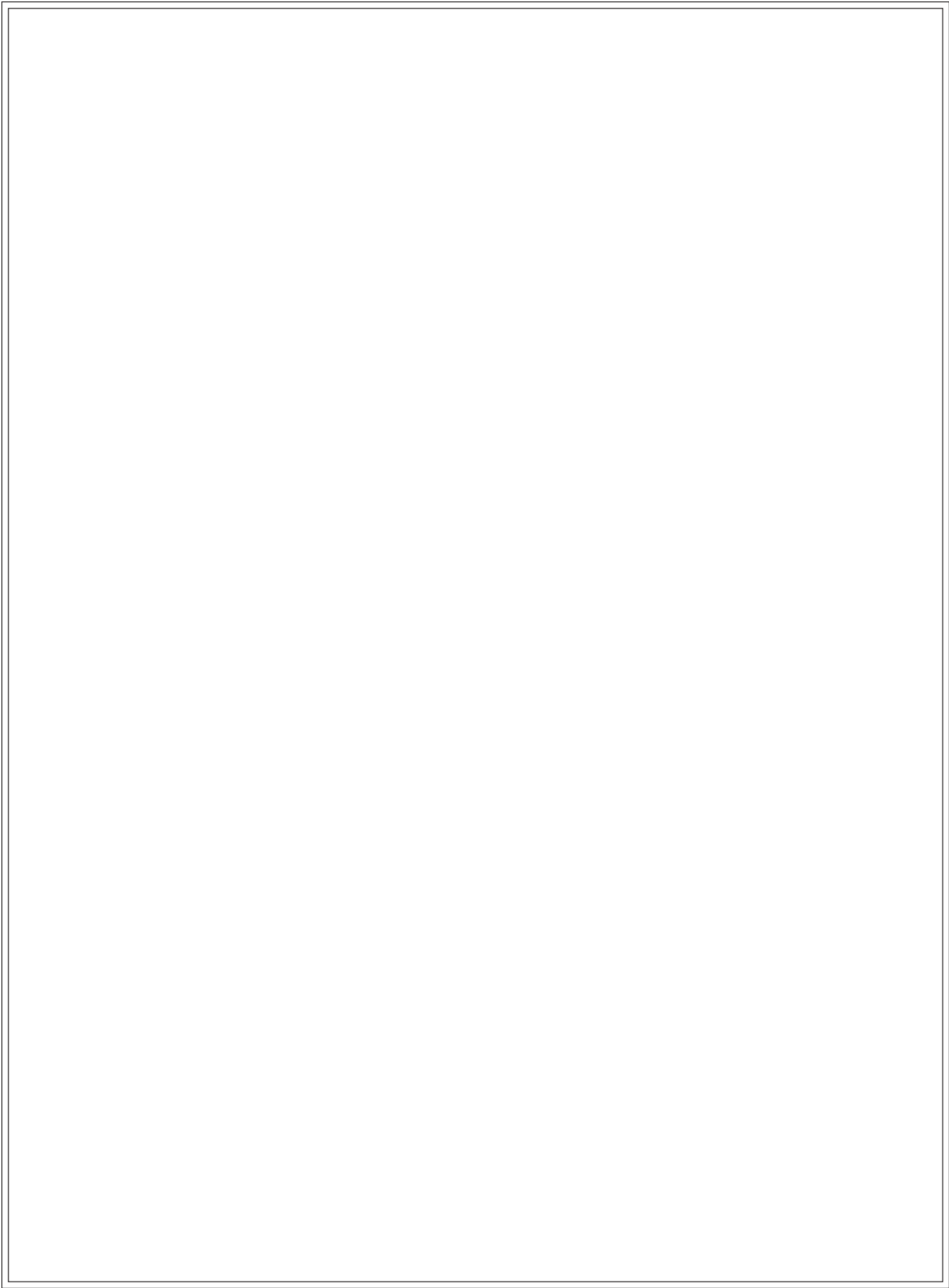


Reflections
for PEOPLE
with POWER
to CHANGE
their world.

PAL-177

Fall 2001



In democratic communities,
knowledge of how to combine
is the mother of all other forms of knowledge;
on its progress depends that of all others.

Alexis de Tocqueville

When the knower has to apply knowledge...

Let us imagine a pilot,
and assume that he has passed every
examination with distinction,
but that he had not as yet been at sea.
Imagine him in a storm;
he knows everything he ought to do,
but he has not known before how terror
grips the seafarer when the stars
are lost in the blackness of night;
he has not known the sense of
impotence that comes when the pilot
sees the wheel in his hand
become a plaything for the waves;
he has not known how the blood
rushes to the head when one
tries to make calculations at
such a moment;
in short, he has no conception
of the changes that takes
place in the knower
when he has to
apply his knowledge.

M. S. Kierkegaard

“Thoughts on Crucial Situations in Human Life”

In *Parables of Kirkegaard*

T.C. Oden, Editor (1978) Princeton University Press, p. 38

Be patient toward all that is unre-
solved in your heart
and try not to love the questions
themselves.
Do not now seek the answers
which cannot be given to you
because you will not be able to live
them.
And the point is, to live everything.
Live the questions now.
Perhaps you will then gradually,
without noticing it,
Live along some distant day into the
answer.

