

Introduction

In January of 2007 I received high dose chemotherapy with a stem cell transplant. At my request, friends emailed me inspiring quotations while I was in the hospital. I could not have survived without their quotations, and especially their loving and supportive email. I send each of them my deepest gratitude and love for their tender net of kindness which held me in those challenging weeks.

As a small means of recognizing their kindness, I assembled their quotations, added some of my own favorites, and consistently formatted them all. I hope others can benefit from these inspiring quotations. Even though I allowed myself to use 27 tightly formatted pages, I could not use everything sent to me. I did not use those without a reference to the publication in which the quotation occurred and only chose those that moved me the most. So despite this collection coming from the people alphabetically listed below, my subjective judgments color it. I did not order the quotations, but still hope that they inspire you as they have me. I take full responsibility for any errors they contain.

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Vic

Steven Mitchell's translation of Rilke's *Tenth Duino Elegy*

"...How dear you will be to me then, you nights
of anguish. Why didn't I kneel more deeply to accept you,
inconsolable sisters, and, surrendering, lose myself
in your loosened hair. How we squander our hours of pain.
How we gaze beyond them into the bitter duration
to see if they have an end. Though they are really
seasons of us, our winter--
enduring foliage, ponds, meadows, our inborn landscape,
where birds and reed-dwelling creatures are at home."

Oceans by Juan Ramón Jiménez translated by Robert Bly in *The Soul Is Here for Its Own Joy* (HarperCollins publishers, 1995) p. 246.).

I have a feeling that my boat
has struck, down there in the depths,
against a great thing.
And nothing
happens! Nothing ... Silence ... Waves....

—Nothing happens? Or has everything happened,
and are we standing now, quietly, in the new life?

H. H. Dalai Lama, *Ethics for the New Millennium* (Riverhead books, New York, 1999) p. 124.

When we enhance our sensitivity towards others suffering through deliberately opening ourselves up to it, it is believed that we can gradually extend out compassion to the point where the individual feels so moved by even the subtlest suffering of others that they come to have an overwhelming sense of responsibility toward those others. This causes the one who is compassionate to dedicate themselves entirely to helping others overcome both their suffering and the causes of their suffering. In Tibetan, this ultimate level of attainment is called “great compassion.”

I am not I, Juan Ramon Jimenez, Translated by Robert Bly (Robert Bly, *The Soul Is Here for Its Own Joy* (HarperCollins publishers, 1995) p. 246.)

I am not I.
I am this one
Walking beside me whom I do not see,
Whom at times I manage to visit,
And whom at other times I forget;
The one who remains silent when I talk,
The one who forgives, sweet, when I hate,
The one who takes a walk where I am not,
The one who will remain standing when I die.

Kindness, Naomi Shihab Nye, *Words Under the Words*, Eighth Mountain Press, 1995

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth
What you held in your hand,

what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.
Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.
Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.
Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to mail letters and purchase bread,
only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
It is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you everywhere
like a shadow or a friend.

Two Kinds Of Intelligence, The Essential Rumi, Translation Coleman Barks & John Moyne, Harper, San Francisco, 1995.

There are two kinds of intelligence: One acquired,
as a child in school memorizes facts and concepts
from books and from what the teacher says,
collecting information from the traditional sciences
as well as from the new sciences.
With such intelligence you rise in the world.
You get ranked ahead or behind others
in regard to your competence in retaining
information. You stroll with this intelligence
in and out of fields of knowledge, getting always more
marks on your preserving tablets.
There is another kind of tablet, one

already completed and preserved inside you.
A spring overflowing its springbox. A freshness
in the center of the chest. This other intelligence
does not turn yellow or stagnate. It's fluid,
and it doesn't move from outside to inside
through the conduits of plumbing-learning.
This second knowing is a fountainhead
from within you, moving out.

