a gift of joy as well.

Quotes

“When everything has to be right, something isn’t.”

—Stanislaw Lec

“The longer we dwell on our misfortunes, the greater is their power to harm us.”

—Voltaire

“Nothing in business is so valuable as time.”

—John H. Patterson

Don’t be deluded by jealousy:

“Jealousy is all the fun you think they had.”

—Erica Jong

“As a moth gnaws a garment, so doth envy consume a man.”

—St. John Chrysostom

“To cure jealousy is to see it for what it is, a dissatisfaction with self.”

—Joan Didion

The Letter

One day a woman named Louise fell asleep in her bed and dreamed a very fitful dream. She dreamed that someone in Hell wrote a letter to her, and it was to be delivered to her by a messenger. The messenger passed between the lakes of burning fire and brimstone that occupies Hell, and found his way to the door that would lead him to the outside world.

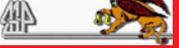
Louise dreamed that the messenger walked to her house, came inside, and gently but firmly woke Louise up. He gave her the message, saying only that a friend had written it to her from Hell. Louise, in her dream, with trembling hands took the letter and read:

My friend,

I stand in Judgment now,
 And feel that you're to blame somehow.
 On earth, I walked with you day by day,
 And never did you point the way.
 You knew the Lord in truth and glory,
 But never did you tell the story.
 My knowledge then was very dim;
 You could have led me safe to Him.
 Though we lived together on the earth,
 You never told me of the second birth.
 And now I stand this day condemned,
 Because you failed to mention Him.
 You taught me many things, that's true,
 I called you 'friend' and trusted you.
 But now I learn that it's too late,
 You could have kept me from this fate.
 We walked by day and talked by night,
 And yet you showed me not the Light.
 You let me live, and love, and die,
 You knew I'd never live on high.
 Yes, I called you a 'friend' in life,
 And trusted you through joy and strife.
 And yet on coming to the end,
 I cannot, now, call you "My Friend."

~~Marsha

After reading the letter, Louise awoke. The dream was still so real in her mind and sweat dropped from her body in pools. She swore she could still smell the acrid smell of brimstone and smoke from her room. As she contemplated the meaning of her dream, she realized that as a Christian, she had failed in her duty to "go out to all the world and preach the gospel." As she thought of that, she promised herself that the next day she would call Marsha and invite





her to church with her.

The next morning she called Marsha and this was the conversation:

“Bill, is Marsha there?”

“Louise, don’t you know?”

“No, Bill, know what?”

“Marsha was KILLED LAST NIGHT IN A CAR ACCIDENT. I thought you knew.”

Isn’t there someone you were supposed to tell about Jesus today?

The Paradox of our Time

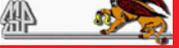
The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers; wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy it less. We have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, but less time; we have more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, but more problems; more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry too quickly, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too seldom, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We’ve learned how to make a living, but not a life; we’ve added years to life, not life to years. We’ve been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor.

We’ve conquered outer space, but not inner space. We’ve done larger things, but not better things. We’ve cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We’ve split the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We’ve learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever, but have less communication.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; tall men, and short character; steep profits, and shallow relationships. These are the times of world peace, but domestic warfare; more leisure, but less fun; more kinds of food, but less nutrition. These are days of two incomes, but more divorce; of fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throw-away morality, one-night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stockroom; a time when technology can



bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

George Carlin

Not only written by a comedian, but by one that is pretty irreverent in his routines. I applaud his insight.

THE PEARLS.

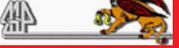
Jenny was a bright-eyed, pretty five-year-old girl. One day when she and her mother were checking out at the grocery store, Jenny saw a plastic pearl necklace priced at \$2.50. How she wanted that necklace, and when she asked her mother if she would buy it for her, her mother said, "Well, it is a pretty necklace, but it costs an awful lot of money. I'll tell you what. I'll buy you the necklace, and when we get home we can make up a list of chores that you can do to pay for the necklace. And don't forget that for your birthday Grandma just might give you a whole dollar bill, too. Okay?"

Jenny agreed, and her mother bought the pearl necklace for her. Jenny worked on her chores very hard every day, and sure enough, her grandma gave her a brand new dollar bill for her birthday. Soon Jenny had paid off the pearls. How Jenny loved those pearls. She wore them everywhere - to kindergarten, bed and when she went out with her mother to run errands. The only time she didn't wear them was in the shower - her mother had told her that they would turn her neck green!

Now Jenny had a very loving daddy. When Jenny went to bed, he would get up from his favorite chair every night and read Jenny her favorite story. One night when he finished the story, he said, "Jenny, do you love me?" "Oh yes, Daddy, you know I love you," the little girl said. "Well, then, give me your pearls." "Oh! Daddy, not my pearls!" Jenny said. "But you can have Rosie, my favorite doll. Remember her? You gave her to me last year for my birthday. And you can have her tea party outfit, too. Okay?" "Oh no, darling, that's okay." Her father brushed her cheek with a kiss. "Good night, little one."

A week later, her father once again asked Jenny after her story, "Do you love me?" "Oh yes, Daddy, you know I love you." "Well, then, give me your pearls." "Oh, Daddy, not my pearls! But you can have Ribbons, my toy horse. Do you remember her? She's my favorite. Her hair is so soft, and you can play with it and braid it and everything. You can have Ribbons if you want her, Daddy," the little girl said to her father. "No, that's okay," her father said and brushed her cheek again with a kiss. "God bless you, little one. Sweet dreams."

Several days later, when Jenny's father came in to read her a story, Jenny was sitting on her bed and her lip was trembling. "Here, Daddy," she said, and held out her hand. She opened it and her beloved pearl necklace was inside. She let it slip into her father's hand. With one hand her father held the plastic pearls and with the other he pulled out of his pocket a blue velvet box. Inside of



the box were real, genuine, beautiful pearls. He had had them all along. He was waiting for Jenny to give up the cheap stuff so he could give her the real thing.

So it is with our Heavenly Father. He is waiting for us to give up the cheap things in our lives so he can give us beautiful treasure.

The other point in this story is how much do you really love someone, it is evidenced by how much your willing to give up or do for them? If you have restrictions it is not true love, and I am not in any way referring to giving up things to anybody who wants them, but to the ones you love who deserve it.

The real 12 days of Christmas

People often think of The Twelve Days of Christmas as the days preceding the festival. Actually, Christmas is a season of the Christian Year that last for days beginning December 25 and lasting until January 6 - the Day of Epiphany when the church celebrates the revelation of Christ as the light of the world and recalls the journey of the Magi.

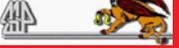
From 1558 until 1829 Roman Catholics in England were not allowed to practice their faith openly. During that era someone wrote 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' as a kind of secret catechism that could be sung in public without risk of persecution.

The song has two levels of interpretation: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the church. Each element in the carol is a code word for a religious reality.

1. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ.
2. The two turtledoves are the Old and New Testaments.
3. Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love.
4. The four calling birds are the four Gospels.
5. The five gold rings recall the torah (Law) the first five books of the Old Testament.
6. The six geese a-laying stand for the six days of creation.
7. Seven swans a-swimming represent the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.
8. The eight maids a-milking are the eight beatitudes.
9. Nine ladies dancing are the nine fruits of the spirit (Gal.5).
10. The ten lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments.
11. Eleven pipers piping stand for the eleven faithful disciples.
12. Twelve drummers drumming symbolize the 12 points of belief in the Apostles Creed.

