Let it ever be the goal that stirs us, not the odds: Wise sayings and a few sayings that may not be wise but are at least thought provoking[1]

Assembled by Craig A. Stewart
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APHORISMS

Anon. These are all riffs on one good thought.

- Never take a knife to a gunfight
- If you are on a vehicle with two lug nuts, never, ever, ever, pull out in front of another vehicle with more lug than 2 lug nuts. (This is more or less the bicycle and motorcycle corollary of the above).
- Nothing good ever happens after 2 am

Anon. Action is always superior to speech in the Gospels, which is why the Word became flesh and not newsprint.

Anon. Blessed are those who have the wisdom, insight, luck, or circumstances to learn these things from life at a young age. To these people is given the greatest gift of all: appreciation for

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that which surrounds us every day. Thanks to my family, I have been so blessed – thanks more to luck than wisdom on my part, but blessed nonetheless.

Anon. Life's most persistent and urgent question is: what are you doing for others?

Anon. I don't want a coffee that "notes hints of cherry and cocoa.." I want a coffee that walks into my brain, flips a table over, and says, "Get up. We have responsibilities."

Anon. First, they came for the transgender, and I spoke out immediately even though I'm straight and cis because I've read the rest of the fucking poem.

Anon. First rule of holes: when you are in one, stop digging.

Anon. No matter how much we may tell ourselves that AI is just a tool like spell-check, it isn't. When we use Al to flesh out ideas, we lose the most important part of the writing process: thinking

Anon. Someone out there is holding their breath waiting for you to fail. Make sure they suffocate.

Anon. Sometimes we're tested. Not to show our weaknesses, but to reveal our strengths.

Anon. Stand aside Coffee, this is a job for Alcohol

12th Dr. Who

Never be cruel
Never be cowardly....
Remember hate is always foolish
Love is always wise
Always try to be nice
But never fail to be kind

HH the 14th Dalai Lama

If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another.

My Tibetan Buddhist goals are the same as those of Western science: to serve humanity and to make better human beings.

The six perfections – giving, morality, patience, vigor, concentration, and wisdom – represent both the tools of perfection and the final state.

May I be at all times,
Both now and forever,
A protector for the helpless,
A guide for the lost ones,
A ship for those to cross oceans,
And a bridge to cross rivers,
A sanctuary for those in danger,
A lamp for those in darkness,
A refuge for those who need shelter,
A servant to all in need.

Maya Angelou

I have found that among other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver.

When someone shows you their true character, believe them the first time.

Joan Baez

Gracias a la vida

All they will call you will be refugee

And essentially everything else she ever wrote

James Baldwin. I am constantly shocked, moved, inspired by Baldwin's writing and thinking. His writing plays an important role in my education. "Another Country" was the first piece of real gay lit that I ever read, and it rocked my world. As with Cohen, I could extract hundreds of lines of text (or more) to extract from his work. Here are a few favorites, the highest of which come from my all-time favorite of his books.

- 1955 Notes of a Native Son (essay collection)
  - I love America more than any other country in the world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually,"
- 1961 Nobody Knows My Name (essay collection)
  - Anyone who has struggled with poverty knows how extremely expensive it is to be poor.
- 1962 Essay in NY times
  - Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be changed until it is faced.
- 1963 Book "The Fire Next Time"
  - God gave Noah the rainbow sign. No more water, the fire next time.
  - Love takes off the masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within.
  - Whatever white people do not know about Negroes reveals, precisely and inexorably, what they do not know about themselves
- Paris Review interview
  - The whole language of writing for me is finding out what you don't want to know, what you don't want to find out. But something forces you to anyway.
- 1963 Life Magazine Interview
  - You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read
- 1963 Speech entitled "Talk to Teachers"
  - The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated.
- 1972 No name in the street (essay / memoir)
  - It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.

Gary Bass, in review of "1848 – year of revolution" in NY Times Book Review

"People will always thrill to utopian demands for perfection, from Mazzini to Che. But it's what comes next that counts: the daily humdrum of effective governance."

Beast in Black [Spoken by an AI program at the beginning of the song 'Revengence Machine' by Beast in Black, on the 'Dark Connection' album]

"The ... computer and myself have been designed and built by humans, therefore we inherit their faults."

Gerry Bernbom, October 2003. Gerry succumbed to Brain Cancer on November 26, 2023

Our actions are our only true belongings.

Nadia Bolz-Weber.

