

A Week in Images and Quotes

March - 2024



"What day is it?" asked Pooh.
"It's today," squeaked Piglet.
"My favorite day," said Pooh.

A. A. Milne

I had an interesting experience while waiting with Marsha for our car to be serviced. After about 40 minutes of waiting patiently, Marsha indicated that she was ready to go home and wanted to leave. I could tell she was getting agitated. About that time a woman, who was seated nearby, commented on the weather and how cold it was. I started a conversation and discovered that she was a care provider for two women in Columbia. She said, "I could tell you are her care provider." I turned to Marsha and said, "We take care of each other." The remaining time waiting for our car went by quite pleasantly thanks to the person who started a conversation in which Marsha participated. This is a great example of how natural, unplanned supports exist in our communities.

Earlier this week Marsha was resting on the couch and I wanted to go to bed and she let me know that she was staying on the couch. I said "OK." I then read from one of my novels and watched more of a basketball game and 90 minutes later woke her up and told her it was time for bed. She said, "OK" and followed me into the bedroom. There was no reason for me to argue with her that we were both tired and it was time to retire.

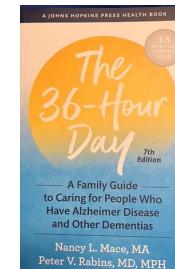
FRIDAY

01

SATURDAY

02

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved. Helen Keller



I had noticed this book as I reviewed several on-line resources. A friend happened to bring it to my attention last week and I purchased the current 7th Edition. I will refer to this resource often during the next few weeks.

With patience comes choice, and with choice comes power.

Louise Penny,
All the Devils Are Here, p. 4

What a grand thing, to be loved!
What a grander thing still, to love!

Victor Hugo

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SUNDAY

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MONDAY

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TUESDAY

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WEDNESDAY

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THURSDAY

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FRIDAY

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SATURDAY

09

WONDER

Meditation Card

The best way to measure how much you've grown isn't by inches or the number of laps you can now run around the track, or even your grade point average-- though those things are important, to be sure. It's what you've done with your time, how you've chosen to spend your days, and whom you've touched this year. That, to me, is the greatest measure of success. R.J. Palacio, *Wonder*

I had already included these lyrics in a previous posting, but it bears repeating here under the heading: wonder.

*Everybody is wondering what and where
They all came from.*

*Everybody is worrying about where
they're going to go
When the whole thing's done.
But no one knows for certain and so
it's all the same to me.*

I think I'll just let the mystery be. Iris DeMent

*Well, it ain't no use to sit
and wonder why, babe
If'n you don't know by now
And it ain't no use to sit
and wonder why, babe
It'll never do somehow ...*

Bob Dylan

- To know how to grow old is the master work of wisdom, and one of the most difficult chapters in the great art of living.*
- We are only what we are; not what we would be; nor everything we hope for. We are but a step in a scale, that reaches further above us than below.*
- There are some enterprises in which a careful disorderliness is the true method.*

Herman Melville



Meditation Card

- I need to remember to limit questions to Marsha that begin with "Do you remember when ... ?" This only emphasizes her troubles with memory.* ELP
- It's a pleasure to share one's memories. Everything remembered is dear, endearing, touching, precious. At least the past is safe though we didn't know it at the time. We know it now. Because it's in the past; because we have survived.* Susan Sontag
- One day, in retrospect, the years of struggle will strike you as the most beautiful.* Sigmund Freud
- You have to go where the truth takes you, and that doesn't always take you in exactly the same place where people you speak to might want, or suspects may want. That's your ultimate obligation.*
- Each person, as they live through history, can't see it all.* David Grann

*It had taken Beauvoir years to see the power of pausing.
And of patience. Of taking a breath to consider all options,
all angles, and not simply acting on the most obvious*

Louise Penny, All the Devils Are Here, p. 222

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SUNDAY

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Gamache is speaking to Beauvoir about the four statements that lead to wisdom:

- *I'm sorry.*
- *I was wrong.*
- *I don't know.*
- *I need help.*

Louise Penny,
A World of Curiosities, p. 19

The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time.

James Taylor

Everybody has their idiosyncrasies.

