

A Week in Images and Quotes

August - 2026

As read in a recent Substack essay
by Parker Palmer)

The Coming of Wisdom with Time

*Though leaves are many, the root is one;
Through all the lying days of my youth
I swayed my leaves and flowers in the sun,
Now may I wither into the truth.*

William Butler Yeats

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- *The concept of passage, crossroads, death and rebirth have been underlying elements in much of my work. My art continues to move in a creative spiral.*
 - *Mystery and beauty remain constant forces behind my creative energy. This is the energy that spins the spiral.*
 - *It may not be possible to convey to someone else the mysterious transforming gifts by which dreams, memory, and experience become art. But I like to think that I can try.*
 - *Death is the center. Everything revolves around death.* Betye Saar
-

*I'm not a genius. I'm just a
tremendous bundle of experiences.*

R. Buckminster Fuller

- *Abundance is an expansion of energy. Abundance is a form of gratitude, a generosity, a modesty, a bow toward others – what we can give, what we can share, rather than what we can take.*
 - *To hear something asks very little of us. To listen places our entire being on notice.*
 - *My books are collages made from journals, research, and personal experience. I love the images rendered in journal entries, the immediacy that is captured on the page, the handwritten note. I love the depth of ideas and perspective that research brings to a story ...*
 - *I believe that when we are fully present, we not only live well, we live well for others.*
 - *When one of us says, “Look, there’s nothing out there,” what we are really saying is “I cannot see.”*
 - *I want my life to a celebration of slowness.*
 - *To write requires an ego, a belief that what you say matters. Writing also requires an aching curiosity leading you to discover, uncover, what is gnawing at your bones.* Terry Tempest Williams
-

Be the **VERB** not the NOUN.

I had heard this expression and I thought of a few examples to clarify its meaning:

- I am not a poet, but I like **writing in verse**.
- I am not a journalist, but I am **writing entries in my journal**.
- I am not a sage, but **I am composing some insightful comments**.
- I am not a perfectionist, but **I am perfecting my writing / actions**.

SATURDAY

01

- *Hope is a method: If I do something about this situation, I might change it enough so that I can do something else about this situation.*
- *It's not necessarily about what career you pick. It's about how you do what you do.*
- *If you want to double your success rate, triple your failure rate.*

Cory Doctorow

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August - 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
The thing about life is that one day you'll be dead * David Shields - Anything processed by memory is fiction. - Aging followed by death is the price we pay for the immortality of our genes. You find this information soul-killing; I find it thrilling, liberating. - Story seems to say that everything happens for a reason and I want to say, No, it doesn't. - Human memory, driven by emotional self-interest, goes to extraordinary lengths to provide evidence to back up whatever understanding of the world we have our hearts set on—however removed that may be from reality. David Shields	A quote by David Shields was a clue in my acrostic puzzle, so I had to investigate any quotes from this source.	Thoughts from my 24-year-old self retrieved from my journals: <i>Sometimes you really realize how small a part you are in the puzzle of all men. One man is really quite insignificant in changing other people's lives and only a few do affect other's actions. The purpose of one's life is to effect changes in others as much as it is to effect changes in oneself. What direction does this change take? I believe it must follow the direction of one's dreams and they should be placed high in one's priorities and take a lifetime to accomplish. Maybe that's when death occurs. If one has ceased to try and attain his potential or if a plateau has been reached and little more effort is exerted to try and reach that potential, Death begins its knocking on the door.</i> I was listening to a song being sung by Glen Hansard that appeared on a Leonard Cohen album and written by Dick Blakeslee. Here is the chorus: <i>Passin' through, passin' through Sometimes happy, sometime blue, Glad that I ran into you Tell the people that you saw me passin' through.</i> Here is my own verse that makes sense to me: <i>When you died I was by your side I was right there next to you And every day that passes I thank you for passin' through</i>	I was thumbing through an old journal of mine from 1989 and noticed a quote that I had written from the book Shoeless Joe by W. P. Kinsella: <i>I didn't think much of it at the time. Hardly anybody recognizes the most significant moments of their life at the time they happen. (p. 124)</i> <i>Learn how to live and you'll know how to die; learn how to die, and you'll know how to live.</i> Morrie Schwartz	I don't pretend to have any kind of big answers for anybody. I think every once in a while, if I'm lucky, I'll get at a feeling that we all have. But I don't have any big solutions for the problem. Jack Johnson		

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SUNDAY

09

I retrieved the following poem I wrote at the age of 21 on June 18, 1973.