These are unbelievable....

The "Stella" awards rank up there with the Darwin awards. In 1994, a New Mexico jury awarded \$2.9 million in damages to 81-year-old Stella Liebeck who suffered third-degree burns to her legs, groin and buttocks after spilling a cup of McDonald's coffee on herself.



This case inspired an annual award - The “Stella” Award - for the most frivolous lawsuit in the U.S. The ones listed below are our top nominees for this year.

All these cases are verging on the outright ridiculous and yet with the right plaintiff’s attorney (commonly referred to as ambulance chasers) you could win anything!

1. A jury of her peers awarded Kathleen Robertson of Austin Texas \$780,000 after breaking her ankle tripping over a toddler who was running inside a furniture store. The owners of the store were understandably surprised at the verdict, considering the misbehaving little bastard was Ms. Robertson’s son.

2. A 19-year-old Carl Truman of Los Angeles won \$74,000 and medical expenses when his neighbor ran over his hand with a Honda Accord. Mr. Truman apparently didn’t notice there was someone at the wheel of the car, when he was trying to steal his neighbor’s hubcaps.

3. Terrence Dickson of Bristol, Pennsylvania was leaving a house he had just finished robbing by way of the garage. He was not able to get the garage door to go up since the automatic door opener was malfunctioning. He couldn’t re-enter the house because the door connecting the house and garage locked when he pulled it shut. The family was on vacation. Mr. Dickson found himself locked in the garage for eight days. He subsisted on a case of Pepsi he found, and a large bag of dry dog food. He sued the homeowner’s insurance claiming the situation caused him undue mental anguish. The jury agreed to the tune of half a million dollars!

4. Jerry Williams of Little Rock, Arkansas was awarded \$14,500 and medical expenses after being bitten on the buttocks by his next door neighbor’s beagle. The beagle was on a chain in its owner’s fenced-in yard. The award was less than sought because the jury felt the dog might have been just a little provoked at the time by Mr. Williams who was shooting it repeatedly with a pellet gun!

5. A Philadelphia restaurant was ordered to pay Amber Carson of Lancaster, Pennsylvania \$113,500 after she slipped on a soft drink and broke her coccyx. The beverage was on the floor because Ms. Carson threw it at her boyfriend 30 seconds earlier during an argument!

6. Kara Walton of Claymont, Delaware successfully sued the owner of a night club in a neighboring city when she fell from the bathroom window to the floor and knocked out her two front teeth. This occurred while Ms. Walton was trying to sneak through the window in the ladies room to avoid paying the \$3.50 cover charge. She was awarded \$12,000 and dental expenses.

And the winner is:



Mr. Merv Grazinski of Oklahoma City. Mr. Grazinski purchased a brand new 32-foot Winnebago motor home. On his first trip home, having joined the freeway, he set the cruise control at 70 mph and calmly left the drivers seat to go into the back and make himself a cup of coffee. Not surprisingly the Winnie left the freeway, crashed and overturned. Mr. Grazinski sued Winnebago for not advising him in the handbook that he couldn't actually do this. He was awarded \$1,750,000 plus a new Winnie. (Winnebago actually changed their handbooks on the back of this court case, just in case there are any other complete morons buying their vehicles.)

I have found both sites that support these items and sites that purport them as urban legends, or just plain jokes.

Whether real or made up they purport to the stupidity of the common man and the unwillingness of same to accept responsibility for their own actions. The real culprits are not being made accountable within our court systems.

Try reading some of the warning labels on items you purchase to see manufacturers are attempting to protect themselves from this stupidity. I mean, of course, Preparation H is not meant for internal use, but do you really have to label it so that some dolt out there doesn't try to? Sad to say, I guess so.

Things to Be Thankful For

Here's to good friends.....Something you can't have too few of.....

I AM THANKFUL FOR...

...the mess to clean after a party because it means I have been surrounded by friends.

...the taxes I pay because it means I am employed.

...the clothes that fit a little too snug because it means I have enough to eat.

...a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning and gutters that need fixing because it means I have a home.

...my shadow who watches me work because it means I am out in the sunshine.

...the spot I find at the far end of the parking lot because it mean I am capable of walking.

...all the complaining about our government because it means we have freedom of speech.

...my large heating bill because it means I am warm.

...the lady behind me in church who sings off key because it means that I can hear.

...the alarm that goes off in the early morning hours because it means I am alive.

...the piles of laundry and ironing because it means my loved ones are nearby.

...weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day because it means I have been productive.



Things We Can Learn From A Dog

Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.

Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.

When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.

When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.

Let others know when they've invaded your territory.

Take naps and stretch before rising.

Run, romp and play daily.

Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.

Be loyal.

Never pretend to be something you're not.

If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.

When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently.

Thrive on attention and let people touch you.

Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.

On hot days, drink lots of water and lay under a shady tree.

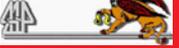
When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.

No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout...run right back and make friends.

Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.

Think carefully about what you will be reading.

Mary had a little lamb,
 His fleece was white as snow.
 And everywhere that Mary went,
 The Lamb was sure to go.
 He followed her to school each day,
 T'wasn't even in the rule.
 It made the children laugh and play,
 To have a Lamb at school.
 And then the rules all changed one day,
 Illegal it became;
 To bring the Lamb of God to school,
 Or even speak His Name.! ;
 Every day got worse and worse,
 And days turned into years.
 Instead of hearing children laugh,
 We heard gun shots and tears.
 What must we do to stop the crime,
 That's in our schools today?
 Let's let the Lamb come back to school,
 And teach our kids to pray!



=====
 It is said that 86% of Americans believe in God. Therefore I have a very hard time understanding why there is such a mess about having “In God We Trust” on our money and having God in the Pledge of Allegiance. Why don’t we just tell the 14% to shut up and sit down????

MEMO FROM GOD:

To: YOU
 Date: TODAY
 From: THE BOSS
 Subject: YOURSELF
 Reference: LIFE

I am God.
 Today I will be handling all of your problems.
 Please remember that I do not need your help.

If life happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFGTD (something for God to do) box. It will be addressed in My time, not yours. Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold on to it

If you find yourself stuck in traffic;
 Don’t despair. There are people in this world for which driving is an unheard of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work;
 Think of the man who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad;
 Think of the person who has never known what it’s like to love and be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend;
 Think of the woman in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week to feed her children.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance;
 Think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice a new gray hair in the mirror;
 Think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes she had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what is life all about, asking what is my purpose?
 Be thankful. There are those who didn’t live long enough to get the opportunity.



Should you find yourself the victim of other people's bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities;
Remember, things could be worse.
You could be them!!!!

Count and appreciate your blessings, then count them again.

Hooray for Dennis Miller!!

He said recently on his show, regarding the judge who declared the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional:

“So, Your Honor, the Pledge is unconstitutional because it says ‘Under God’.

Guess that means when you were sworn in with your hand on a Bible, and at the end of your oath repeated, ‘So Help Me God’ that makes your job unconstitutional, therefore you have no job, which means your ruling doesn’t mean shit.”