Love Dogs, *The Essential Rumi*, Translations by Coleman Barks

One night a man was crying,
Allah! Allah!
His lips grew sweet with the praising,
until a cynic said,

"So! I have heard you
calling out, but have you ever
gotten any response?"
The man had no answer to that.
He quit praying and fell into a confused sleep.
He dreamed he saw Khidr, the guide of souls,
in a thick, green foliage.

"Why did you stop praising?"
"Because I've never heard anything back."
"This longing
you express is the return message."

The grief you cry out from draws you toward union.
Your pure sadness
That wants help
Is the secret cup.

The Heat of Midnight Tears, Mirabai, Translation by Robert Bly in *The Soul is Here
for its Own Joy* (HarperCollins)

Listen, my friend, this road is the heart opening,
kissing his feet, resistance broken, tears all night.
If we could reach the Lord through immersion in water,
I would have asked to be born a fish in this life.
If we could reach Him through nothing but berries and wild nuts
then surely the saints would have been monkeys when they came from the womb!

If we could reach him by munching lettuce and dry leaves then the goats would surely get to the Holy One before us!

If the worship of stone statues could bring us all the way,
I would have adored a granite mountain years ago.

Mirabai says, "The heat of midnight tears will bring you to God."

Symeon the New Theologian Greek Orthodox Abbot (949-1022) (Translated by Steven Mitchell in *The Enlightened Heart: An Anthology of Sacred Poetry*)

We awaken in Christ's body
as Christ awakens our bodies,
and my poor hand is Christ, He enters
my foot, and is infinitely me.

I moved my hand, and wonderfully
my hand becomes Christ, becomes all of Him
(for God is indivisibly
whole, seamless in His Godhood).

I move my foot, and at once
He appears like a flash of lightning.
Do my words seem blasphemous?--Then
open your heart to Him

and let yourself receive the one
who is opening to you so deeply.
For if we genuinely love Him,
we wake up inside Christ's body

where all our body, all over,
every most hidden part of it,
is realized in joy as Him,
and He makes us, utterly, real,

and everything that is hurt, everything
that seemed to us dark, harsh, shameful,
maimed, ugly, irreparably
damaged, is in Him transformed

and recognized as whole, as lovely,
and radiant in His light
we awaken as the Beloved
in every last part of our body.

Love Letters From Spirit To You, Jacob Beilhart

The fires must burn; the things that yet hold you and draw you must be cut asunder. Experiences alone will do this. Mental effort will not do it; it requires actual living - real experiences in the things you exist in. Your loves and desires must be made active, and then the life forces must be wounded, as it will seem to you. This gives you pain and sorrow, but it is the action in you—you of My Love.

The Light Of Smiles, *Metaphysical Meditations, Universal Prayers, Affirmations and Visualizations*, Paramahansa Yogananda, 1964, Self Realization Fellowship, p. 85

I will light the match of smiles. My gloom veil will disappear. I shall behold my soul in the light of my smiles, hidden behind the accumulated darkness of ages. When I find myself, I shall race through all hearts with the torch of my soul-smiles. My heart will smile first, then my eyes and my face. Every body part will shine in the light of smiles.

I will run amid the thickets of melancholy hearts and make a bonfire of all sorrows. I am the irresistible fire of smiles. I will fan myself with the breeze of god-joy and blaze my way through the darkness of all minds, my smiles will convey His smiles and whoever meets me will catch a whiff of my divine joy. I will carry fragrant purifying torches of smiles for all hearts.

Paul Brunton - *Perspectives*, page 153.

"Life remains what it is -- deathless and unbound. We shall all meet again. Know what you are and be free. The best counsel today is, keep calm, aware. Don't let the pressure of mental environment break into what you know and what is real and ultimately true. This is your magic talisman to safeguard you; cling to it. The last word is -- Patience! The night is darkest before dawn. But dawn comes."

Albert Einstein, *What I Believe*, 1930

"A human being is part of a whole, called by us the "Universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest--a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

Hillesum, Etty. *An Interrupted Life and Letters from Westerbork* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), p. 294.