Rainer Maria Rilke

Even though it might not seem so at first
sight, the greatest difficulty is building
our shared dream of the ideal city.
Once we have clarity of the city we
desire, we will find, that to build it, is
less difficult than we would of imagined
it was. Nevertheless to discover this,
we must not resign to accept anything
different than our most ambitious
dreams.

Enrique Peñalosa, Mayor of Bogota
Colombia, 1998-2000

This is a great discovery, education is
politics! When a teacher discovers that
he or she is a politician, too, the teacher
has to ask, What kind of politics am I
doing in the classroom? That is, in
favor of whom am I being a teacher?
The teacher works in favor of
something and against something.
Because of that, he or she will have
another great question, How to be
consistent in my teaching practice with
my political choice?

Paulo Friere
A Pedagogy for Liberation

Schooling has a profound impact on the
lives of people and society. As a
teacher, I believe that my actions in the
classroom play a very real role in
creating and changing and shaping the
world, one child at a time. I need to
ask myself what kind of neighbors I
want, and then I need to work to create
a classroom that helps create that
world.

Steven Wolk
A Democratic Classroom

What is Happening

I look around and see people
Disregarding each other's mind, body, and soul.
Why are you so angry? Why the rage and revenge. It must end.
There is so much hate. Where is the love? I don't see it.
People are afraid. Intimidation is so wrong.
There is too much harm, hurt, destruction. Where is the
conscience?
Who are your friends? Are they competitors, rivals?
We need to respect and honor each other.
There is so much loneliness, don't you see them?
The need a companion. Try to be obedient, stop being so unruly.
We need good self-esteem, no doubt. Be proud.
We need assurance and faith that things will change.
Don't be afraid, don't be sad. There is hope.
The children need guidance. Don't mislead them.
Compromise and learn self-control. Teach morals.
Practical, sensible, rational; isn't there enough foolishness?
Encourage each other. Life is too short.
Be thankful. There is light beyond the darkness.
It can shine through, forgive, have patience, and be devoted to
kindness.
We need a future, it's our responsibility.
—Rhonda Strohofer, a member of the Kitchen Table Project

And every time I try to be
What someone else has thought of me
So caught up, I wasn't able to achieve
But deep in my heart the answer it was in me
And I made up my mind to find my own destiny.

Lauryn Hill
The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill

Help me to Believe in Beginnings

God of history and of my heart, so much has happened to me during these whirlwind days:

I've known death and birth;
I've been brave and scared;
I've hurt, I've helped;
I've been honest, I've lied;
I've destroyed, I've created;
I've been with people, I've been lonely;
I've been loyal, I've betrayed;
I've decided, I've waffled;
I've laughed and I've cried.

You know my frail heart and my frayed history --
and now another day begins.

Oh God, help me believe in beginnings
and in my beginning again,
no matter how often I've failed before.

Help me to make beginnings:
to begin going out of my weary mind
into fresh dreams,
daring to make my own bold tracks
into the land of now;
to begin forgiving
that I may experience mercy;
to begin questioning the unquestionable
that I may know truth;
that I may create beauty;
to begin sacrificing
that I may accomplish justice;
to begin risking
that I may make peace;
to begin loving
that I may realize joy.

Help me to be a beginning for others,
to be a singer to the songless,
a storyteller to the aimless,
a befriender to the friendless;
to become a beginning of hope for the despairing,
of assurance for the doubting,
of reconciliation for the divided;
to become a beginning of freedom for the oppressed,
of comfort for the sorrowing,
of friendship for the forgotten;
to become a beginning of beauty for the forlorn,
of sweetness for the soured,
of gentleness for the angry,
of wholeness for the broken,
of peace for the frightened and
violent of the earth.

Help me to believe in beginnings,
to make a beginning,
to be a beginning,
so that I may not just grow old,
but grow new
each day of this wild, amazing life
you call me to live
with the passion of Jesus Christ.



First They Came for the Jews

First they came for the Jews
and I did not speak out
because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for the Communists
and I did not speak out
because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the trade unionists
and I did not speak out
because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me
and there was no one left
to speak out for me.

Pastor Martin Niemoller

It is I who must begin...

Once I begin, once I try--
here and now,
right where I am,
not excusing myself
by saying that things
would be easier elsewhere,
without grand speeches and
ostentatious gestures,
but all the more persistently
--to live in harmony
with the "voice of Being," as I

understand it within myself
--as soon as I begin that,
I suddenly discover,
to my surprise, that
I am neither the only one,
not the first,
nor the most important one
to have set out upon that road...

Whether all is really lost
or not depends entirely on
wether or not I am lost...

Václav Havel



Community and Democracy
can not exist within
a hierarchy of voices.
Steven Wolk

A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the
moment a single man contemplates it,
bearing within him the image of a
cathedral.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Our Deepest Fear

Our deepest fear
is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear
is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light
not our darkness,
that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves,
who am I to be brilliant,
gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?
You are a child of God.
Your playing small doesn't serve the world.
There's nothing enlightening about shrinking
so that other people
won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest
the glory of God that is within us.
It's not just in some of us;
it's in everyone.
And as we let our own light shine,
we unconsciously give other people
permission to do the same.
We are liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others.

Marianne Williamson

Caminante no hay camino.

Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino, y nada mas;
caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace camino,
y al volver la vista atras
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante, no hay camino,
sino estelas en la mar.

Wonderer there is no way (translation)

Wonderer, the only way
is your footsteps, there is no other.
Wonderer, there is no way,
you make the way as you go.
As you go, you make the way
and stopping to look behind,
you see the path that your feet
will never travel again.
Wonderer, there is no way—
only foam trails in the sea.

Antonio Machado

NEVI'IM JUDGES 7

The Lord said to Gideon, “you have too many troops with you for Me to deliver Midian into their hands; Israel might claim for themselves the glory due to Me, thinking ‘Our own hand has brought us victory.’” Therefore, announce to the men, ‘Let anybody who is timid and fearful turn back, as a bird flies from Mount Gilead’” Thereupon, 22,000 troops turned back and 10,000 remained.

“There are still too many troops,” the Lord said to Gideon. “Take them down to the water and I will sift them for you there.

Then the Lord said to Gideon, “Set apart all those who lap up the water with heir tongues like dogs from all those who get down on their knees to drink.” Now those who “lapped” the water into their mouths by hand numbered three hundred; all the rest of the troops got down on their knees to drink. Then the Lord said to Gideon, “I will deliver you and I will put Midian into your hands through the three hundred ‘lappers’; let the rest of the troops go home.

Empower me
to be a bold participant,
rather than a timid saint in waiting,
in the difficult ordinariness of now;
to exercise the authority of honesty;
rather than to defer to power,
or deceive to get it;
to influence someone for justice,
rather than impress anyone for gain;
and, by grace, to find treasures
of joy, of friendship, of peace
bidden in the fields of the daily
you give me to plow.

Ted Loder
Affirmations and Invocations



Thousands of years
of history have passed...
and during all that time
human beings
have fought, killed,
plundered and wronged each other
in every possible way.
Of such stuff history is made.

But also during that time,
other human beings
have quietly and patiently persevered
in the development
of the arts, crafts,
inventions, ideas and programs.
From these millions of creative persons,
most of them unnoticed and unknown
in the upheavals of history,
have come the good and lasting things
in the sum of human culture.

Barbara G. Walker

With the drawing of this Love, and the Voice of this Calling,
We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

—T.S. Elliot



Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

So God created humankind in God’s own image,

In the image of God he created them; male and female God created them.

God blessed them and said to them,

“Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

—Genesis 1:26-29

Center and Ground

The leader who is centered and grounded can work with erratic people and critical group situations without harm.

Being centered means having the ability to recover one's balance, even in the midst of action. A centered person is not subject to passing whims or sudden excitements.

Being grounded means being down-to-earth, having gravity or weight. I know where I stand, and I know what I stand for: that is grounded.

The centered and grounded leader has stability and a sense of self.

One who is not stable can easily get carried away by the intensity of leadership and make mistakes of judgement or even become ill.

John Heider

The Tao of Leadership:

Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* Adapted for a New Age (1985)

We are all on a journey together...
To the center of the universe...
Look deep
Into yourself, into another.
It is to a center which is everywhere
That is the holy journey...
First you need only look:
Notice and honor the radiance of
Everything about you...
Flay in this universe. Tend
All these shining things around you:
The smallest plant, the creatures and
objects in your care.
Be gentle and nurture. Listen...
As we experience and accept
All that we really are...
We grow in care.
We begin to embrace others
As ourselves, and learn to live
As one among many....

Anne Hillman
Affirmations and Invocations

Where there is no sharing there is no reality.
Where there is self-appropriation there is no reality.
The more direct the contact with the Thou (or other),
The fuller is the sharing.
The I is real in virtue of its sharing in reality.
The fuller its sharing the more real it becomes.

Martin Buber

Alone, you can fight,
you can refuse, you can
take what revenge you can
but they roll over you.

But two people fighting
back to back can cut through
a mob, a snake-dancing file
can break a cordon, an army
can meet an army.

Two people can keep each other
sane, can give support, conviction,
love, massage, hope, sex.
Three people are a delegation,
a committee, a wedge. With four
you can play bridge and start
an organization. With six
you can rent a whole house,
eat pie for dinner with no
seconds, and hold a fundraising party.

A dozen make a demonstration.
A hundred fill a hall.
A thousand have solidarity and your own
newsletter;
ten thousand, power and your own paper;
a hundred thousand, your own media;
ten million your own country.

It goes on one at a time,
it starts when you care
to act, it starts when you do
it again after they said no,
it starts when you say We
and know who you mean, and each
day you mean one more.

Marge Piercy



(Song)

There is only one God
There is only one King
There is only one Body
That is why we sing.

So, Bind us together, Lord
Bind us together with cords
That cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord
Bind us together in Love.

We are the family of God
We are the people of God
We are the only one Image
That is why we sing. So...

The Ripple Effect

Do you want to be a positive influence in the world? First, get your own life in order. Ground yourself in the single principle so that your behavior is wholesome and effective. If you do that, you will earn respect, and be a powerful influence.

Your behavior influences others through a ripple effect. A ripple effect works because everyone influences everyone else. Powerful people are powerful influences.

If your life works, you influence your family.

If your family works, your family influences the community.

If your community works, your community influences the nation.

If your nation works, your nation influences the world.