SHARING

When we share laughter,
There's twice the fun;
When we share success,
We surpass what we've done.

When we share problems,
There's half the pain;
When we share tears,
A rainbow follows rain.

When we share dreams,
They become more real;
When we share secrets,
It's our hearts we reveal.

If we share a smile,
Then our love shows;
If we share a hug,
Then our love grows.

If we share with someone
On whom we depend,
That person becomes
Family or friend.

And what draws us closer
And makes us all care,
Is not what we have,
but what we share!!



Check out tomorrows date

20th Feb 2002

Now look at it a different way

20022002

It reads the same backwards as it does forwards.....

This only happens once every 3000 years...can't remember the scientific name for it.

Again who has time for figuring these things out, do they get paid for it?
I notice all kinds of similar coincidences all the time...

Puppies

A farmer had some puppies he needed to sell.

He painted a sign advertising the 20 pups. And set about nailing it to a post on the edge of his yard.

As he was driving the last nail into post, he felt a tug on his overalls. He looked down into the eyes of a little boy.

“Mister,” he said, “I want to buy one of your puppies.”

“Well,” said the farmer, as he rubbed the sweat of the back of his neck, “These puppies come from fine parents and cost a good deal of money.”

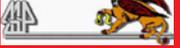
The boy dropped his head for a moment. Then reaching deep into his pocket, he pulled out a handful of change and held it up to the farmer.

“I’ve got thirty-nine cents. Is that enough to take a look?” “Sure,” said the farmer. And with that he let out a whistle “Here,Dolly!” he called. Out from the doghouse and down the ramp ran Dolly followed by four little balls of fur.

The little boy pressed his face against the chain link fence. His eyes danced with delight. As the dogs made their way to the fence, the little boy noticed something else stirring inside the doghouse. Slowly another little ball appeared, this one noticeably smaller. Down the ramp it slid. Then in a somewhat awkward manner, the little pup began hobbling toward the others, doing its best to catch up....

“I want that one,” the little boy said, pointing to the runt.

The farmer knelt down at the boy’s side and said, “Son, you don’t want that puppy. He will never be able to run and play with you like these other dogs



would.”

With that the little boy stepped back from the fence, reached down, and began rolling up one leg of his trousers. In doing so he revealed a steel brace running down both sides of his leg attaching itself to a specially made shoe.

Looking back up at the farmer, he said, “You see sir, I don’t run too well myself, and he will need someone who understands.”

The world is full of people who need someone who understands.

Jesus said, “if you are ashamed of me, I will be ashamed of you before my Father.”

“Don’t make Me come down there!” -God

THREE TREES

Once there were three trees on a hill in the woods. They were discussing their hopes and dreams when the first tree said, “Someday I hope to be a treasure chest. I could be filled with gold, silver and precious gems. I could be decorated with intricate carving and everyone would see the beauty.”

Then the second tree said, “Someday I will be a mighty ship. I will take kings and queens across the waters and sail to the corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of the strength of my hull.”

Finally the third tree said, “I want to grow to be the tallest and straightest tree in the forest. People will see me on top of the hill and look up to my branches, and think of the heavens and God and how close to them I am reaching. I will be the greatest tree of all time and people will always remember me.”

After a few years of praying that their dreams would come true, a group of woodsmen came upon the trees. When one came to the first tree he said, “This looks like a strong tree, I think I should be able to sell the wood to a carpenter” ... and he began cutting it down. The tree was happy, because he knew that the carpenter would make him into a treasure chest.

At the second tree a woodsman said, “This looks like a strong tree, I should be able to sell it to the shipyard.” The second tree was happy because he knew he was on his way to becoming a mighty ship. When the woodsmen came upon the third tree, the tree was frightened because he knew that if they cut him down his dreams would not come true.

One of the woodsmen said, “I don’t need anything special from my tree so I’ll take this one,” and he cut it down.



When the first tree arrived at the carpenters, he was made into a feed box for animals. He was then placed in a barn and filled with hay. This was not at all what he had prayed for. The second tree was cut and made into a small fishing boat. His dreams of being a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end.

The third tree was cut into large pieces and left alone in the dark.

The years went by, and the trees forgot about their dreams. Then one day, a man and woman came to the barn. She gave birth and they placed the baby in the hay in the feed box that was made from the first tree. The man wished that he could have made a crib for the baby, but this manger would have to do. The tree could feel the importance of this event and knew that it had held the greatest treasure of all time.

Years later, a group of men got in the fishing boat made from the second tree. One of them was tired and went to sleep. While they were out on the water, a great storm arose and the tree didn't think it was strong enough to keep the men safe. The men woke the sleeping man, and he stood and said "Peace" and the storm stopped. At this time, the tree knew that it had carried the King of Kings in its boat.

Finally, someone came and got the third tree. It was carried through the streets as the people mocked the man who was carrying it. When they came to stop, the man was nailed to the tree and raised in the air to die at the top of a hill.

When Sunday came, the tree came to realize that it was strong enough to stand at the top of the hill and be as close to God as was possible, because Jesus had been crucified on it.

The moral of this story is that when things don't seem to be going your way, always know that God has a plan for you. If you place your trust in Him, He will give you great gifts. Each of the trees got what they wanted, just not in the way they had imagined. We don't always know what God's plans are for us. We just know that His ways are not our ways, but His ways are always best.

Time and.....

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 ALL OF IT, 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.

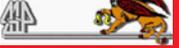
Treasure every moment that you have! And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time.

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!!!

Friendship

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.

When someone is in your life for a REASON, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed outwardly or inwardly. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally, or spiritually. They may seem like a godsend, and they are. They are there for the reason, you need them to be. Then, without any wrong doing



on your part or at an inconvenient time, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end. Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up or out and force you to take a stand. What we must realize is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled; their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered and it is now time to move on.

When people come into your life for a SEASON, it is because your turn has come to share, grow, or learn. They may bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it! It is real! But, only for a season.

LIFETIME relationships teach you lifetime lessons; those things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation.

Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person/people (any way); and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life. It is said that love is blind but friendship is clairvoyant.

Thank you for being a part of my life....

Tortoise vs. Hare

“It never pays to deal with the flyweights of the world. They take far too much pleasure in thwarting you at every turn.”—Sue Grafton

“Learn to depend upon yourself by doing things in accordance with your own way of thinking.”—Grenville Kleiser

“Not seeing is half-believing.”—Vita Sackville-West

Take it slow and steady:

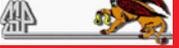
“Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry.”—John Wesley

“Wisely and slow: they stumble that run fast.”—William Shakespeare (Romeo and Juliet)

“Time flies, but you shouldn’t.”—Anon.

“All I Really Need To Know I Learned from Noah and the Ark:”

1. Don’t miss the boat.
2. Try to remember that we’re all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark, you know.



4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something REALLY big.

5. Don't listen to critics, just get on with what has to be done.

6. Build your future on high ground.

7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

8. Two heads are better than one.

9. Speed isn't always an advantage; after all, the snails were on board with the cheetahs.

10. When you're stressed, try floating awhile.

11. Remember that the ark was built by amateurs; it was the Titanic that was built by professionals.

12. Remember that woodpeckers inside are a larger threat than storms outside.

13. No matter what the difficulty, trust in the Almighty: There'll be a rainbow at the end of the storm.

*** A STORY OF TWO WOLVES ***

An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life.