"The misery here is quite terrible; and yet, late at night when the day has slunk away into the depths behind me, I often walk with a spring in my step along the barbed wire. And then time and again, it soars straight from my heart - I can't help it, that's just the way it is, like some elementary force—the feeling that life is glorious and magnificent, and that one day we shall be building a whole new world. Against every new outrage and every fresh horror, we shall put up one more piece of love and goodness, drawing strength from within ourselves."

Looking into Mind by A. Damiani, p. 147

One man, by the name of Meister Eckhart said, "The horse that will bear us quickest to perfection is suffering." Nothing will open your eyes like when you suffer.. .

Manly Palmer Hall, *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry*.

"Man is climbing an endless flight of steps with his eyes fixed upon the goal at the top. Many cannot see the goal, and only one or two steps are visible before them. He has learned one great lesson ... namely that as he builds his own character he is given strength to climb the steps. Hence a Mason is a builder of the temple of character. He is the architect of a sublime mystery ... the gleaming glowing temple of his own soul."

Paradiso, Canto XXXIII, lines 143-145, *Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri, translated by John Sinclair, Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, pp. 484-5.

... but now my desire and will, like a wheel that spins with even motion, were revolved by the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.

e.e. cummings : *a selection of poems*, p. 156

i carry your heart with me (i carry it in
my heart) i am never without it(anywhere
i go you go, my dear; and whatever is done
by only me is your doing, my darling)
i fear
no fate (for you are my fate, my sweet) i want
no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)

Elephant Wondering, *The Gift: Poems by Hafiz The Great Sufi Master*, Daniel
Ladinsky, Translator

A seed
sprouted beneath a golden leaf
In a dark forests.

The seed is seriously contemplating
Seriously wondering about
The moseying habits
Of the Elephant

Why?
Because
In this lucid, wine-drenched tale
The Elephant is really
God,

Who has His big foot upon us,
Upon the golden leaf under which lies
This sprouting
Universe

Wherein
We are all a little concerned
And
Nervous.

Do It Anyway: A Sign In Mother Teresa's Office

People are unreasonable,
illogical, and self-centered,

Love Them Anyway

If you do good, people will

accuse you of selfish,
ulterior motives,

Do Good Anyway

If you are successful, you win
false friends and true enemies,

Succeed Anyway

The good you do will
be forgotten tomorrow,

Do Good Anyway

Honesty and frankness
make you vulnerable,

Be Honest And Frank Anyway

What you spent years building
may be destroyed overnight,

Build Anyway

People really need help but
may attack you if you help them,

Help People Anyway

Give the world the best you
have and you'll get kicked
in the teeth,

Give The World The Best You've Got Anyway.

Max Erlmann, *Desiderata: Words for Life*

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender,
be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly;

and listen to others,
even to the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons;
they are vexatious to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs,
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love,
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be.

And whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,

keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.

Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

By religious happiness...I mean a happiness that so fills a person and his world that he can be confident that it will never entirely forsake him, however bad things get to be. It can and it does remain with one even during very severe suffering, which makes it the sort of happiness that delivers us from the fear of death; with it, as the saying goes, one can "die happy." Like a great love, this sort of happiness colors everything.

Zero Circle, Rumi, *Mysticism After Modernity*, Don Cupitt p. 123

Be helpless, dumbfounded,
Unable to say yes or no.
Then a stretcher will come from grace
 To gather us up.

We are to dull- eyed to see that beauty.
If we say we can, we're lying.
If we say No, we don't see it,
That No will behead us
And shut tight our window onto spirit.

So let us rather not be sure of anything,
Besides ourselves, and only that so
Miraculous beings come running to help.
Crazed, lying in a zero circle, mute,
We shall be saying finally
With tremendous eloquence, Lead us.
When we have totally surrendered to that beauty,
We shall be a mighty kindness.