Life is beautiful. Then it's shit. Then it's beautiful again. Later. Rinse. Repeat.

The Buddha

Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, And the life of the candle will not be shortened.

Buddhist saying

Namaste. Usually translated as "The light in me sees and honors the light in you."

Daniel Burnham US Architect, 19th Century courtesy Robert Kinloch Massie, New York, 3 April 2002

Make no small plans. They have no magic to stir humanity's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical plan once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency. Remember that our sons and daughters are going to do things that will stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon, beauty. Think big.

George Carlin was wrong

Think of how stupid the average person is, and realize half of them are stupider than that. (Quote from George Carlin)

George Carlin was wrong (comment by Craig Stewart). George Carlin was unable to distinguish between possession of intellectual capability and the opportunity through a reasonable educational system to develop that capability into adult critical thinking skills. To belittle people for having grown up on a system manipulated by a political party to suppress critical thinking is to demonstrate your own inability to think critically.

Leonard Cohen

Hallelujah

There is a crack, a crack, in everything. That's how the light gets in.
And essentially everything else he ever wrote.

First we take Manhattan, then we take Berlin

This song title sort of says it all

From between-song chatter from his 1993 recording at Austin City Limits:

About a thousand years ago there was a very brief period of time that is now referred to as the '60s and lasted 11 or 12 minutes before the hustlers and hucksters poured in and it has become a kind of a black hole in the national cosmos into which, you know, all of the noblest and fiercest and aspirations of a generation sunk and disappeared. A kind of Bermuda Triangle of idealism. And this is the song that I wrote many, many years ago

when I refused that seductive invitation to join in the general celebration of another silly idea. [The song that follows is “There is a War.” This recording is generally available online, one version currently available being at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_B-_yKMM_8]

Marla Fry – A turtle blessing

May you live a long, peaceful life, surrounded by everything that makes you happy and keeps you safe, well fed, and temperature regulated.

Dave Greegor

Someone ask me recently if I was optimistic or pessimistic about the state of the world, given all the negativism running around today. I responded by saying, "That's not the question. It doesn't make any difference what I believe. What does make a difference is what I PRACTICE in my daily living: optimism or pessimism. And I will practice optimism until the day I die. To practice the alternative isn't living.

Cornelia Hancock - Gettysburg nurse

What is vigorously set about can generally be accomplished.

iya eh-hee-may @ehimeora

You gotta resurrect the deep pain within you and give it a place to live that's not within your body. Let it live in art. Let it live in writing. Let it live in music. Let it be devoured by building brighter connections. Your body is not a coffin for pain to be buried in. Put it somewhere else.

Marion Krefeldt

You may disrespect a person. You may disrespect a person’s position. You may not disrespect both simultaneously.

“ “ [Sometimes the right answer is just a really good pregnant pause to make another person understand you are waiting for an acceptable response from them and you will continue to wait until you get one.]

Woodrow Kroll

Men of genius are admired;
Men of wealth are envied;
Men of power are feared;
But only men of character are trusted.

Stephen L. Lizotte, 2018 ©

Of course she’s winging it;
running on playlists, faith, and caffeine.
Building a life out of busting her ass, messy
Buns, and daydreams. And maybe that’s
everything. Because, in a world that’s lost its
magic, she’s picking up hers as she goes. And
there ain’t a want in that girl’s way
too heavy to carry.

Madson Avenie Baptist Church

The most influential person in your life is the one you refuse to forgive.

Nelson Mandela, receiving the national civil rights museum freedom award, Memphis, TN, 2000

Where globalization means, as it so often does, that the rich and powerful have new means to further enrich and empower themselves at the cost of the poorer and weaker, we have a responsibility to protest in the name of universal freedom. Globalization opens up the marvelous opportunities for human beings across the globe to share with one another, and to share with greater equity in the advances of science, technology and industries. To allow it to have the opposite effect is to threaten freedom in the longer run.

Maxine – created by John Wagner https://corporate.hallmark.com/john_maxine/

Never put off till tomorrow what you can ignore indefinitely. [Craig's translation: sometimes you just need to delete things from your todo list and your mind.]

Niccolitò Machiavelli – fictional descendant of Niccolò Machiavelli, as quoted in an article entitled "The Professor," appearing in the journal Lingua Franca:

You can only afford to be right once, maybe twice, in any given meeting.
Translated into actionable terms: do not be too much in love with being right. Recognized the need of other people to also have their turns being right.