"A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy.

"It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves.

One is evil - he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego."

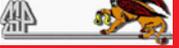
He continued, "The other is good - he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you - and inside every other person, too."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

{ Author Unknown }

*** WHICH ONE ARE YOU? ***



A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling.

It seemed as one problem was solved a new one arose. Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to a boil. In the first, she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs and the last she placed ground coffee beans.

She let them sit and boil, without saying a word. In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her daughter, she asked, “Tell me, what do you see?”

“Carrots, eggs, and coffee,” she replied.

She brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots.

She did and noted that they were soft.

She then asked her to take an egg and break it.

After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg.

Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee.

The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma.

The daughter then asked, “What does it mean, mother?”

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity -boiling water- but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak.

The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened!

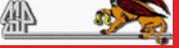
The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water they had changed the water.

“Which are you?” she asked her daughter. “When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond?”

Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?”

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity, do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat?

Did I have a fluid spirit, but after death, a breakup, a financial hardship or does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually



changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor.

If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate to another level?

How do you handle adversity?

ARE YOU A CARROT, AN EGG, OR A COFFEE BEAN?

{ Author Unknown }

Vet

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg - or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's ally forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept

America safe wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a vet just by looking.

What is a vet? He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel.

He is the barroom loudmouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 38th parallel.

She - or he - is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.

He is the POW who went away one person and came back another - or didn't come back AT ALL.

He is the Quantico drill instructor that has never seen combat - but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no-account rednecks and gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each other's backs.

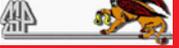
He is the parade - riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.

He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by.

He is the three anonymous heroes in The Tomb Of The Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's sunless deep.

He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket - palsied now and aggravatingly slow - who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

He is an ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.



He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country, just lean over and say Thank You. That's all most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

Two little words that mean a lot, "THANK YOU".

Though "thank you" means a lot to everyone, can change a persons whole day and outlook.

Remember November 11th is Veterans Day.....

"It is the soldier, not the reporter, Who has given us freedom of the press. It is the soldier, not the poet, Who has given us freedom of speech. It is the soldier, not the campus organizer, Who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.

It is the soldier, Who salutes the flag, Who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, Who allows the protester to burn the flag."

Father Denis Edward O'Brien, USMC

I am a veteran also, so I can speak from this viewpoint, those who stand between us and harms way deserve our respect and thanks, no matter what we think about them or the cause they are fighting!

Quotes

"It takes as much courage to have tried and failed as it does to have tried and succeeded." —Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"Pity costs nothing and ain't worth nothing." —Josh Billings

"More tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones."
—Saint Teresa of Avila

You don't have to get all of it right all of the time:

"The essence of man is imperfection." —Norman Cousins

"What, after all, is a halo? It's only one more thing to keep clean."
—Christopher Fry

"The 'C' students run the world." —Harry Truman

Leaders

Here's a SCARY thought.

I'm sure this is in one of the other books but it is worth repeating...

It is time to elect a world leader, and your vote counts.

Here's the scoop on the three leading candidates...

Candidate A: associates with ward heelers and consults with astrologists. He's had two mistresses. He chain-smokes and drinks 8 to 10 martinis a day.

Candidate B: was kicked out of office twice, sleeps until noon, used opium in college and drinks a quart of brandy every evening.

Candidate C: is a decorated war hero. He's a vegetarian, doesn't smoke, drinks an occasional beer and hasn't had any illicit affairs.

Which of these candidates is your choice?

Candidate A: is Franklin D. Roosevelt

Candidate B: is Winston Churchill

Candidate C: is Adolph Hitler

Facts and their presentation can be concieving.

Water versus Coke

We all know that water is important but I've never seen it written down like this before.

75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated. (Likely applies to half world pop.)

In 37% of Americans, the thirst mechanism is so weak that it is often mistaken for hunger.

Even MILD dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3%.

One glass of water shut down midnight hunger pangs for almost 100% of the dieters studied in a U-Washington study.

Lack of water, the #1 trigger of daytime fatigue.

Preliminary research indicates that 8-10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers.

A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble





with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.

Drinking 5 glasses of water daily decreases the risk of colon cancer by 45%, plus it can slash the risk of breast cancer by 79%, and one is 50% less likely to develop bladder cancer.

Are you drinking the amount of water you should every day?

=====

COKE

No wonder coke tastes soooo good:

1. In many states (in the USA) the highway patrol carries two gallons of Coke in the truck to remove blood from the highway after a car accident.
2. You can put a T-bone steak in a bowl of coke and it will be gone in two days.
3. To clean a toilet: Pour a can of Coca-Cola into the toilet bowl and.....Let the "real thing" sit for one hour, then flush clean. The citric acid in Coke removes stains from vitreous china.
4. To remove rust spots from chrome car bumpers: Rub the bumper with a crumpled-up piece of Reynolds Wrap aluminum foil dipped in Coca-Cola.
5. To clean corrosion from car battery terminals: Pour a can of Coca-Cola over the terminals to bubble away the corrosion.
6. To loosen a rusted bolt: Applying a cloth soaked in Coca-Cola to the rusted bolt for several minutes.
7. To bake a moist ham: Empty a can of Coca-Cola into the baking pan, wrap the ham in aluminum foil, and bake. Thirty minutes before the ham is finished, remove the foil, allowing the drippings to mix with the Coke for a sumptuous brown gravy.
8. To remove grease from clothes: Empty a can of coke into a load of greasy clothes, add detergent, And run through a regular cycle. The Coca-Cola will help loosen grease stains. It will also clean road haze from your windshield.

FYI:

1. The active ingredient in Coke is phosphoric acid. Its Ph is 2.8. It will dissolve a nail in about 4 days.
2. To carry Coca-Cola syrup (the concentrate) the commercial truck must



use the Hazardous material place cards reserved for corrosive materials.

3. The distributors of coke have been using it to clean the engines of their trucks for about 20 years!

Still Want To Drink Up?

So, which do you prefer? The ‘good’ stuff or coke, it is amazing what we will or won’t put in our bodies without a second thought. Also, did you realize that up until it was illegalized there really was coke (cocaine) in Coka-Cola? It’s where the advertising played into a ‘pick-me-up’ or ‘get the kick!’

AN ELEMENTARY TEACHER

Her name was Mrs. Thompson. And as she stood in front of her 5th grade class on the very first day of school, she told the children a lie. Like most teachers, she looked at her students and said that she loved them all the same. But that was impossible, because there in the front row, slumped in his seat, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard.

Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed that he didn’t play well with the other children, that his clothes were messy and that he constantly needed a bath. And Teddy could be unpleasant.

It got to the point where Mrs. Thompson would actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, making bold X’s and then putting a big “F” at the top of his papers.

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child’s past records and she put Teddy’s off until last. However, when she reviewed his file, she was in for a surprise.

Teddy’s first grade teacher wrote, “Teddy is a bright child with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good manners he is a joy to be around.”

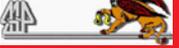
His second grade teacher wrote, “Teddy is an excellent student, well-liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle.”

His third grade teacher wrote, “His mother’s death has been hard on him. He tries to do his best but his father doesn’t show much interest and his home life will soon affect him if some steps aren’t taken.”