From *Ten Poems to Change Your Life*, Roger Housden p.43

Distress is to our advantage when we have nothing to seek but mercy. We can be glad of our helplessness when we really believe that His power is made perfect in our infirmity
p.42.

Thoughts in Solitude, Thomas Merton, p.45

Let my trust be in Your mercy, not in myself. Let my hope be in Your love, not in health, or strength, or ability or human resources

New Seeds of Contemplation, Thomas Merton

My chief care should not be to find pleasures or success, health or life or money or rest or even things like virtue and wisdom—still less their opposites, pain, failure, sickness, death. But in all that happens, my one desire and my one joy should be to know: “Here is the thing that God has willed for me. (pp. 17-18.)

To be “lost” is to be left to the arbitrariness and pretenses of the contingent ego, the smoke-self that must inevitably vanish. To be “saved” is to return to one’s inviolate and eternal reality and to live in God. (p. 38)

We must live by the strength of an apparent emptiness that is always truly empty and yet never fails to support us at every moment. (p. 62.)

And yet, strangely, it is in this helplessness that we come upon the beginning of joy. We discover that as long as we stay still the pain is not so bad and there is even a certain peace, a certain richness, a certain strength, a certain companionship that makes itself present to us when we are beaten down and lie flat with our mouths in the dust, hoping for hope. (p. 36.)

From *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton*

Our real journey in life is interior,
it is a matter of growth, deepening,
and an ever greater surrender to the creative
action of love and grace in our hearts.

From *Letters of the Scattered Brotherhood*, edited by Mary Strong. Published in 1948 by Harper & Row.

"Sometimes the body sits on a stump and has to be told by the happy Spirit, March on, brave one!" (p 150) anonymous

"Let the soul banish all that disturbs; let the body that envelops it be still, and all the frettings of the body, and all that surrounds it; let earth and sea and air be still, and heaven itself. And then let the man think of the Spirit as streaming, pouring, rushing and shining into him from all sides while he stands quiet. ((p. 109) Plotinus, A.D. 205

From the Psalms

“He shall cover you with his feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge. His faithfulness will be your shield and your rampart.” Psalms 91.4

“Teach us to treasure each day that we may open our hearts to Your wisdom.” Psalms 90.12

If I take my flight to the frontiers
of the morning
or dwell at the limit of the western sea
even there Thy hand will meet me
and Thy right hand will hold me fast. Psalm 139: 9-10

The Complete Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Vol.1; p. 269

"Life goes headlong. We chase some flying scheme, or we are hunted by some fear or command behind us. But if suddenly we encounter a friend, we pause; our heat and hurry look foolish enough. A friend is the hope of the heart."

John 10:27-28

"My sheep listen to my voice: I know them and they follow me: I give them eternal life, and they never perish. No one can scratch them out of my hand."

Paradiso, Canto XXXIII, lines 143-145, Divine Comedy, Dante Alighieri, translated by John Sinclair, Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, pp 484-5

.... but now my desire and will, like a wheel that spins with even motion, were revolved by the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.

The Essential Rumi

All day I think about it, then at night I say it.
Where did I come from, and what am I supposed to be doing?
I have no idea.
My soul is from elsewhere, I'm sure of that,
and I intend to end up there.

This drunkenness began in some other tavern.
When I get back around to that place,
I'll be completely sober. Meanwhile,
I'm like a bird from another continent, sitting in this aviary.

The day is coming when I fly off,
but who is it now in my ear who hears my voice?
Who says words with my mouth?

Who looks out with my eyes? What is the soul?
I cannot stop asking.
If I could taste one sip of an answer,
I could break out of this prison for drunks.
I didn't come here of my own accord, and I can't leave that way.
Whoever brought me here will have to take me home.

This poetry. I never know what I'm going to say.
I don't plan it.
When I'm outside the saying of it,
I get very quiet and rarely speak at all.

Master Sheng Yen, *Attaining the Way: A Guide to the Practice of Chan Buddhism*,
Shambhala Publications, 2006.