Quincy Jones

Wisdom begins in wonder. Socrates

MONDAY

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INTENTIONS
Meditation Card

- *to be a caring partner as we advance into our senior years.*
- *to learn the lessons that Marsha will teach me.*
- *to be an active and creative investigator of daily options to challenges as they occur.*
- *to be mindful of "presence" and a commitment to minute-by-minute living.*
- *to follow current best practices in being a caregiver to Marsha.*

- *I've found that small wins, small projects, small differences often make huge differences.*
- *Friendly people are caring people, eager to provide encouragement and support when needed most.*

Rosabeth Moss Kanter

I had nothing to offer anybody except my own confusion.

Jack Kerouac

TUESDAY

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WEDNESDAY

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HONOR MEMORIES OF THE PAST
Meditation Card

1/4/76

*Now it's 1976.
I'm 24 and soon
must fix a course in life!
Tomorrow, I start a job as a special
education teacher at the Carbondale
Special Education Cooperative. It will be
interesting to record my thoughts and
see in which direction my actions will
take me. I feel this will be a most
important year for me and many
answers to important questions will be
coming.*

*(This year may, in fact, have been one of
the most important years of my life when
I would meet and fall in love with Marsha
Brantley.) 6/13/14*

*There's a certain grace in accepting
what your life is and embracing all the
good things that have been - but there's
still an expectation of good things to
come. Not necessarily what you
expected.* Emmylou Harris

THURSDAY

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FRIDAY

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*Go to the People.
Live Among them.
Learn from them.
Serve them.
Plan with them.
Start with what
they know.
Build with what
they have.*

Dr. Y. C. James Yen
*The last two lines
are of special value
in my current life
circumstances.*

*I choose to believe that there is good in
people and that everything is a lesson.
Our place on Earth is to go deeper, to
somehow get wiser. To have spirit.*

Glen Hansard

*I was listening to a song on Spotify by
Chip Taylor and Carrie Rodriguez and
this phrase caught my attention:
*I wonder - wonder for the wonder of
you.**

SATURDAY

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*We must let go of
the life we have
planned, so as to
accept the one that
is waiting for us.*

Joseph Campbell

*In March, winter
is holding back
and spring is
pulling forward.
Something holds
and something
pulls inside us,
too.* Jean Hersey

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SUNDAY

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In their book, Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life, Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat define spiritual literacy:

Life is a sacred adventure. Every day we encounter signs that point to the active presence of Spirit in the world around us. Spiritual literacy is the ability to read the signs written in the texts of our own experiences. Whether viewed as a gift from God or a skill to be cultivated, this facility enables us to discern and decipher a world full of meaning.

I received this quote from a good friend on my short listserve of individuals with whom I share these quotes and images. It spoke volumes to me about how I experience the daily routines with Marsha and how each instance of each activity can reveal such a different experience and lesson; i.e. washing the dishes, taking our medicines, holding hands on the couch, etc. Thank you Mahlon!

No memory is ever alone; it's at the end of a trail of memories, a dozen trails that each have their own associations.

Louis L'Amour

MONDAY

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Do not the most moving moments of our lives find us without words?



Marcel Marceau

TUESDAY

19

Marriage is a school itself. Also, having children. Becoming a father changed my whole life. It taught me as if by revelation.

Abraham Maslow

WEDNESDAY

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TOGETHER
Meditation Card

When 'I' is replaced with 'We', even the illness becomes wellness. Malcolm X

And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.

Malala Yousafzai

In mere moments of togetherness, families forge their most indelible memories. Wes Fesler

With us, the circle stands for togetherness of people . . . To us this is beautiful and fitting, symbol and reality at the same time, expressing the harmony of life and nature. John Fire Lame Deer

I have no faith in human perfectibility. I think that human exertion will have no appreciable effect upon humanity. Man is now only more active - not more happy - nor more wise, than he was 6000 years ago. Edgar Allan Poe

FRIDAY

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INTEGRITY
Meditation Card

Parker Palmer's values have heavily influenced my teaching career, especially from his book, The Courage to Teach, from which this quote originates:

Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identify and integrity of the teacher.

I could easily substitute the word "caregiver" for "teacher/teaching."

Palmer continues in another passage:

By choosing integrity, I become more whole, but wholeness does not mean perfection. It means becoming more real in acknowledging the whole of who I am.

I'm not one of those people who is not looking forward to getting old. I'm happy with my life.