Teddy’s fourth grade teacher wrote, “Teddy is withdrawn and doesn’t show much interest in school. He doesn’t have many friends and sometimes sleeps in class.”

By now, Mrs. Thompson realized the problem and she was ashamed of herself. She felt even worse when her students brought her Christmas presents, wrapped in beautiful ribbons and bright paper, except for Teddy’s. His present was clumsily wrapped in the heavy, brown paper that he got from a grocery bag.

Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents. Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing and a bottle that was one quarter full of per-



fume.

But she stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some of the perfume on her wrist.

Teddy Stoddard stayed after school that day just long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my Mom used to."

After the children left she cried for at least an hour. On that very day, she quit teaching reading, and writing, and arithmetic. Instead, she began to teach children. Mrs. Thompson paid particular attention to Teddy.

As she worked with him, his mind seemed to come alive. The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. By the end of the year, Teddy had become one of the smartest children in the class and, despite her lie that she would love all the children the same, Teddy became one of her "teacher's pets."

A year later, she found a note under her door, from Teddy, telling her that she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy. He then wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Four years after that, she got another letter, saying that while things had been tough at times, he'd stayed in school, had stuck with it, and would soon graduate from college with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson that she was still the best and favorite teacher he ever had in his whole life.

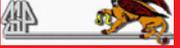
Then four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he explained that after he got his bachelor's degree, he decided to go a little further. The letter explained that she was still the best and favorite teacher he ever had. But now his name was a little longer. The letter was signed, Theodore F. Stoddard, M.D.

The story doesn't end there. You see, there was yet another letter that spring. Teddy said he'd met this girl and was going to be married. He explained that his father had died a couple of years ago and he was wondering if Mrs. Thompson might agree to sit in the place at the wedding that was usually reserved for the mother of the groom. Of course, Mrs. Thompson did. And guess what? She wore that bracelet, the one with several rhinestones missing. And she made sure she was wearing the perfume that Teddy remembered his mother wearing on their last Christmas together.

They hugged each other, and Dr. Stoddard whispered in Mrs. Thompson's ear, "Thank you, Mrs. Thompson, for believing in me. Thank you so much for making me feel important and showing me that I could make a difference."

Mrs. Thompson, with tears in her eyes, whispered back. She said, "Teddy, you have it all wrong. You were the one who taught me that I could make a difference. I didn't know how to teach until I met you."

Warm someone's heart today Pass it along.
Never underestimate the Power of Purpose.



WHAT IS LOVE?

In a survey of 4-8 year olds, kids share their views on love. But what do little kids know about love? Read on and be surprised that despite their young and innocent minds, kids already have a simple but deep grasp of that 4-letter word.

“Love is that first feeling you feel before all the bad stuff gets in the way.”

When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love.

When someone loves you, the way she says your name is different. You know that your name is safe in her mouth.

Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other.

Love is what makes you smile when you're tired.

Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents for a minute and look around.

Love is hugging. Love is kissing. Love is saying no.

When you tell someone something bad about yourself and you're scared she won't love you anymore. But then you get surprised because not only does she still love you, she loves you even more.

Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, then he wears it everyday.

Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they've know each other so well.

Love comes from people's hearts, but God made hearts.

What Your Birth Date Reveals About You!

The birth date describes who we are, what we are good at and what our inborn abilities are. It also points to what we have to learn and the challenges we are facing. To figure out your Birth Number, add all the numbers in the birth date together like in the example until there is only one digit. The Birth Number does not prevent you from being anything you want, it will just color your choice differently.

For example:

January 18, 1957

$01 + 18 + 57 = 76 = 7 + 6 = 13 = 1 + 3 = 4$



Four (4) is the Birth Number to read for the birth date in the example.

November 25, 1988

$11 + 25 + 88 = 124 = 1 + 2 + 4 = 7$

Seven (7) is the Birth Number to read for the birth date in the example.

1 THE ORIGINATOR

One's (1's) are originals. Coming up with new ideas and executing them is natural. Having things their own way is another trait that gets them labeled as being stubborn and arrogant. 1's are extremely honest and do well to learn some diplomacy skills. They like to take the initiative and are often leaders or bosses, as they like to be the best. Being self-employed is definitely helpful for them.

Lesson to learn: Others' ideas might be just as good or better and to stay open minded.

Famous 1's: Tom Hanks, Robert Redford, Hulk Hogan, Carol Burnett, Wynona Judd, Nancy Reagan, Raquel Welch.

2 THE PEACEMAKER

Two's (2's) are the born diplomats. They are aware of others' needs and moods and often think of others before themselves. Naturally analytical and very intuitive they don't like to be alone. Friendship and companionship is very important and can lead them to be successful in life, but on the other hand they'd rather be alone than in an uncomfortable relationship. Being naturally shy they should learn to boost their self-esteem and express themselves freely and seize the moment and not put things off.

Famous 2's: President Bill Clinton, Madonna, Whopie Goldberg, Thomas Edison, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

3 THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

Three's (3's) are idealists. They are very creative, social, charming, romantic, and easygoing. They start many things, but don't always see them through. They like others to be happy and go to great lengths to achieve it. They are very popular and idealistic. They should learn to see the world from a more realistic point of view.

Famous 3's: Alan Alda, Ann Landers, Bill Crosby, Melanie Griffith, Salvador Dali, Jody Foster.

4 THE CONSERVATIVE

Four's (4's) are sensible and traditional. They like order and routine. They only act when they fully understand what they are expected to do. They like getting their hands dirty and working hard. They are attracted to the outdoors and feel an affinity with nature.

They are prepared to wait and can be stubborn and persistent. They should learn to be more flexible and to be nice to themselves.

Famous 4's: Neil Diamond, Margaret Thatcher, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Tina Turner, Paul Hogan, Oprah Winfrey.



5 THE NONCONFORMIST

Five's (5's) are the explorers. Their natural curiosity, risk taking, and enthusiasm often lands them in hot water. They need diversity, and don't like to be stuck in a rut. The whole world is their school and they see a learning possibility in every situation.

The questions never stop. They are well advised to look before they take action and make sure they have all the facts before jumping to conclusions.

Famous 5's: Abraham Lincoln, Charlotte Bronte, Jessica Walter, Vincent Van Gogh, Bette Midler, Helen Keller and Mark Hamil.

6 THE ROMANTIC

Six's (6's) are idealistic and need to feel useful to be happy.

A strong family connection is important to them.

Their emotions influence their decisions. They have a strong urge to take care of others and to help. They are very loyal and make great teachers. They like art or music. They make loyal friends who take the friendship seriously. 6's should learn to differentiate between what they can change and what they cannot.

Famous 6's: Albert Einstein, Jane Seymour, John Denver, Meryl Streep, Christopher Columbus, Goldie Hawn.

7 THE INTELLECTUAL

Seven's (7's) are the searchers. Always probing for hidden information, they find it difficult to accept things at face value.

Emotions don't sway their decisions. Questioning everything in life, they don't like to be questioned themselves.

They're never off to a fast start, and their motto is slow and steady wins the race. They come across as philosophers and being very knowledgeable, and sometimes as loners. They are technically inclined and make great researchers uncovering information. They like secrets. They live in their own world and should learn what is acceptable and what not in the world at large.