**Thoughts & Observations
On Any
Particular Day**

02/12/73 thru
05/28/74

I wonder who I was thinking of in the last stanza. Perhaps, it was my inner voice at age 74 telling my younger self,
Good job, you had a successful life!

MONDAY

10

*There's a question on my mind;
It's haunting at my soul:
My reason for being and purpose in life
And heading for my goal.*

*Are we all just put here
To melt beneath the sun
Or do I have a greater strength
And must my job be done ...*

*By only me and no one else
'Cause I'm part of a big master plan
Or do I simply fill a void
That's been left over by man?*

*Where do I go for the answers?
Are they knocking at my door
Or am I just too lazy
And don't seem to care anymore?*

*There's a lot to learn from everyone
I'm shutting myself off
By being too much inner grown
And many ones I scoff.*

*I need some inner, greater strength
From someone I've always known.
I hope he's listening to me now
And to my goal be shown.*

TUESDAY

11

WEDNESDAY

12

Earlier this week, I listened to an interview Courtney Martin had with Frank Ostaseski and the following gem of wisdom surfaced: *This is my new reality. What can I discover?* when asked about his current life after experiencing several strokes. I related this attitude to my experiences as a care partner with Marsha during the time we lived with her dementia.

As I was reviewing pages from my 1984 Journal the following caught my attention:

If I were to write my American Dream it might be as follows - To be able to live each five minutes with no regrets, to have a close network of friends, and a caring, thoughtful family. Who could ask for anything more?

Current Update: *Mission Accomplished*



I walk the path I'm on!

THURSDAY

13

FRIDAY

14

Welcome to Friends of Silence

A contemplative community rooted in silence, wisdom, and shared listening.

"Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?"

<https://friendsofsilence.net>

I was doing a little data mining of documents I had saved on my computer and used the search word "kindness." One of the hits was a newsletter called *Friends of Silence*. I went to their website and highly recommend it as a monthly go-to source for inspiring essays, poems, quotes and other forms of wisdom.

There exists only the present instant ... a Now which always and without end is itself new. There is no yesterday nor any tomorrow, but only Now, as it was a thousand years ago and as it will be a thousand years hence.

Meister Eckhart



SATURDAY

15

A Week in Images and Quotes

August - 2026

SUNDAY

16

I was intrigued by the following quotes by Stephen Levine:

- *Buddha left a road map, Jesus left a road map, Krishna left a road map, Rand McNally left a road map. But you still have to travel the road yourself.*
- *Death is just a change in lifestyles.*
- *In Chinese, the word for heart and mind is the same - - Hsin. For when the heart is open and the mind is clear they are of one substance, of one essence.*
- *You can call it wisdom, or sanity, or health, or enlightenment. I use the word God as a short-cut. I am comfortable with the word God because I don't have the foggiest idea of what it means.*

I wish I'd known at the beginning that all I really had to do is trust myself. Everything would work out as if by magic once I actually leaned back into my imagination and just let it work, and not question it and not fret about it. **Peter Straub**

MONDAY

17

TUESDAY

18

When creativity meets care, there is alchemy - a transformation. Care, which is usually associated with loss, becomes a generative act. Care infused with creativity makes something new that has value, even if the person is terminally ill. Even if they are moments before passing. To infuse creativity into care is to make meaning in moments that can feel meaningless. And by jumping into the flow state of creativity as you are caring for someone you love - that flow state can carry you beyond the myriad pains you might be feeling: the complexity of anger, resentment, grief. That flow state can reduce your stress. It can open you to growth and joy and all its neuro benefits. It can increase your cognitive reserve so that even if you are in the thick intensity of caring for someone with dementia, you are maximizing brain health for the both of you. **Anne Basting**

- *It took me a few seconds to draw it, but it took me 34 years to learn how to draw it in a few seconds.*
- *It's through mistakes that you actually can grow. You have to get bad in order to get good.*
- *If I get up every day with the optimism that I have the capacity for growth, then that's success for me.* **Paula Scher**

WEDNESDAY

19

THURSDAY

20

From an interview with George Saunders by Austin Kleon

What do you do for exercise? Do you detect any mental, spiritual, or creative benefits?