Among the great masters and adepts, Chan was known as the Dharma gate of "letting go of one's life" and "putting to death one's delusion." When one can die the great death of delusion, then one can live the great life of awakening. This is the meaning of resolving the great matter of life and death.

From the Bhagavad Gita 4:24, translation by Nikhilananda

Brahman is the ritual,
Brahman is the offering,
Brahman is he who offers to the fire,
Which is Brahman.

The Summer Day, Mary Oliver, *New and Selected Poems* (Beacon Press, Boston; 1992)
p. 94

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean ---
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down ---
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.

Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

In Blackwater Woods (p. 177)

Look, the trees
are turning
their own bodies
into pillars

of light,
are giving off the rich
fragrance of cinnamon
and fulfillment,

the long tapers
of cattails
are bursting and floating away over
the blue shoulders

of the ponds,
and every pond,
no matter what its
name is, is

nameless now.
Every year
everything
I ever learned

in my lifetime
leads back to this: the fires
and the black river of loss
whose other side
is salvation,
whose meaning
none of us will ever know.

To live in this world

you must be able
to do three things:
to love what is mortal;
to hold it

against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to let it go,
to let it go.

Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali* LXIX

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world
and dances in rhythmic measures.

Jack Kornfield, *A Path with Heart*

To open deeply, as genuine spiritual life requires, we need tremendous courage and
strength, a kind of warrior spirit. But the place for this warrior strength is in the heart.

David Steindl-Rast, *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer*

What brings fulfillment is gratefulness, the simple response of our heart to this life in all
its fullness.

David Steindl-Rast, *A Listening Heart*

Happiness is not what makes us grateful. It is gratefulness that makes us happy.

Neale Donald Walsch, *Tomorrow's God*

It is not a question of whether you "have what it takes," but of whether you take the gifts
you have -- they are plenteous -- and share them with all the world.

The Giver of Stars, Amy Lowell, *Sword Blades & Poppy Seeds*

Hold your soul open for my welcoming.
Let the quiet of your spirit bathe me

With its clear and rippled coolness,
That, loose-limbed and weary, I find rest,
Outstretched upon your peace, as on a bed of ivory.

Let the flickering flame of your soul play all about me,
That into my limbs may come the keenness of fire,
The life and joy of tongues of flame,
And, going out from you, tightly strung and in tune,
I may rouse the blear-eyed world,
And pour into it the beauty which you have begotten.

Ego, *Dynamite on a China Plate* by Jay Leeming (The Backwaters Press, Omaha, 2006).

Getting rid of the ego
is like trying to throw out a garbage can.
No one believes you're serious,
and the more you yell at the garbage men
the better the neighbors
remember your name.

Eight Steps to Happiness - the Buddhist way of loving kindness, Geshe Kelsang Gyatso,
Tharpa Publications, 2000, page 50-51.

"Without others we are nothing. Our sense that we are an island, an independent, self-sufficient individual, bears no relation to reality. It is closer to the truth to picture ourself as a cell in a vast body of life, distinct yet intimately bound up with all living beings. We cannot exist without others, and they in turn are affected by everything we do. The idea that it is possible to secure our own welfare whilst neglecting that of others, or even at the expense of others, is completely unrealistic."

Prometheus Unbound, Shelly, Modern Library edition;

This is the day, which down the void abysm
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's despotism
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep:
Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
O dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
There are the seals of that most firm assurance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his length;
These are the spells by which to reassume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope, till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great, joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

R.W. Emerson, *The Heart Of Emerson's Journals*, p 199:

"It is greatest to believe and to hope well of the world, because he who does so, quits the world of experience, and makes the world he lives in."

From *The Wheel of Life* by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, Touchstone, New York, N.Y., 1997, pp. 285-6.

I truly believe that my truth is a universal one – above all religions, economics, race and color – shared by the common experience of life.

All people come from the same source and return to the same source.

We must all learn to love and be loved unconditionally.