David Beckham

Find the good. It's all around you. Find it, showcase it and you'll start believing in it.

Jesse Owens

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SUNDAY

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INSPIRATION

Meditation Card

The meaning of life is not found
Amid the lyrics or in the sound
Of Dylan's music or in his words
As I find myself drawn towards
Synchronicity.

He has his muse and I have mine
And once in a while they intertwine
And meet together and share their mysteries
As they expand the boundaries
Of my **Creativity**.

Bob has no answers but he holds up a mirror
So we can see our reflection and perhaps a glimmer
Of what really matters, if truth be told,
As we search within our very soul
Spirituality.

On the second day in June
We go to Desolation Row or to a tune
Like Highway 61.
It's a journey that is never done
To view **Simplicity**.

Why the fascination with this man's talent?
What draws me to this music sent
For all of us to listen in time
So we can each compose our rhyme –
To express our **individuality**?

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THURSDAY
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- *LIFE'S work is to wake up, to let the things that enter into your life wake you up rather than put you to sleep. The only way to do this is to be open, be curious, and develop some sense of sympathy for everything that comes along, to get to know its nature and let it teach you what it will.*

- *In a nutshell, when life is pleasant, think of others. When life is a burden, think of others.*

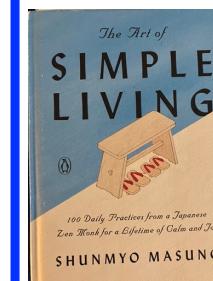
- *It isn't the things that happen to us in our lives that cause us to suffer, it's how we relate to the things that happen to us that causes us to suffer.*

Pema Chödrön

FRIENDSHIP

Meditation Card

*Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind.
“Pooh!” he whispered.
“Yes, Piglet?”
“Nothing,” said Piglet taking Pooh’s
paw. “I just wanted to be sure of
you.” A.A. Milne*



- Believe in yourself.
- Life is a long, yet brief practice.
- Don't be a show-off.
- Don't fixate on right and wrong.
- Find the keys to life in the stories of older people.
- Seek not what you lack.

On my trip to the basement, I noticed this book off to the side and brought it upstairs because of this meditation card.

I remember being quite impressed with the lyrics of a song by Alicia Keys during the pandemic as she spoke directly to the “heroes” working tirelessly amid Covid 19. I now say these words to myself and all caregivers.

*Good job
You're doing a good job, a good job
You're doing a good job
Don't get too down
The world needs you now
Know that you matter, matter, matter, yeah*

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SUNDAY

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Authentic Meditation Card

I came to believe that my true identity goes beyond the outer roles I play. It transcends the ego. I came to understand that there is an Authentic 'I' within - an 'I Am,' or divine spark within the soul. Sue Monk Kidd

Authenticity is not something we have or don't have. It's a practice --- a conscious choice of how we want to live. Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It's about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen.

Brené Brown

First Nations Blessing

*Now you will feel no rain,
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold,
For each of you will be warmth to the other.*

Cited in Louise Penny's *A World of Curiosities*

Good Attitude

Meditation Card

I originally composed this visual organizer when thinking about creativity in teaching. Many of these ingredients have relevance for my current circumstances.

Always **A**im to **A**chieve **A**ccomplishments.

Take **T**ime **T**o **T**each **T**olerance.

Teaching **T**akes **T**act and **T**echnique.

Initial **I**nsights **I**nvolve an **I**nvestment of your time.

Triumph **T**oward **T**ackling **T**ough challenges.

Understand **U**niqueness and **U**ncomfortable **U**ncertainties.

Demand **D**iligence **D**uring **D**eliberations

Encourage & **E**ngage **E**veryone **E**qually.

... beginning to understand that believing something was even more powerful than knowing it.

Louise Penny, *A World of Curiosities*, p. 377

One of the virtual support group members recommended that we access the Alzheimer's 10 Commandments. I decided to rename this list.

Our Relationship

ALWAYS

AGREE

Never Argue

REDIRECT

Never Reason

DISTRACT

Never Shame

REASSURE

Never Lecture

REMINISCE

Never say, "Remember?"

REPEAT

Never say, "I already told you."

SAY "DO WHAT YOU CAN."

Never say, "You can't."

ASK

Never Command

ENCOURAGE AND PRAISE

Never Condescend

REINFORCE

Never Force