I pledge to go to the gym, then don't.

Creative benefit: more time to work. :)

FRIDAY

21

SATURDAY

22

- *My favorite journey is looking out the window.*
- *The helpful thought for which you look is written somewhere in a book.*
- *God knows, there's enough to worry about without worrying about worrying about things.*
- *What is, is, and what might have been could never have existed.*
- *I am a person before I am anything else. I never say I am a writer. I never say I am an artist. ... I am a person who does those things.*
- *Explaining something makes it go away, so to speak; what's important is left after you have explained everything else.*
- *I've never had any intentions about anything. That's why I am where I am today which is neither here nor there, in a literal sense.*
- *I don't know what it is I'm doing. But it's not that. Despite all evidence to the contrary.*

Edward Gorey

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
• <i>What you end up remembering isn't always the same as what you have witnessed.</i> • <i>How often do we tell our own life story? How often do we adjust embellish, make sly cuts? And the longer life goes on, the fewer are those around to challenge our account, to remind us that our life is not our life, merely the story we have told about our life.</i> • <i>You grow old first not in your own eyes but in other people's eyes; then, slowly you agreed with their opinion of you.</i> • <i>The more you learn, the less you fear. "Learn" not in the sense of academic study, but in the practical under-standing of life.</i> • <i>This is what those who haven't crossed the tropic of grief often fail to understand: the fact that someone is dead may mean that they are not alive, but doesn't mean that they do not exist.</i> • <i>In life, every ending is just the start of another story.</i> • <i>When you read a great book, you don't escape from life, you plunge deeper into it.</i> Julian Barnes			• <i>I don't like to give advice. I like to give people information because every-one's life is different, and everyone's journey is different.</i> • <i>Find out who you are. And do it on purpose.</i> • <i>If you don't like the road you're walking, start paving another one.</i> Dolly Parton <i>We work so hard to get somewhere, to realize a dream to arrive at some destination, that we often forget that though some satisfaction may be waiting at the end of our endurance and effort, there is great and irreplaceable aliveness in the steps along the way.</i> Mark Nepo My inner voice: <i>Happy Birthday, Ernie!</i> Ernie: <i>Thank you!</i> <i>We are the choices we have made.</i> Meryl Streep <i>Confusion is the first stage of creativity.</i> Michael Feigelson		<i>The Five Invitations</i> 1. <i>Don't Wait</i> 2. <i>Welcome everything, push away nothing.</i> 3. <i>Bring your whole self to the experience</i> 4. <i>Find a place of rest in the middle of things.</i> 5. <i>Cultivate don't know mind</i> Frank Ostaseski <i>Each day holds a surprise. But only if we expect it can we see, hear, or feel it when it comes to us. Let's not be afraid to receive each day's surprise, whether it comes to us as sorrow or as joy it will open a new place in our hearts, a place where we can welcome new friends and celebrate more fully our shared humanity.</i> Henri Nouwen	

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August - 2026

SUNDAY

30

THE FIVE INVITATIONS

*Discovering What Death
Can Teach Us About Living Fully*

FRANK OSTASESKI
Foreword by Rachel Naomi Remen, MD

- ... what I have come to call mature hope, a hope that takes us inside ourselves and toward finding the good in the experience.
- The present moment could best be described as the flow of life. We are continually being shaped by it, and we are shaping it through the way we meet and respond to it.