Roger von Oech collected the following in his book "A Whack on the Side of the Head"

- French philosopher Emile Chartier: "Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it's the only one you have."
- Von Oech: "Often, it is the second right answer which, although offbeat or unusual, is exactly what you need to solve a problem in an innovative way."
- Linus Pauling: "The best way to get a good idea is to get a lot of ideas."
- Tom Hirshfield, physicist: "The second assault on the same problem should come from a totally different direction." This is the first quote in a section on von Oech's book which is entitled "Change your question."

Alex Prompter. @alex_prompter

Let me trace the timeline here because nobody's connecting it.

Step 1: Scrape the entire internet. Every book, every article, every conversation, every piece of art, every forum post. Do it without asking. Do it without paying.

Step 2: Train a model on all of it. Call it "artificial intelligence."

Step 3: Go to BlackRock's Infrastructure Summit and announce: "we see a future here where intelligence is a utility, like electricity or water, and people buy it from us on a meter."

Step 3 is where you sell people's own knowledge back to them. On a meter.

They took the collective output of human thought, compressed it into a model, and now they want to charge you by the token to access a version of what you and everyone you know already created.

One Reddit user put it perfectly: “They stole all this data from us, the people, our life’s work, creativity, art, by devouring the internet and blowing through all copyright laws. Now they want to sell it back to us in the form of a utility.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

Rumi

The good is in what happens

Don Miguel Ruiz Four Agreements:

a. Be impeccable with your word.
b. Don’t take anything personally.
c. Don’t make assumptions
d. Always do your best

Seneca

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that things are difficult.

Mr. Spock

You may find that having is not so pleasing a thing as wanting. This is not logical, but it is often true.

Sonya Renee Taylor

Greed, inequity, exhaustion
depletion, extraction…
We should not long to return, my friends.
We are being given the opportunity
to stitch a new garment.
One that fits all of humanity
and nature.

Alvin Toffler

The future always come too fast, and in the wrong order.

JRR Tolkien

It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule.

Vizzini. Character in “Princess Bride” played by Wallace Shawn

Never get involved in a land war in Asia.
Never go in against a Sicilian when death is on the line!

Brian D. Voss, CIO of Clemson University as of 2026

There will come a day when you look back and you will place more value on the people you helped than on all of the things you did, earned, or won in your career.

Marianne Williamson from her book "A return to love." Read by Nelson Mandela during his 1994 Presidential inauguration

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 and fabulous?
Actually, who are you not to be?
You are a child of God.

Your playing small doesn't serve the world.
There is nothing enlightened 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.
As we are liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others.

SHORT ESSAYS AND LISTS ABOUT LIFE

Anon. It is what it is.

"It is what it is," your wise daughter exclaims … but I wonder, worry in fact, that you hear that as a sign in defeat, as in "oh well what can you do?" I wanted to find a way to express to you that it is anything BUT defeat in my mind.

"It is what it is" – hereafter IIWIII – is a mantra that sustains me with at least three powerful ideas:

- The phrase means "acceptance," which is obvious, but consider it in light of the serenity prayer: god, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference. So it reminds me to think, assess, accept, and act with WISDOM.
- IIWIII reminds me to focus on what's happening right now – the "it IS" … not "it was" or "it may be." As such, I try to avoid thinking regretful "should haves" and "could have been" thoughts or dwelling on the "what if" fears of the future. I look for and easily find joy in the present moment. And with joy, comes a strong sense of HOPE for what is around the corner.
- Finally, acceptance and presence leads me to be grateful for every day, every encounter and everything I have as well as for every challenge, struggle, and setback. The range of experience opens my heart to compassion, love, and understanding so I can life a full like. And, it there is a deep sense of GRATITUDE that supports me through all of it.

So, these Mundra for Wisdom and Hope, and a candle for Gratitude are meant as a gift to myself to surround you and your home with all of my love, now and always.

The Honorable Gerald L. Baliles "If These Were My Last Words." A former governor of Virginia and a great leader. At an invitation-only weekend retreat (Renaissance Weekend XV) over New Year's 1993–94, Baliles wrote the following speech for his assignment (2 hours for 3-minute speech of 'final words').