All the hardships that come to you in life, all the tribulations and nightmares, all the things you see as punishments from God, are in reality like gifts. They are an opportunity to grow, which is the sole purpose of life.

You cannot heal the world without healing yourself first.

If you are ready for spiritual experiences and you are not afraid, you will have them yourself. You do not need a guru or Baba to tell you how to do it.

All of us, when we were born from the source, which I call God, were endowed with a facet of divinity. That is what gives us knowledge of our immortality.

You should live until you die.

No one dies alone.

Everyone is loved beyond comprehension.

Everyone is blessed and guided.

It is very important that you do what you love to do. You may be poor, you may go hungry, you may live in a shabby place, but you will totally live. At the end of your days, you will bless your life because you have done what you came here to do.

The hardest lesson to learn is unconditional love.

Dying is nothing to fear. It can be the most wonderful experience of your life. It all depends on how you have lived.

Death is but a transition from this life to another existence where there is no more pain or anguish.

Everything is bearable when there is love.

My wish is that you try to give more people more love.

The only thing that lives forever is love.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepard
I shall not want
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures
He leadeth me beside the still waters
He restoreth my soul
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name sake
Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death
I will fear no evil
For Thou art with me
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies
My cup runneth over
Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
It's possible I am pushing through solid rock
in flintlike layers, as the ore lies, alone;
I am such a long way in I see no way through,
and no space; everything is close to my face,

and everything close to my face is stone.

Rilke *Selected Poems of Rainer Maria Rilke*, A Translation from the German and Commentary by Robert Bly, p. 55

I don't have much knowledge yet in grief-
so this massive darkness makes me small,
You be the master; make yourself fierce, break in:
then your great transforming will happen to me,
and my great grief cry will happen to you.

Psalm 139: 9-10

"If I take my flight to the frontiers
of the morning
or dwell at the limit of the western sea
even there Thy hand will meet me
and Thy right hand will hold me fast.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."v. 1

" I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust."v.2

"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor the arrow that flieth by day" v5

"Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;" v 9

"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." v 10-12

"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him." v 14 & 15

From *The Persistence of Yellow* by Monique Duval, #338

Today I saw
the future. She was sitting
in a lawn chair in the center of

the road with a sign that said,
"Don't go this way." She doesn't always take
the direct approach. She might camouflage herself
behind traffic jams, alarm clocks, burnt toast and
deadlines causing the urban observer to believe
she's really not there. But no matter what,
she always leaves a little trail of hope leading to
her infinite arms.

Prayers of the Cosmos, translation and commentary by Neil Douglas-Klotz:

Turned to the Source are those who live by breathing Unity; theirs "I can!" is included in
God's.

Blessed are those in emotional turmoil; they shall be united inside by love.

Healthy are those who have softened what is rigid within; they shall receive physical
vigor and strength from the universe.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for physical justice; they shall be surrounded by
what is needed to sustain their bodies.

Blessed are those who, from their inner wombs, birth mercy; they shall feel its warm
arms embrace them.

Aligned with the One are those whose lives radiate from a core of love; they shall see
God everywhere.

Blessed are those who plant peace each season; they shall be named the children of God.

Blessings to those who are dislocated for the cause of justice; their new home is the
province of the universe.

Renewal when you are reproached and driven away by the clamor of evil on all sides, for
my sake...

Then, do everything extreme, including letting your ego disappear, for this is the secret of
claiming your expanded home in the universe.

For so they shamed those before you:

All who are enraptured, saying inspired things - who produce on the outside what the
spirit has given them within.

Merton: *Thoughts in Solitude* p.21

The desert is the house of despair. And despair, now, is everywhere. Let us not think
that our interior solitude consists in acceptance of defeat. We cannot accept anything by
consenting tacitly to be defeated. Despair is an abyss without bottom. Do not think to
close it by consenting to it and trying to forget you have consented.