Famous 7's: William Shakespeare, Lucille Ball, Michael Jackson, Joan Baez, Princess Diana.

8 THE BIG SHOT

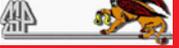
Eight's (8's) are the problem solvers. They are professional, blunt and to the point, have good judgment and are decisive. They have grandiose plans and like to live the good life. They are take charge people. They view people objectively.

They let you know in no uncertain terms that they are the boss. They should learn to base their decisions on their own needs rather than on what others want.

Famous 8's: Edgar Cayce, Barbra Streisand, George Harrison, Jane Fonda, Pablo Picasso, Aretha Franklin, Nostrodamus

#9 THE PERFORMER

Nine's (9's) are natural entertainers. They are very caring and generous, giving away their last dollar to help.



With their charm, they have no problem making friends and nobody is a stranger to them.

They have so many different personalities that people around them have a hard time understanding them. They are like chameleons, ever changing and blending in. They have tremendous luck, but also can suffer from extremes in fortune and mood. To be successful, they need to build a loving foundation.

Famous 9's: Albert Schweitzer, Shirley MacLaine, Harrison Ford, Gloria Steinem, Jimmy Carter, Elvis Presley

WISDOM

I've learned -

That you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes.
After that, you'd better know something.

I've learned-

That you cannot make someone love you.
All you can do is be someone who can be loved.
The rest is up to them.

I've learned -

That no matter how much I care,
Some people just don't care back.

I've learned -

That it takes years to build up trust,
And only seconds to destroy it.

I've learned -

That it's not what you have in your life
But WHO you have in your life that counts.

I've learned -

That you shouldn't compare yourself to the best others can do.

I've learned -

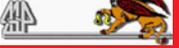
That you can do something in an instant
That will give you heartache for life.

I've learned -

That it's taking me a long time
To become the person I want to be.

I've learned -

That you should always leave loved ones with loving words.
It may be the last time you see them.



I've learned -
That you can keep going
Long after you can't.

I've learned -
That we are responsible for what we do,
No matter how we feel.

I've learned -
That either you control your attitude
Or it controls you.

I've learned -
That regardless of how hot and steamy a relationship is at first, the passion
fades
And there had better be something else to take its place.

I've learned -
That heroes are the people
Who do what has to be done when it needs to be done,
Regardless of the Consequences.

I've learned -
That money is a Lousy way of keeping score.

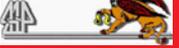
I've learned -
That my best friend and I can do anything
Or nothing and have the best time.

I've learned -
That sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down
Will be the ones to help you get back up.

I've learned -
That sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry,
But that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

I've learned -
That true friendship continues to grow,
Even over the longest distance.
Same goes for true love.

I've learned -
That just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to
It doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.



I've learned -

That maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had
and what you've learned from them
And less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated.

I've learned -

That no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you every once in
a while
And you must forgive them for that.

I've learned -

That it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others.
Sometimes you are to learn to forgive yourself.

I've learned -

That no matter how bad your heart is broken
The world doesn't stop for your grief.

I've learned -

That our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are,
But we are responsible for who we become.

I've learned -

That just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each
other,
And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.

I've learned -

That we don't have to change friends
If we understand that friends change.

I've learned -

That you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret.
It could change your life forever.

I've learned -

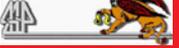
That two people can look at the exact same thing
And see something totally different.

I've learned -

That no matter how you try to protect your children, they will eventually get
hurt And you will hurt in the process.

I've learned -

That your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who don't even
know you.



I've learned -
That even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, You will find the strength to help.

I've learned -
That credentials on the wall
Do not make you a decent human being.

I've learned -
That the people you care about the most in life
Are taken from you too soon.

And you keep on learning throughout your life. I don't want to know anyone who thinks they've learned 'enough, or all they need to!'

witches

Ladies don't take it personally

Young King Arthur was ambushed and imprisoned by the monarch of a neighbouring kingdom. The monarch could have killed him, but was impressed by Arthur's strength and courage. So he offered him freedom, as long as he could answer a very difficult question.

Arthur would have a year to figure out the answer; if, after a year, he still had no answer, he would be killed.

The question was: What do women really want?

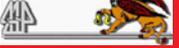
Such a question would perplex even the most knowledgeable man, and, to young Arthur, it seemed an impossible query.

Well, since it was better than death, he accepted the monarch's proposition to have an answer by year's end. He returned to his kingdom and began to poll everybody. The princesses, the prostitutes, the wise men, the court jester. In all, he spoke with everyone but no one could give a satisfactory answer.

What most people did tell him was to consult the old witch, as only she would know the answer. The price would be high, since the witch was famous throughout the kingdom for the exorbitant prices she charged.

The last day of the year arrived and Arthur had no alternative but to talk to the witch. She agreed to answer his question, but he'd have to accept her price first. The old witch wanted to marry Gawain, the most noble of the Knights of the Round Table and Arthur's closest friend!

Young Arthur was horrified: she was hunchbacked and awfully hideous, had only one tooth, and smelled like sewage water, often made obscene



noises... He had never run across such a repugnant creature. He refused to force his friend to marry her and have to endure such a burden.

Gawain, upon learning of the proposal, spoke with Arthur. He told him that nothing was too big of a sacrifice compared to Arthur's life and the preservation of the Round Table.

Hence, their wedding was proclaimed, and the witch answered Arthur's question:

What a woman really wants is to be able to be in charge of her own life.

Everyone instantly knew that the witch had uttered a great truth and that Arthur's life would be spared. And so it went. The neighboring monarch spared Arthur's life and granted him total freedom.

What a wedding Gawain and the witch had! Arthur was torn between relief and anguish. Gawain was proper as always, gentle and courteous. The old witch put her worst manners on display. She ate with her hands, belched and farted, and made everyone uncomfortable.

The wedding night approached: Gawain, steeling himself for a horrific night, entered the bedroom. But, what a sight awaited! The most beautiful woman he'd ever seen lay before him! Gawain was astounded and asked what had happened.

The beauty replied that since he had been so kind to her (when she'd been a witch), half the time she would be her horrible, deformed self, and the other half, she would be her beautiful maiden self.

Which would he want her to be during the day and which during the night?

What a cruel question? Gawain began to think of his predicament:

During the day a beautiful woman to show off to his friends, but at night, in the privacy of his home, an old spooky witch?

Or, would he prefer having by day a hideous witch, but by night a beautiful woman to enjoy many intimate moments?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO????

What Gawain chose as follows below, but don't read until you've made your own choice.



Noble Gawain replied that he would let her choose for herself. Upon hearing this, she announced that she would be beautiful all the time, because he had respected her and had let her be in charge of her own life.

So, what is the moral of this story?

THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS THAT IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOUR WOMAN IS PRETTY OR UGLY, UNDERNEATH IT ALL, SHE'S STILL A WITCH!

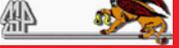
MY MORAL: goes along with 'don't judge a book by it's cover, but by it's content!!!! We are naturally more attracted to someone we find attractive, but, then we learn to love the person underneath the exterior.

Looks may bring us together but personalities keep us together (or separate us).