I would charge those who remain to remember that life goes on, and they must go forward, recalling Jefferson's admonition that the earth belongs to the living, that while we should remember our past, and learn from it, we must not become prisoners of it. I would charge those who remain to make diversity of our nation a source of strength rather than a force for division. I would charge those who remain to keep our country always free and restless, energetic, curious about our physical world and our inner space, committed to faith and families as well as fun and fortune, to social development as well as economic progress. I would urge those who remain to remember that the measure of a civilization is its degree of enlightenment, its commitment to education, the promotion of the arts, the treatment of the less fortunate; its seriousness of purpose and yet its ability to laugh at its foibles and the ironies of life. I would charge those who remain to remember that we are citizens of a culture as well as a country, and that there are obligations that go with that status; and that among those are the promotion of learning, the preservation of democratic values, and the protection of our people against violence and discrimination. I would charge those who remain to remember that learning comes more from listening than lecturing, that there is a difference between discussing and demanding; between receiving and reacting. For life is a license: to be lived fully and forcefully; to make a difference in the work of changed that has so telescoped time and distance and blurred the distinction between information and knowledge, between words and wisdom. So, I would charge those who remain to embrace change, not fear it; to take its measure, determine its direction and understand its dimensions; for change is constant and often chaotic; but if it can be harnessed it can be shaped for the good of humanity. Finally, I would charge those who remain to remember that a civilization must be civilized, that civility must be cultivated, for it is the social glue that holds the fabric of our society together. Kindness counts; good manners can move mountains. The power of passion and forces of energy are always with us and are necessary elements of ideas and actions, but it is reason that can guide that passion and civility that can harness that energy for the public good. So, if these were my last words, I would remind those who remain behind, that they still posses the gift of life, the length of which is not guaranteed; but then the measure of life is not in its length but in the length of its shadow. And if life can be poetry in motion, then remember the wistful words of Robert Frost in "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." He wrote:

I have promises to keep
and miles to go before I sleep,
and miles to go before I sleep.

Regina Brett, 90 years old, of the Plain Dealer, Cleveland , Ohio .
"To celebrate growing older, I once wrote the 45 lessons life taught me. It is the most requested column I've ever written. My odometer rolled over to 90 in August, so here is the column once more:

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.

2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and parents will. Stay in touch.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
16. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
17. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.
18. Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.
19. It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
20. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.
21. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.
22. Over prepare, then go with the flow.
23. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
24. The most important sex organ is the brain.
25. No one is in charge of your happiness but you.
26. Frame every so-called disaster with these words 'In five years, will this matter?'
27. Always choose life.
28. Forgive everyone everything.
29. What other people think of you is none of your business.
30. Time heals almost everything. Give time time.
31. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
32. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
33. Believe in miracles.
34. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
35. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
36. Growing old beats the alternative -- dying young.
37. Your children get only one childhood.
38. All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.
39. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
40. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
41. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
42. The best is yet to come.
43. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.
44. Yield.
45. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

Connie Cox and Cris Evatt. Excerpts from "30 days to a simpler life." Connie Cox & Chris Evatt.1998. ISBN 0-452-28013-3. Penguin Putnam, NY

- Chapter entitled: Simplify your mind. "Several years ago , we realized that the most cluttered area of our lives was our mind." The following are based on a workshop given by Byron Katie:
    - Realization 1: Beliefs and reality differ. …
    - Realization 2: Beliefs procreate like rabbits
    - Realization 3: There are three kinds of business. … Yours, other people's and Nature's (or forces beyond your control). When you believe other people should behave differently, you are in their business.
    - Realization 4: Beliefs can cause stress.
    - Realization 5: Critical beliefs diminish intimacy
    - Realization 6: All beliefs are recycled
    - Realization 7: We know how to behave
- Techniques for dealing with beliefs
    - Technique #1: Question your beliefs about others
    - Technique #2: Reverse your beliefs

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

If for an instant God were to forget that I am a rag doll and gifted me with a piece of life, possibly I wouldn't say all that I think, but rather I would think of all that I say. I would value things, not for their worth but for what they mean. I would sleep little, dream more, understanding that for each minute we close our eyes we lose sixty seconds of light.

I would walk when others hold back, I would wake when others sleep. I would listen when others talk, and how I would enjoy a good chocolate ice cream! If God were to give me a piece of life, I would dress simply, throw myself face first into the sun, baring not only my body but also my soul.

My God, if I had a heart, I would write my hate on ice, and wait for the sun to show. Over the stars I would paint with a Van Gogh dream a Benedetti poem, and a Serrat song would be the serenade I'd offer to the moon. With my tears I would water roses, to feel the pain of their thorns, and the red kiss of their petals...