If your world works, the ripple effect spreads throughout the cosmos.

Remember that your influence begins with you and ripples outward. So be sure that your influence is both potent and wholesome.

How do I know this works?

All growth spreads outward from a fertile and potent nucleus. You are a nucleus.

John Heider

The Tao of Leadership:

Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*

Adapted for a New Age (1985)

Out beyond wrong doings
and right doings
there is a place,
we shall meet there.
—Rumi

Once there was a young warrior. Her teacher told her that she had to do battle with fear. She didn't want to do that. It seemed to aggressive; it was scary; it seemed unfriendly. But the teacher said she had to do it and gave her the instructions for the battle. The day arrived. The student warrior stood on one side, and fear stood on the other. The warrior was feeling very small, and fear was looking big and wrathful. They both had their weapons. The young warrior roused herself and went toward fear, prostrated three times, and asked, "May I have permission to go into battle with you?" Fear said, "Thank you for showing me so much respect that you ask permission." Then the young warrior said, "How can I defeat you?" Fear replied, My weapons are that I talk fast, and that I get very close to your face. Then you get completely unnerved, and you do whatever I say. If you don't do what I tell you, I have no power. You can listen to me, and you can have respect for me. You can even be convinced by me. But if you don't do what I say, I have no power." In that way, the student warrior learned how to defeat fear.

Pema Chodron

When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advise for Difficult Times

p. 34-35

Any religion that professes concern for the souls of men and is not equally concerned about the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a spiritually moribund religion only waiting for the day to be buried.

Equally fallacious is the notion that ethical appeals and persuasion alone will bring about justice. This does not mean that ethical appeals must not be made. It simply means that those appeals must be undergirded by some form of constructive coercive power.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

May our eyes remain open even in the face of tragedy.
May we not become disheartened.
May we find in the dissolution
 of our apathy and denial,
 the cup of the broken heart.
May we discover the gift of the fire burning
 in the inner chamber of our being-
 burning great and bright enough
 to transform any poison.
May we offer the power of our sorrow to the service
 of something greater than ourselves.
May our guilt not rise up to form
 yet another defensive wall.
May the suffering purify and not paralyze us.
May we endure; may sorrow bond us and not separate us.
May we realize the greatness of our sorrow
 and not run from its touch or its flame.
May clarity be our ally and wisdom our support.
May our wrath be cleansing, cutting through
 the confusion of denial and greed.
May we not be afraid to see or speak our truth.
May the bleakness of the wasteland be dispelled.
May the soul's journey be revealed
 and the true hunger fed.
May we be forgiven for what we have forgotten
 and blessed with the remembrance
 of who we really are.

The Terma Collective
Prayers for Solidarity and Justice

No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.
We plant seeds that will one day grow.
We water seeds that are already planted,
knowing that they old future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide the yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something and do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning,
a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results.
But that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.
We are the workers, not master builders;
ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.

Archbishop Oscar Romero

Oración del Éxito

Si piensas que estás vencido lo estás
Si piensas que no te atreves, no lo harás
Si piensas que te gustaría ganar
Pero que no puedes no lo lograrás,
Porque en el mundo encontrarás que el
Éxito comienza con la voluntad del hombre.

Si piensas que perderás, ya has perdido
Todo esta en el estado mental
Porque muchas carreras se han perdido
Antes de haber corrido
Y muchos cobardes han fracasado
Antes de haber su trabajo empezado
Piensa en grande y tus hechos crecerán
Piensa en pequeño y quedarás atrás;
Tienes que pensar bien para elevarte,
Todo esta en el estado mental.

Si piensas que estás adelante lo estás
Tienes que pensar bien para elevarte
Tienes que estar seguro de ti mismo,
Antes de intentar ganar un premio
La batalla de la vida no siempre la gana
El hombre más fuerte o el más ligero,
Porque tarde o temprano el hombre que
Gana es aquel que cree poder hacerlo.

Dr. Christian Barnard

Oration of Success (translation)

If you think that you are defeated, you are
If you think that you do not dare,
you shall not do it
If you think that you would like to win
But that you cannot, you shall not win
Because in the world you will find that
Success begins with the will of man.

If you think that you will lose,
you have already lost
It's all in the mental state
Because many races have been lost
Before they were run
And many cowards have failed
Before having begun their work
Think big and your deeds shall grow
Think small and you shall remain behind;
You must think well to elevate yourself,
It's all in the mental state.

If you think you are ahead you are
You must think well to elevate yourself
You must be sure of yourself,
Before attempting to win a prize
The battle of life is not always won
By the man who is strongest or quickest,
Because sooner or later the man who
Wins is he who believes he can.

Dr. Christian Barnard

Lyrics from the Violent Femmes “I’m Free”

A Song about Belief Barriers

I’m free and I’m happy
I am free from your hatred
I’ve parted from the part
that I participated in
so I’m free it was easy
I know nothing of your hatred
I’ve known and shone the light
and the darkness abated
so I’m free
run skip jump play
my little boy is happy
look he’s smiling because
he knows no fear... hear...
my mommy’s calling me
and I’m running thru the fields
because I’m free...
every day in every way
I’m getting better and better and better
and better and better and better, etc
because there’s no fear... here why
I can’t tell you now cause
I’m runnin through the woods
and I just jumped a little bit higher...
cause I’m free
and that’s the way he created me to be
I have turned from your hatred
I turned on the light
and there was nothing there that waited to get me
this ain’t a song about that this is a song about this

Jorge the Church Janitor Finally Quits

No one asks
where I am from,
I must be
from the country of janitors,
I have always mopped this floor.
Honduras, you are a squatter's camp
outside the city
of their understanding.