WW2 trivia

This may be old news to some of the fortunate ones who lived through what looks to others like ancient history. Whenever we complain about how bad the military is now, let's look at the past.

1. The first German serviceman killed in the war was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), the first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940), the highest ranking American killed was Lt. Gen. Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps. So much for allies.
2. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded in combat and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. (His benefits were later restored by act of Congress)
3. At the time of Pearl Harbor the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced "sink us"), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th. Infantry division was the Swastika, and Hitler's private train was named "Amerika" All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
4. More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions your chance of being killed was 71%.
5. Not that bombers were helpless. A B-17 carried 4 tons of bombs and 1.5 tons of machine gun ammo. The US 8th Air Force shot down 6,098 fighter planes, 1 for every 12,700 shots fired.
6. Germany's power grid was much more vulnerable than realized. One estimate is that if just 1% of the bombs dropped on German industry had instead been dropped on power plants German industry would have collapsed.
7. Generally speaking there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance Japanese ace Hiro Yoshi



Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.

8. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a mistake. The tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet the tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.

9. When allied armies reached the Rhine the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).

10. German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City but it wasn't worth the effort.

11. A number of aircrewmembers died of farts. (ascending to 20,000 ft. in an unpressurized aircraft causes intestinal gas to expand 300%).

12. The Russians destroyed over 500 German aircraft by ramming them in mid-air (they also sometimes cleared minefields by marching over them). "It takes a brave man not to be a hero in the Red Army" – Joseph Stalin

13. The US Army had more ships than the US Navy.

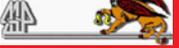
14. The German Air Force had 22 infantry divisions, 2 armor divisions, and 11 paratroop divisions. None of them were capable of airborne operations. The German Army had paratroops who WERE capable of airborne operations. Go figure.

15. When the US Army landed in North Africa, among the equipment brought ashore was 3 complete Coca Cola bottling plants.

16. Among the first "Germans" captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.

17. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.

18. The Graf Spee never sank. The scuttling attempt failed and the ship was bought as scrap by the British. On board was Germany's newest radar system.



19. One of Japan's methods of destroying tanks was to bury a very large artillery shell with only the nose exposed. When a tank came near enough a soldier would whack the shell with a hammer. "Lack of weapons is no excuse for defeat." - Lt. Gen. Mutaguchi

20. Following a massive naval bombardment 35,000 US and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska. 21 troops were killed in the firefight. It would have been worse if there had been Japanese on the island.

21. The MISS ME was an unarmed Piper Cub. While spotting for US artillery her pilot saw a similar German plane doing the same thing. He dove on the German plane and he and his co-pilot fired their pistols damaging the German plane enough that it had to make a forced landing. Whereupon they landed and took the Germans prisoner. I don't know where they put them since the MISS ME only had 2 seats.

22. Most members of the Waffen SS were not German.

23. The only nation that Germany declared war on was the USA.

24. During the Japanese attack on Hong Kong British officers objected to Canadian infantrymen taking up positions in the officer's mess. No enlisted men allowed you know.

25. Nuclear physicist Niels Bohr was rescued in the nick of time from German occupied Denmark. While Danish resistance fighters provided covering fire he ran out the back door of his home stopping momentarily to grab a beer bottle full of precious "Heavy Water". He finally reached England still clutching the bottle. Which contained beer. I suppose some German drank the Heavy Water!!!!

You have value

A well-known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?" Hands started going up.

He said, "I am going to give this \$20 to one of you but first, let me do this." He proceeded to crumple the dollar bill up.

He then asked, "Who still wants it?" Still the hands were up in the air.

"Well," he replied, "what if I do this?" And he dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty. "Now who still wants it?"

Still the hands went into the air. "My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20. Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value. You are special - Don't ever forget it!



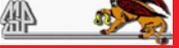
You Make A Difference

A teacher in New York decided to honor each of her seniors in high school by telling them the difference they each made. She called each student to the front of the class, one at a time. First she told each of them how they had made a difference to her and the class. Then she presented each of them with a blue ribbon imprinted with gold letters, which read, "Who I Am Makes a Difference." Afterwards the teacher decided to do a class project to see what kind of impact recognition would have on a community. She gave each of the students three more ribbons and instructed them to go out and spread this acknowledgment ceremony. Then they were to follow up on the results, see who honored whom and report back to the class in about a week.

One of the boys in the class went to a junior executive in a nearby company and honored him for helping him with his career planning. He gave him a blue ribbon and put it on his shirt. Then he gave him two extra ribbons and said, "We're doing a class project on recognition, and we'd like you to go out, find somebody to honor, give them a blue ribbon, then give them the extra blue ribbon so they can acknowledge a third person to keep this acknowledgment ceremony going. Then please report back to me and tell me what happened."

Later that day the junior executive went in to see his boss, who had been noted, by the way, as being kind of a grouchy fellow. He sat his boss down and he told him that he deeply admired him for being a creative genius. The boss seemed very surprised. The junior executive asked him if he would accept the gift of the blue ribbon and would he give him permission to put it on him. His surprised boss said, "Well, sure." The junior executive took the blue ribbon and placed it right on his boss's jacket above his heart. As he gave him the last extra ribbon, he said, "Would you do me a favor? Would you take this extra ribbon and pass it on by honoring somebody else? The young boy who first gave me the ribbons is doing a project in school and we want to keep this recognition ceremony going and find out how it affects people."

That night the boss came home to his 14-year-old son and sat him down. He said, "The most incredible thing happened to me today. I was in my office and one of the junior executives came in and told me he admired me and gave me a blue ribbon for being a creative genius. Imagine. He thinks I'm a creative genius. Then he put this blue ribbon that says 'Who I Am Makes A Difference'" on my jacket above my heart. He gave me an extra ribbon and asked me to find somebody else to honor. As I was driving home tonight, I started thinking about whom I would honor with this ribbon and I thought about you. I want to honor you. My days are really hectic and when I come home I don't pay a lot of attention to you. Sometimes I scream at you for not getting good enough grades in school and for your bedroom being a mess, but somehow tonight, I just wanted to sit here and, well, just let you know that you do make a difference to me. Besides your mother, you are the most important person in my life. You're a great kid and I love you!"



The startled boy started to sob and sob, and he couldn't stop crying. His whole body shook. He looked up at his father and said through his tears, "Dad, earlier tonight I sat in my room and wrote a letter to you and Mom explaining why I had killed myself and asking you to forgive me. I was going to commit suicide tonight after you were asleep. I just didn't think that you cared at all. The letter is upstairs. I don't think I need it after all." His father walked upstairs and found a heartfelt letter full of anguish and pain. The envelope was addressed, "Mom and Dad".

The boss went back to work a changed man. He was no longer a grouch but made sure to let all his employees know that they made a difference. The junior executive helped several other young people with career planning and never forgot to let them know that they made a difference in his life...one being the boss's son. And the young boy and his classmates learned a valuable lesson.

Who you are DOES make difference.

The Cross

The young man was at the end of his rope. Seeing no way out, He dropped to his knees in prayer. "Lord, I can't go on," he said. "I have too heavy a cross to bear."

The Lord replied, "My son, if you can't bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then, open that other door and pick out any cross you wish."

The man was filled with relief. "Thank you, Lord," he sighed, and he did as he was told.

