

The Promise of a New Day

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Introduction

It takes strength to step enthusiastically into each day of our lives. This strength comes more readily on some days than on others, but every day makes demands on us.

Personal experience has taught us that centering ourselves in the face of these demands smoothes our passage. To get centered means to sense our place in the grand scheme and to trust the rightness of all experiences that beckon.

It is our hope that these brief daily meditations will help you find your place, and thus help you summon the forces to see you through the days ahead. We both follow a Twelve Step program for sane living, and openness is an integral part of this approach. Healing, help, and wisdom may come from anywhere so we gathered these quotations from men and women of many lands and times, and let them stimulate our own reflections.

Taking responsibility for our own lives, trusting in the rightness of a plan--however we may define the higher power that is its source, and nurturing ourselves to be the best we can; these are the tasks that renew our energies even as we perform them.

The words we have chosen remind us that women and men in every place and time have pondered, struggled, succeeded, and failed in much the same way as we. In every case, they had the drive to begin their journeys anew, day after day. They are like all of us. We are like all of them: journeying forth courageously one day, tentatively the next. The real importance of the journey is simply that we're making it, alone and yet mysteriously together.

—the authors

January 1

One faces the future with one's past.

—Pearl S. Buck

We are never divorced from our past. We are in company with it forever, and it acquaints us with the present. Our responses today reflect our experiences yesterday. And those roots lie in the past.

Every day is offering us preparation for the future, for the lessons to come, without which we'd not offer our full measure to the design which contains the development of us all.

Our experiences, past and present, are not coincidental. We will be introduced to those experiences that are consistent with our talents and the right lessons designated for the part we are requested to play in life. We can remember that no experiences will attract us that are beyond our capabilities to handle.

All is well. I'm ready for whatever comes today. My yesterdays have prepared me.

January 2

One cannot collect all the beautiful shells on the beach, one can collect only a few.

—Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Our lives are a series of selections. We select projects to do, activities to participate in, friendships to cultivate. And often we'll have to forego some of the selections we've made because time and energy run out. Full commitment, total involvement with singular activities and few friendships, is far better than partial attention to many. Rapt attention to the moment and all of whatever it contains enriches our lives; nothing less than full attention can do so.

The talents we each have been blessed with can only be developed if we use them fully to benefit the lives of others as well as our own. Thus, when our selections are vast, our attention is sporadic and our talents aren't fully developed. The fullness of our lives individually and collectively is proportionate to the depth of the relationships developed between ourselves, our friends, and our activities.

I can't be everywhere today. Nor can I attend to the needs of everybody I meet. I will carefully choose where to give my attention and then offer it totally.

January 3

. . . goodness cannot adopt the form of blind passions, even in the act of defense and offense, and even when it refuses to tolerate evil. . . .

—Benedetto Croce

Willful blindness can't be good. To shut out any sight from the mind's eye is to exclude part of life. Any action blindly taken is likely to do unintentional harm.

It's not easy, when we're in the grip of any strong feeling, to stop ourselves from acting on blind impulse. It's not easy, but it's wise. Yielding to an impulse, without giving ourselves time to "see" it through clearly, can set us up for guilt or regret.

We needn't know everything in order to act; we merely need to know ourselves. "Blind passion" hides most of ourselves from view. Passion may move us to great selflessness, but never to great clarity, and good actions come from the clear-seeing soul.

I can trust myself to mistrust blind passion, and to wait for clarity before I take action.