No one can speak
my name,
I host the fiesta
of the bathroom,
stirring the toilet
like a punchbowl.
The Spanish music of my name
is lost
when the guests complain
about toilet paper.

What they say
must be true:
I am smart,
but I have a bad attitude.

No one knows
that I quit tonight,
maybe the mop
will push on without me,
sniffing along the floor
like a crazy squid
with stringy gray tentacles.
They will call it Jorge.

Martin Espada
Poetry Like Bread



But we have only begun
to love the earth.

We have only begun
to imagine the fullness of life.

How could we tire of hope?
--so much in the bud.

How can desire fail?
--we have only begun

to imagine justice and mercy
only begun to envision

how it might be
to live as siblings with beast
and flower,
not as oppressors.

Surely our river
cannot already be hastening
into the sea of nonbeing?

Surely it cannot
drag, in the silt,
all that is innocent?

But yet, not yet--
there is too much broken
that must be mended,

too much hurt we have done
to each other
that cannot yet be forgiven.

We have only begun to know
the power that is in us if we
would join
our solitudes in the
communion of struggle.

So much is unfolding that must
complete its gesture,

so much is in the bud.

Denise Levertow

Quick and Easy Recipe for Motivation Cake

The basic mix:

2 cups Hope for Change to sweeten the cake
4 cups Solidarity to hold the cake together
Combine and blend well.

In order to make the cake rise you will need:

1 cup Righteous Anger at Injustice
Stir into batter but allow the lumps to remain.

Bake in a hot Urgent oven; do not cook too long,
cake will overbake and become inert and unyielding.

When done, top with delicious
“You can Make a Difference” frosting.

To make the frosting combine:

1/2 cup Action Plan
1/2 cup Accountability
1/2 cup Skills and Confidence Building

Sprinkle on some Recognition and enjoy!

From the makers of *Movements in Minutes*
Judith Roberts

“That your effort and work would be to make our dream real.
That a gypsy kid would be a Doctor by Harvard.”
—the gypsy community in Catalonia, Spain (to Tere Sorde-Marti)

Feel the overwhelming fire of this great pain and think
In every instance, in your heart
Why they are in Heaven, Why I am in Hell
Why does this whole world laugh at me and I cry alone
To rise to Heaven, to laugh what a great thing!
You, oh unknown bringer of light to the Nation
Burden, bring whatever there is,
A little thought, a little vision, a piece of soul, a piece of understanding
Like him who stole the fire, though none may remember what you have done.
—Prometheus

Táctica y Estrategia

Mi táctica es mirarte,
aprender como sos
quererte como sos.

Mi táctica es hablarte
y escucharte
construir con palabras
un puente indestructible.

Mi táctica es
quedarme en tu recuerdo
no se cómo ni
con que pretexto
pero quedarme en vos.

Mi táctica es ser franco
y saber que sos franca
y que no nos vendamos simulacros
para que entre los dos
no haya telón ni abismos.

Mi estrategia es en cambio
más profunda y más simple
Mi estrategia es
que un día cualquiera
no se cómo ni
con qué pretexto
por fin me necesites.

Mario Benedetti

Tactics and Strategy (translation)

My tactics are to look at you
To learn how you are
To like you how you are.

My tactics are to talk to you
And listen to you
To construct with words
An indestructible bridge.

My tactics are
To have left I in your memory
I do not know how
Or with what pretext
But to have left I in you.

My tactics are to be frank
And to know that you are frank
And that we are selling maneuvers
to each other
So that between both of us
There is no drop curtain or abysses.

My strategy is however
Deeper and simpler
My strategy is
That one day
I do not know how
Or with what pretext
Finally you need me.

Mario Benedetti

We always want to do the right thing, but we do the wrong thing when we do not make a decision about what to do. Decisions have power. Decisions have force. They usually take us to the exact place we need to be, exactly the way we need to get there. It is the wavering back and forth that is dangerous. It places us at the mercy of events; we fall prey to the choices people make for us. Since time and opportunity wait for no one, our lives will not stand still until we figure out what to do. The rightness of a decision is based on our ability to make the decision. When we weigh what we want against what we will have to do, a decision can be an effortless event. We must know what we will and will not do, what we can do and choose not to do; and decide in harmony with the things that we know. The freedom from making a decision can only come after we have made the decision.

Today I decide to be free from all decisions.

“Acts of Faith: Daily Meditations for People of Color”
by Iyanla Vanzant

Great it is to believe the dream
when we stand in youth by a starry stream,
But a greater thing is to fight life through,
and say at the end the dream came true.

—Edwin Markham

If your plan is for one year, plant rice.
If your plan is for 10 years, plant trees.
If your plan is for 100 years, educate children.