This, then, is our desert: to live facing despair, but not to consent. To trample down
under hope in the cross. To wage war against despair unceasingly. That war is our
wilderness. If we wage it courageously, we will find (Christ) at our side. If we cannot
face it, we will never find Him.

Psalm 139: 9-10

"If I take my flight to the frontiers
of the morning
or dwell at the limit of the western sea
even there Thy hand will meet me
and Thy right hand will hold me fast.

Priceless Gifts, *Talking to My Body*, Anna Swir, translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Leonard Nathan, Copper Canyon Press

An empty day without events.
And that is why
it grew immense
as space. And suddenly
happiness of being
entered me.
I heard
in my heartbeat
the birth of time
and each instant of life
one after the other
came rushing in
like priceless gifts.

Those Winter Sundays, Robert Hayden, *Angle of Ascent: New and Collected Poems*

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Martin Buber, *The Way of Man According to the Teaching of Hasidism* (The Citadel Press, Secaucus NJ, 1966); pages 40-41.

"Where is the dwelling of God?" This is the question with which the Rabbi of Kotzk surprised a number of learned men who happened to be visiting him. They laughed at him: "What a thing to ask! Is not the whole world full of his glory?"

Then he answered his own question: "God dwells wherever man lets him in."

Meditations for People in Crisis, by Paul Brunton (editors: Sam and Leslie Cohen)

If you want to heal someone, do not concentrate about the nature of the disease, or you may strengthen it. Concentrate rather upon the nature of the Overself, that its mighty grace may be released to them. Do not even pray that he or she will be cured. Pray rather that the power of the Overself's grace may work within them, and do what it will.

The difficulty is that if you try to get at the Truth simply as a means to achieve the healing, the Truth eludes you. You have therefore to seek Truth and leave your fate to it, which will always work out for the best, materially or otherwise.

Schaya, Leo, *The Universal Meaning of the Kabbalah*. Translator Nancy Pearson, Penguin Books, Baltimore. 1973, P. 133.

Were it not for the gentle, vivifying, and illuminating 'dew' which constantly falls from the 'tree' of grace into the two lower worlds where the multitude of creatures is unfolded, cosmic law in the rigor of its justice would at once destroy everything, 'from man even to cattle, to the reptiles and to the birds in the sky', because of the negation by man -- the criterion of created existence -- of his own reality, his pure 'self', which is God himself.

But this saving dew falls only inasmuch as there is a man on earth to attract it, for 'the whole earth', the entire cosmos, has been created only with a view to man, who is its synthesis and its mediator.

Open Secrets, *The Letters of Reb Yerachmiel ben Yisrael*, p. 8.

"Be careful, my friend, for I sense a confusion arising when you think about Yesh and Ayin. Do not imagine that Yesh is the body and Ayin the soul. Do not equate Yesh with the physical and Ayin with the spiritual. And be careful not to mistake Ayin for God. Yesh is the world of separateness. Whether we are speaking of bodies or souls, if we imagine them as separate independent beings, we are speaking in terms of Yesh. Ayin is

that which is empty of self and separateness. From the perspective of Ayin, there is no separate self, only the oneness of God.

God is not only this oneness, however. God's shlemut (completeness) necessitates both unity and diversity. God is both Yesh and Ayin and that which embraces them both.

A magnet has two poles, one positive and one negative. A magnet cannot be otherwise and still be a magnet. The two poles go together, and only when they are together can there be a magnet. even if you cut the magnet in half and in half again, it will always manifest these two poles. No matter how small you slice the magnet, its oneness necessitates the duality of positive and negative poles.

Now think of God. Yesh (Being) and Ayin (emptiness) are the poles of God. God cannot be God without them, and they cannot be themselves without each other and God. This is what is meant by God's shlemut, God's wholeness. All things are contained in and necessitated by God. We will return to this truth over and over again, for it explains the deepest mysteries.

But enough for now. You ask difficult questions, made all the more difficult because the answer is so simple: God is All."