Upon entering the other door, he saw many crosses, some so large the tops were not visible. Then, he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall.

"I'd like that one, Lord," he whispered.

And Lord replied, "My son, that is the cross you just brought in."

When life's problems seem overwhelming, it helps to look around and see what other people are coping with.

You may consider yourself far more fortunate than you imagined.

YOUR CROSS

Whatever your cross, whatever your pain, there will always be sunshine after the rain. Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall, But God's always there to help you through it all.

Funny how you can send a thousand 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing.



When your hut is burning

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming. Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect him from the elements, and to store his few possessions. But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened; everything was lost. He was stunned with grief and anger. "God, How could you do this to me?!" he cried. Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had come to rescue him. "How did you know I was here?" asked the weary man of his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal," they replied. It is easy to get discouraged when things are going bad. But we shouldn't lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering. Remember, next time your little hut is burning to the ground-it just may be a smoke signal that summons the grace of God.

For all the negative things we have to say to ourselves, God has a positive answer for it.

You say: "It's impossible"

God says: All things are possible (Luke 18:27)

You say "I'm too tired"

God says: I will give you rest (Matt 11:28-20)

You say: "Nobody really loves me"

God says: I love you (John 3:16 & John 13:34)

You say: "I can't go on"

God says: My grace is sufficient (II Cor. 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)

You say: "I can't figure things out"

God says: I will direct your steps (Proverbs 3:5-6)

You say: "I can't do it"

God says: You can do all things (Phil 4:13)

You say: "I'm not able"

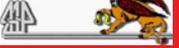
God says: I am able (II Cor. 9:8)

You say: "It's not worth it"

God says: It will be worth it (Romans 8:28)

You say: "I can't forgive myself"

God says: I forgive you (I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)



You say: "I can't manage"

God says: I will supply all your needs (Phil 4:19)

You say: "I'm afraid"

God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear (II Tim.1:7)

You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated"

God says" Cast all your cares on ME (I Peter 5:7)

You say "I don't have enough faith"

God says: I've given everyone a measure of faith (Romans12:3)

You say: "I'm not smart enough"

God says" I give you wisdom (I Cor 1:30)

You say:"I feel all alone"

God says: I will never leave you or forsake you (Heb. 13:5)

Your rights

The following has apparently been attributed to State Representative Mitchell Kaye from GA. I hope this guy runs for President:

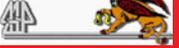
"We, the sensible people of the United States, in an attempt to help everyone get along, restore some semblance of justice, avoid any more riots, keep our nation safe, promote positive behavior, and secure the blessings of debt free liberty to ourselves and our great-great-great-grandchildren, hereby try one more time to ordain and establish some common sense guidelines for the terminally whiny, guilt-ridden, delusional, and other bed-wetters. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That a whole lot of people are confused by the Bill of Rights and are so dim that they require a Bill of No Rights:

ARTICLE I: You do not have the right to a new car, big screen TV or any other form of wealth. More power to you if you can legally acquire them, but no one is guaranteeing anything.

ARTICLE II: You do not have the right to never be offended. This country is based on freedom and that means freedom for everyone - not just you! You may leave the room, turn the channel express a different opinion, etc., but the world is full of idiots, and probably always will be.

ARTICLE III: You do not have the right to be free from harm. If you stick a screwdriver in your eye learn to be more careful, do not expect the tool manufacturer to make you and all your relatives independently wealthy.

ARTICLE IV: You do not have the right to free food and housing. Americans are the most charitable people to be found, and will gladly help anyone in need, but we are quickly growing weary of subsidizing generation after generation of



professional couch potatoes who achieve nothing more than the creation of another generation of professional couch potatoes.

ARTICLE V: You do not have the right to free health care. That would be nice, but from the looks of public housing, we're just not interested in public health care.

ARTICLE VI: You do not have the right to physically harm other people. If you kidnap, rape, intentionally maim, or kill someone, don't be surprised if the rest of us want to see you fry in the electric chair.

ARTICLE VII: You do not have the right to the possessions of others. If you rob, cheat or coerce away the goods or services of other citizens, don't be surprised if the rest of us get together and lock you away in a place where you still won't have the right to a big screen color TV or a life of leisure.

ARTICLE VIII: You don't have the right to demand that our children risk their lives in foreign wars to soothe your aching conscience. We hate oppressive governments and won't lift a finger to stop you from going to fight if you'd like. However, we do not enjoy parenting the entire world and do not want to spend so much of our time battling each and every little tyrant with a military uniform and a funny hat.

ARTICLE IX: You don't have the right to a job. All of us sure want all of you to have one, and will gladly help you along in hard times, but we expect you to take advantage of the opportunities of education and vocational training laid before you to make yourself useful.

ARTICLE X: You do not have the right to happiness. Being an American means that you have the right to pursue happiness - which by the way, is a lot easier if you are unencumbered by an overabundance of idiotic laws created by those of you who were confused by the Bill of Rights."

If you agree, I strongly urge you to forward this to as many people as you can. No, you don't have to, and nothing tragic will befall you should you not forward it. I just think it is about time common sense is allowed to flourish; call it the age of reason revisited.

A couple of quotes before I give my finish-up comments:

"There is nothing common about common sense!" - Ben Franklin

".....food on the table.....a car to every household.....prosperity to all citizens....." - Adolph Hitler

"Tanstafal.....their is no such thing as a free lunch!" - Robert A. Heinlein



What was the Bill of Rights? You have to remember what our forefathers were thinking and going through at the time to truly understand what they were trying to accomplish.

The document was a mandate to government not to meddle in the private lives of the general populace, not guarantees to the public body.

When they were setting up our new union they were throwing off the yoke of an oppressive colonial rule. They did NOT want a strong federal government, originally they wanted the federal government to basically only provide protection from outside sources, not internally. They wanted strength and control at the lowest denominator (the People, remember them), that the further up the chain of government you went the weaker it was to be internally.

It is why we fought a Civil War, the South wanted States rights to dominate, the North wanted the Federal government to dominate. Sorry, but slavery was really a side issue.

Another issue to understand: NO LAW GIVES YOU ANY RIGHTS!

Every law/rule enacted takes away or restricts a right that you had before the law was written. All law is basically restrictive or passing rights from one group to another, personal to governmental control. Which in most cases is not a bad thing in itself, but in interpretative can become scewed.

Each person is accountable to him/herself and God! The Federal government has also made us accountable to the body politic as well. We will never have a Utopia until we can throw off the yoke of BIG government, but then we can't do that either until every person is self-accountable. It is a double edged sword of responsibility.

We can't have people be accountable for themselves as long as they think they don't have to be. I'm referring to owning your own responsibility, the person/company who made the object you hurt yourself with is not responsible for your incompetence.

When government stops supporting the useless, they just might have to learn to fend for themselves and become productive members of society. I'm not referring to people in dire need, I'm talking about the people who think they have a right to free handouts.

So, back to Heilein's statement: "Tanstafal.....there is no such thing as a free lunch!" Whatever your receiving came from someone, is depriving someone else of something they would have had if not for you! So, get a job, get some self-respect, become a giver not a taker.

The Bill of Rights stated that we all have the RIGHT to pursue happiness. Pursue not guaranteed!

When we root out this attitude from our society we will be making progress towards our forefathers dreams...