Confucius



N o w

Is it not late? A late time to be living? Are not our generations the crucial ones? For we have changed the world. Are not our heightened times the important ones? For we have nuclear bombs. Are we not especially significant because our century is?—our century and its unique Holocaust, its refugee populations, its serial totalitarian exterminations; our century and its antibiotics, silicon chips, men on the moon, and spliced genes? No, we are not and it is not. These times of ours are ordinary times, a slice of life like any other. Who can bear to hear this, or who will consider it? Though perhaps we are the last generation—now there's a comfort. Take the bomb threat away and what are we? Ordinary beads on a never-ending string. Our time is a routine twist of an improbable yarn.

We have no chance of being here when the sun burns out. There must be something heroic about our time, something that lifts it above all those other times. Plague? Funny weather? Dire things are happening. In fact, we are witnessing a mass extinction of animals: According to Oxford's Robert M. May, most of the birds and mammals we know will be gone in four hundred years. But there have been five other such mass extinctions, scores of millions of years apart. People have made great strides toward obliterating other people too, but that has been the human effort all along, and our cohort has only broadened the means, as have people in every century. Why are we watching the news, reading the news, keeping up with the news? Only to enforce our fancy—probably a necessary lie—that these are crucial times, and we are in on them. Newly revealed, and we are in the know: crazy people, bunches of them. New diseases, shifts in power, floods! Can the news from dynastic Egypt have been any different?

The closer we grow to death, the more closely we follow the news. Year after year, without ever reckoning the hours wasted last week or last year. I read the morning paper. I buy mass psychotherapy in the form of the lie that this is a banner year. Or is it. God save us from crazies, aromatherapy? I smell the rat, but cannot walk away.

It is life's noise—the noise of the news—that sings "It's a Small World After All" again and again to lull you and cover the silence while your love boat slips off into the dark.

The blue light of television flickers on the cave wall. If the fellow crawls out of the cave, what does he see? Not the sun itself, but night, and the two thousand visible stars. Once, I tried to converse with him, the fellow who crawled out of his blue-lit cave to the real world. He had looked into this matter of God, He had to shout to make himself heard: "How do you stand the wind out here?"

I don't. Not for long. I drive a schoolkids' car pool. I shouted back, "I don't! I read Consumer Reports every month!" It seemed unlikely that he heard. The wind blew into his face. He turned and faced the lee. I do not know how long he stayed out. A little at a time does for me—a little every day.

Annie Dilliard
For the Time Being Alfred A. Knopf (1999)

No idea is so outlandish
that it should not be considered
with a searching
but at the same time a steady eye.
Sir Winston Churchill

A pessimist sees the difficulty
in every opportunity;
an optimist sees the opportunity
in every difficulty.
Sir Winston Churchill

It is better
to light a candle
than to curse
the darkness.

Chinese Proverb



Judo Strategy

As an organizer, if you go head-to-head with an incumbent, you're likely to lose. There's little you can do that an incumbent can't do as well, if not better. But you don't have to go head-to-head. Instead you may be able to play off the links between the business you are targeting and the incumbent's existing business. You do something that the incumbent can't match without hurting his existing business. You create a dilemma for the incumbent. He wants to, and could come after you, but he doesn't. So for now at least, the incumbent leaves you alone.

The Japanese art of judo teaches how to use an opponents weight against him, to turn his strength into weakness. In organizing, the judo strategy exploits the links between games to turn the incumbents strength into a handicap.

The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock 1917

Action

And indeed there will be a time
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and "Do I dare?"
Time to turn back and descend the stair
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair
[They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!"]
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted to a simple pin--
[They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!"]
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

Proverbs and Songs

XXIX

Wanderer, your footsteps are
the road, and nothing more;
wanderer, there is no road,
the road is made by walking.
By walking one makes the road,
and upon glancing behind
one sees the path
that never will be trod again.

All mankind
is divided into
three classes:
those that are immovable,
those that are movable,
and those that move.
Muslim Proverb

Dream Deferred

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore -
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over -
Like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

Langston Hughes

The Cure At Troy

Human beings suffer
they torture one another
they get hurt
and they get hard.

No poem or play or song
can fully right a wrong
inflicted and endured.

History says,
'don't hope on this side of the grave.'
But then once in a life time
the longed for tidal wave of justice can rise up
and hope and history rhyme.

So hope for a great sea change on the far side of revenge
believe that a farther shore is reachable from here,
believe in the miracles and cures and healing wells.

Call miracles self healing
the utter self revealing double take of feeling.
If there is fire on the mountain and light in the storm
and God speaks from the sky
that means someone is hearing the outcry
and the birthcry of new life at its term.

It means once in a lifetime
that justice can rise up
and hope and history rhyme.

Seamus Heaney

My testimony is that life is against all dualism. Life is One. Therefore, a way of life that is worth living must be a way worthy of life itself. In all things there is a secret door, which leads into the central place, where the Creator of life and the God of the human heart are one and the same. It is here that the meaning of the hunger of the heart is unified. The Head and the Heart at last are inseparable; they are lost in wonder of the One.

—Howard Thurman, *With Head and Heart*

I think organizing is a mode of travel a sort of climbing. It starts with a desire to be somewhere different, to change something. In organizing we don't go alone, we gather others and take them with us, they want to go there too. We move with energy and focus, we know the climb is ahrd but we have a vision of our destination. We travel, if not in terms of geography, then certainly, in terms of the conditions we demand for our lives

Claire Gilbert

James 2:14-26.