"Our world is fragile and impermanent, but the temporal and fleeting world of Yesh is needed to reveal the powerful and eternal presence of Ayin. And both are needed to express the completeness of God." p 11.

The Measure of My Days, by Florida Scott Maxwell, p. 107.

I am in that rare frame of mind when everything seems simple. When I have no doubt that the aim and solution of life is the acceptance of God. It is impossible and imperative, and clear. To open to such unimaginable greatness affrights my smallness. I do not know what I see, cannot know, but I am where the mystery is the certainty.

My long life has hardly given me time--I cannot say to understand-- but to be able to imagine that God speaks to me, says simply--"I keep calling to you, and you do not come", and I answer quite naturally-- "I couldn't, until I knew there was nowhere else to go"

T.S. Elliot, *No. 1 of Four Quartets*

"At the still point of the turning world
Neither flesh not fleshless;
Neither from nor towards;
at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement.

And do not call it fixity,
 Where past and future are gathered.
Neither movement from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline.
Except for the point, the still point,
 There would be no dance,
 and there is only the dance.

Thanks, Robert Frost by David Ray, *Music of Time: Selected and New Poems*,
Backwaters Press

Do you have hope for the future?
someone asked Robert Frost, toward the end.
Yes, and even for the past, he replied,
that it will turn out to have been all right
for what it was, something we can accept,
mistakes made by the selves we had to be,
not able to be, perhaps, what we wished,
or what looking back half the time it seems
we could so easily have been, or ought...
The future, yes, and even for the past,
that it will become something we can bear.
And I too, and my children, so I hope,
will recall as not too heavy the tug
of those albatrosses I sadly placed
upon their tender necks. Hope for the past,
yes, old Frost, your words provide that courage,
and it brings strange peace that itself passes
into past, easier to bear because
you said it, rather casually, as snow
went on falling in Vermont years ago.

Ezra Pound, *Canto LXXVI*

Nothing matters but the quality
of the affection--
in the end--that has carved the trace in the mind

All You Who Sleep Tonight: Poems Vikram Seth

All you who sleep tonight
Far from the ones you love,
No hand to left or right,

And emptiness above--

Know that you aren't alone.
The whole world shares your tears,
Some for two nights or one,
And some for all their years.

A.E. Housman, *A Shropshire Lad*

"From far, from eve and morning
And yon twelve-winded sky,
The stuff of life to knit me
Blew hither; here am I.

Now -- for a breath I tarry
Nor yet disperse apart --
Take my hand quick and tell me,
What have you in your heart.

Speak now, and I will answer;
How shall I help you, say;
Ere to the wind's twelve quarters
I take my endless way."

Paul Brunton

Philosophic asceticism practices disciplines because it properly values the body, not because it hates the body. Incarnation is an opportunity for salvation. The body is a holy temple. The flesh is a revelation of the World-Mind's working. *Notebook*, 5-2.34

How close is his relationship to that other Self, that godlike Overself! And not only his mind's relationship but also his body's. For in the centre of every cell in blood, marrow, flesh, and bone, there is the void that holds, and is, pure Spirit. *Notebooks*, 5-2.36

I Am Filled with Love, Anna Swir, *Talking to My Body*, translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Leonard Nathan, Copper Canyon Press

I am filled with love,
as a great tree with the wind,
as a sponge with the ocean,
as a great life with suffering,
as time with death.

This being human, *The Illuminated Rumi*, translated by Coleman Barks (New York: Broadway Books, 1997) p. 77.

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and attend them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture, still,
treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

Welcome difficulty.
Learn the alchemy True Human Beings know:
the moment you accept what troubles
you've been given, the door opens.

Welcome difficulty as a familiar
comrade. Joke with torment
brought by the Friend.

Sorrows are the rags of old clothes
and jackets that serve to cover,
and then are taken off.

That undressing, and the beautiful
naked body
 underneath,
 is the sweetness
 that comes
 after grief.