MONDAY

31

Additional quotes from Ostaseski's book can be found in the document:

[Quotes of Relevance from Books Read](#)

- We engage in the journey instead of waiting to arrive at our destination.
- A Tibetan Buddhist teacher spoke of the heart of Buddhist practice as that of complete openness. He described this openness as a willingness to look into whatever arises, to work with it, and to relate to it as part of the overall process ... It is a larger way of thinking, a greater way of viewing things, as opposed to being petty, finicky.
- When we welcome our suffering, it shakes us out of our complacency. It can bring clarity and help us find meaning, without which the pain might be too much to bear. It tenderizes and opens us to vulnerability that gives us the capacity to sense, make contact with, and experience more of life. We access our courage to be with what otherwise would be intolerable.

It's in the process of creating together without knowing what we're creating or how to create it – non-knowing growing – that together we discover that psychology's understanding of who we are and what we're capable of has been such a conservatizing factor.

Lois Holzman

- How much longer will I live? . . . Only one thing seems clear to me. Every day should be well-lived. What a simple truth! Still, it is worthy of my attention.
- People with handicaps teach me that being is more important than doing, the heart is more important than the mind, and caring together is better than caring alone. Henri Nouwen

"Long Long Road"

Life's a long, long road, that leads us somewhere.
It's a heavy load when you're trying to get there.
We all carry on through thick and thin.
I look in the mirror and wonder where, where I've been.
How do we get there? It seems so far away;
Might be tomorrow, it won't be today.
When lightning strikes, you will see the light.
So get up, get out the door, get on your way

Ringo Starr



One morning a week or so ago, I noticed that my Apple watch charger had fallen into one of my shoes.

Our shoes need to be recharged so that they can take us to new uncharted places.

Our feet fit snugly into its openings, welcoming a fresh start each morning.

If a shoe could talk, it would tell us not to pass judgment on the events we will encounter as we go about our day.

Be open to all experiences – expect the unexpected.

Learn from the path that opens before you each day. Reflect on its lessons.

And ... at night, don't forget to recharge your shoes for the next day's adventures.

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Delights on Each Day in August

- 1) Uploading July entries for journal
- 2) Viewing monthly newsletter from *Friends of Silence*
- 3) I made the break from Cable – and it feels freeing!
- 4) Breakfast with George & Pat
- 5) Continuing to read from Byock's book: *The Four Things That Matter Most*
- 6) Tai Chi Class and 13 inning win by Red Sox (12-11) – Unbelievable game!
- 7) Viewed a powerful ending song sung at the conclusion of Glen Hansard's funeral: *Forever Young* / finished Ira Byock's book: *The Four Things That Matter Most*
- 8) Reading an interview with Billy Strings in *NY Times* and viewing him accompanying Bob Dylan on *Along the Watchtower* in Nashville in 2025
- 9) Viewed Courtney Martin's interview with Frank Ostaseski from her SubStack

- 10) Listening to Leo's radio show from TCNJ station
- 11) Shared "last lines" to novels with Natyra based on Washington Post article
- 12) Continuing to update Then/Now document for 2026 update
- 13) Tai Chi Practice – last one of the summer
- 14) Tai Chi potluck at Coventry Lake
- 15) Read an interesting article about Art Spiegelman suggested by Natyra
- 16) Entered several quotes by Edward Gorey in Journal
- 17) Beginning my packing in earnest for trip on Thursday to North Carolina
- 18) Started reading *The Five Invitations* by Frank Ostaseski
- 19) Finished Dickens puzzle – well, almost – one piece missing

- 20) First day back to North Carolina to visit Dad, Mary, Gene and others
- 21) Visiting Claire, the youngest member of the Serpe family (my sister Mary's granddaughter)
- 22) Mary's homemade veggie burgers.
- 23) Renewed my efforts at a daily walk of 25 minutes – I had lapsed in this area!
- 24) 2-mile walk followed with a large salad
- 25) Continued visiting with my Dad and relatives
- 26) Edits to Then/Now/Beyond document
- 27) Celebrated Birthday – North Carolina family members
- 28) 5 days in a row of walking 2 miles
- 29) Go to snack: Yasso chocolate covered crunch yogurt bars! ➡

- 30) Sitting outside in the fresh air with Dad and Mary

31) Home Again!

- *Don't dream it, be it.*
- *I'm good at my own company.*
- *I've never modeled myself on anybody, but there are a lot of people whose work I really admire and attitudes I certainly subscribe to. Tim Curry*