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

WHAT IS RUAH?

RUAH is the ancient Hebrew word for “breath” and “spirit.” In the Bible, RUAH is the power of God which brings creative life out of chaos, liberates people from their slavery, and inspires prophets and sages to attend to the inner voice calling for change and renewal.

RUAH brings together people from varied traditions to explore ancient and contemporary paths.

RUAH exists for people: who are dissatisfied with the frenetic pace of society and seek a deeper and more centered life; may or may not be regular worshippers or members of a church, temple, or mosque; want to learn how to meditate and wish to support others and to be supported in their spiritual journey; want to explore the connection between compassion and a changing world.

RUAH supports the individual’s spiritual journey with retreats, workshops, courses, meditation groups, and audio tapes.

Dare Might Things

(an excerpt)

In the battle of life, it is not the critic who counts; nor the one who points out how the strong person stumbled, or where the doer of a deed could have done better.

The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error and short-coming; who does actually strive to do deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotion, spends oneself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at worst, if he or she fails, at least fails while daring greatly.

Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those timid spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt

The Seven Pentacles

Under a sky the color of pea soup
She is looking at her work growing away there
actively, thickly like grapevines or pole beans
as things grow in the real world, slowly enough.
If you tend them properly, if you mulch, if you water,
If you provide birds that eat insects a home and winter food,

If the sun shines and you pick off caterpillars,
if the praying mantis comes and the ladybugs and the bees,
then the plants flourish, but at their own internal clock.

Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow underground.

You cannot tell always by looking at what is happening.
More than half a tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.
Penetrate quietly as the earthworm that blows no trumpet.
Fight persistently as the creeper that brings down the tree.
Spread like the squash plant that overruns the garden.
Gnaw in the dark and use the sun to make sugar.

Weave real connections, create real nodes, build real houses.

Live a life you can endure; make love that is loving.
Keep tangling and interweaving and taking more in,
a thicket and bramble wilderness to the outside but to us
interconnected with rabbit runs and burrows and lairs.

Live as if you like yourself, and it may happen;
reach out, keep reaching out, keep bringing in.
This is how we are going to live for a long time: not always,

for every gardener knows that after the digging, after the planting,
after the long season of tending and growth, the harvest comes.

Marge Piercy

A Drop of Honey

Burma and Thailand

Once a king stood on his balcony eating honey on rice cakes with his chief adviser. As they ate, they gazed down on the street below. The king was in good humor that day, and as he laughed, a drop of honey fell from his rice cake on to the railing.

“Sire, you have spilled a drop of honey. Do let me wipe it up for you,” offered his adviser.

“Oh, pay no mind, my dear,” said the king. “It’s not our concern. The servants will clean it up later. I do not wish to be disturbed just now.”

They went on eating and talking as the drop of honey warmed in the sun and began to slowly drip down the rail. At last it fell on the street below.

Attracted by the sweet smell, a fly landed on it and began to eat.

“Your Highness,” the adviser commented, “the drop of honey has now landed in the street and is attracting flies. Perhaps we should call someone to clean it.”

“Pay no mind,” answered the king merrily. “It is not our concern.

Suddenly a gecko sprang out from under the palace, and ate the fly in one gulp.

Next a cat spied the gecko and pounced.

The cat, playing with it’s food in the middle of the street caught the attention of a dog, who attacked it.

“Now, sire, there is a cat and dog fight in the street. Surely we should call someone to stop it?” implored the adviser.

“Oh, pay it no mind,” said the king. “Here come the cat and dog owners, they’ll stop it. We don’t need to get involved.

So the two continued to eat their honey and rice cakes and to watch the spectacle from their comfortable perch.

But below in the street, the cat’s owner began beating the dog. The dog’s owner then started to beat the cat. Soon the two were beating each other.

The King’s good humor turned to anger as he watched the scene below. “I’ll have no fighting in my streets,” he bellowed. “Call in my guards to quell this fighting at once!”

The palace guards were summoned. But by this time the fight had grown as friends on either side joined the fray. The guards tried to break up the fighting, but soon they too had joined in. With guards involved, the fight erupted into civil war. Houses were burned, and the palace itself was set afire and destroyed.

The kingdom was never returned to its former splendor, but new wisdom was gained in that country. Some people still say: We are each responsible for our actions, large and small. Small problems if unattended, grow into larger ones, and the whole kingdom can be lost from a drop of honey.

Doorways to the Soul

Edited by Elisa Davy Pearmain

p. 98-99

Go with Me in a New Exodus

O God of fire and freedom,
deliver me from my bondage
to what can be counted
and go with me in a new exodus
toward what counts,
but can only be measured
in bread shared
and swords become plowshares;
in bodies healed
and minds liberated;
in songs sung
and justice done;
in laughter in the night
and joy in the morning;
in love through all seasons
and great gladness of heart;
in all people coming together
and a kingdom coming in glory;
in your name being praised .
and my becoming an alleluia,
through Jesus the Christ.



Ther people of America are red, white, black, yellow, and all the shades in between.
Their eyes are blue, black, brown, and all the shades in between.
Their hair is straight, curly, kinky, and most of it in between.
They are tall and short, slim and fat, athletic and anaemic, and most of them in between.

They are the different peoples of the world becoming more and more the “in between”.

They are a people creating a new bridge of humankind “in between” the past narrow nationalistic chauvinism and the horizon of a new humankind — a people of the world.

Their face is the face of the future.

—Saul Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals

The Little Prince
by Antoine De Saint Exupery

Chapter One

Once when I was six years old I saw a magnificent picture in a book, called *True Stories from Nature*, about the primeval forest. It was a picture of a boa constrictor in the act of swallowing an animal. Here is a copy of the drawing.



In the book it said: "Boa constrictors swallow their prey whole, without chewing it. After that they are not able to move, and they sleep through the six months that they need for digestion." I pondered deeply, then, over the adventures of the jungle. And after some work with a colored pencil I succeeded in making my first drawing. My Drawing Number One. It looked like this:



I showed my masterpiece to the grown-ups, and asked them whether the drawing frightened them. But they answered: "Frighten? Why should any one be frightened by a hat?" My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. But since the grown-ups were not able to understand it, I made another drawing: I drew the inside of the boa constrictor, so that the grown-ups could see it clearly. They always need to have things explained. My Drawing Number Two looked like this:



The grown-ups' response, this time, was to advise me to lay aside my drawings of boa constrictors, whether from the inside or the outside, and devote myself instead to geography, history, arithmetic and grammar. That is why, at the age of six, I gave up what might have been a magnificent career as a painter. I had been disheartened by the failure of my Drawing Number One and my Drawing Number Two. Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

So then I chose another profession, and learned to pilot airplanes. I have flown a little over all parts of the world; and it is true that geography has been very useful to me. At a glance I can distinguish China from Arizona. If one gets lost in the night, such knowledge is valuable. In the course of this life I have had a great many encounters with a great many people who have been concerned with matters of consequence. I have lived a great deal among grown-ups. I have seen them intimately, close at hand. And that hasn't much improved my opinion of them. Whenever I met one of them who seemed to me at all clear-sighted, I tried the experiment of showing him my Drawing Number One, which I have always kept. I would try to find out, so, if this was a person of true understanding. But, whoever it was, he, or she, would always say: "That is a hat."

Then I would never talk to that person about boa constrictors, or primeval forests, or stars. I would bring myself down to his level. I would talk to him about bridge, and golf, and politics, and neckties. And the grown-up would be greatly pleased to have met such a sensible person.

On Turning Ten

The whole idea of it makes me feel
like I'm coming down with something,
something worse than any stomach ache
or the headaches I get from reading in bad light-
a kind of measles of the spirit,
a mumps of the psyche,
a disfiguring chicken pox of the soul.

You tell me it is too early to be looking back,
but that is because you have forgotten
the perfect simplicity of being one
and the beautiful complexity introduced by two.
But I can lie on my bed and remember every digit.
At four I was an Arabian wizard.
I could make myself invisible
by drinking a glass of milk a certain way.
At seven I was a soldier, at nine a prince.

But now I am mostly at the window
watching the late afternoon light.
Back then it never fell so solemnly
against the side of my tree house,
and my bicycle never leaned against the garage
as it does today, all the dark blue speed drained out of it.
This is the beginning of sadness, I say to myself,
as I walk through the universe in my sneakers.
It is time to say good-bye to my imaginary friends,
time to turn the first big number.

It seems only yesterday I used to believe
there was nothing under my skin but light.
If you cut me I would shine.
But now when I fall upon the sidewalks of life,
I skin my knees. I bleed.

Billy Collins
The Art of Drowning (1995)
p. 48-49

Hay personas que luchan un día y son buenos.
Hay otros que luchan un año y son mejores.
Hay quienes luchan muchos años y son muy buenos.
Pero hay los que luchan toda la vida:
Esos son los imprescindibles.

(English translation)

There are those that struggle for a day and they are good.
There are those who struggle for a year and they are better.
There are those that struggle for years and they are very good.
But three are those that struggle for a lifetime:
Those are the essentials.

Bertolt Brecht



In a higher world it is otherwise,
but here below to live is to change,
and to be perfect is to have changed often.

John Henry Cardinal Newman

I arise in the morning,
torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world
and a desire to enjoy (or savor) the world.
It makes it hard to plan the day.
E. B. White

“Blessed Be These Hands” A Litany

Leader: Blessed be the work of your hands, O Holy One.

People: Blessed be these hands that have touched life.

Leader: Blessed be these hands that have nurtured creativity.

People: Blessed be these hands that have held pain.

Leader: Blessed be these hands that have embraced with passion.

People: Blessed be these hands that have tended gardens.

Leader: Blessed be these hands that have closed in anger.

People: Blessed be these hands that have planted new seeds.

Leader: Blessed be these hands that have harvested ripe fields.

People: Blessed be these hands that have cleaned, washed, mopped, scrubbed.

Leader: Blessed be these hands that have become knotty with age.

People: Blessed be these hands that are wrinkled and scarred from doing justice.

Leader: Blessed be these hands that have reached out and have been received.

People: Blessed be these hands that hold the promise of the future.

All: Blessed be the works of your hands, O Holy One.

—Diann Neu

Three Questions

If I am not for myself,
Who will be for me?

If I am only for myself,
What am I?

If not now,
When?

Rabbi Hillel