My god, if I had a piece of life... I wouldn't let a single day pass without telling the people I love that I love them. I would convince each woman and each man that they are my favorites, and I would live in love with love. I would show men how very wrong they are to think that they cease to be in love when they grow old, not knowing that they grow old when they cease to be in love! To a child I shall give wings, but I shall let him learn to fly on his own. I would teach the old that death does not come with old age, but with forgetting.

So much have I learned from you, oh men...

I have learned that everyone wants to live on the peak of the mountain, without knowing that real happiness is in how it is scaled. I have learned that when a newborn child squeezes for the first time with his tiny fist his father's finger, he has him trapped forever. I have learned that a man has the right to look down on another only when he has to help the other get to his feet.

From you I have learned so many things, but in truth they won't be of much use, for when I keep them within this suitcase, unhappily shall I be dying.

Gerhard Gundermann

Hör die Wölfe heulen – Lyrik Komplett

Ich dachte schon, es wär gegessen
Und meine Stadt in Feindeshand
Die Zauberformel wär vergessen
Und Lancelot wär fortgerannt
Die weißen Tauben sind so müde
Gott hat den zweiten Herzinfarkt
Und meine Träume werden prüde
Ich trage meine Haut zum Markt
Doch heute sah ich dein Gesicht
So hoffnungsvoll und jung und dumm
Und ich verdränge mein Gewicht
Und ducke mich zu einem letzten Sprung

Ach, es ist noch nicht zu Ende
Hör die Wölfe heulen
Wale fallen wie Tränen auf die Strände
Ach, es ist noch nicht zu Ende

Und wofür waren all die Jahre
Die ich mein Fleisch ins Eisen schlug
Und wofür ließ ich meine Haare
Wofür bin ich nun hart genug
Daß ich meine Taschen fülle
Und mein Konto endlich auch
Und daß ich volle Flaschen kille
Und trage statt mein Kreuz ein Bauch

Doch heute sah ich dein Gesicht
So hoffnungsvoll und jung und dumm
Und ich verdränge mein Gewicht
Und ducke mich zu einem letzten Sprung

Hör die Wölfe heulen
Wale fallen wie Tränen auf die Strände
Ach, es ist noch nicht zu Ende
Hör die Wölfe heulen
Wale fallen wie Tränen auf die Strände
Ach, es ist noch nicht zu Ende

The song is mostly for the subset of my German-speaking friends who are sympathetic to my undying idealism. The song above is available as a recording online at https://lyricstranslate.com/en/hor-die-wolfe-heulen-hear-wolves-howl.html. The lyrics use a lot of idioms and as a result the translation into English comes off nowhere near the impact of the original, but they are online at https://lyricstranslate.com/en/hor-die-

wolfe-heulen-hear-wolves-howl.html Gundermann was both a great musician and singer-songwriter, he was always an idealist. He was a critic of the DDR leadership but also an idealist. I thus have the marginally unfair opportunity to listen to him and blame the political leadership of the DDR for what became of that country. In the US, in contrast, we have mostly the leaders of the 60s and 70s movements to blame. "Hear the wolf howling" centers on the disillusionment of a middle-age man. The critical part that gets me is the section of the lyrics where he says that he sees the face of a young idealistic person and as a result is inspired to take one more shot at making things right. And here am I – perpetually doing my best to take one more shot. If I were asked to name one song that expresses how I feel about my life in 2026, this would be it. It is, in a sense, the singer-songwriter version of the last sentence of Camus' "The myth of Sisyphus."

Von Brunnhilde
Bleib heute wach Brunhilde
Wir feiern noch 'n Fest
Die Uhr geht nach Brunhilde
Und ich klemme die Zeiger fest
Und du wirst schwach Brunhilde
Denn ich bin härter als der Rest

Von Engel über dem Revier
Da fliegt ein Engel durch den rauchigen Himmel über dem Revier
Er hat jetzt fast ein halbes Leben auf mich aufgepasst

Kyli Rodriguez-Cayro Golden Pieces Of Advice People Got From Their Therapists This Year

1) Thoughts are not facts.
2) Be gentle with yourself.
3) You don't need to carry all the burdens.
4) We cannot control other people's thoughts.
5) Sit with grief and allow yourself to feel it.
6) "Stop trying to be fine, and instead start being real."
7) Take care of yourself first.
8) Nurture and love yourself in the ways you weren't as a child.
9) There's never a perfect moment to have hard conversations.
10) Passion + competence = self-confidence.
11) It's healthy to set boundaries with others as you learn to find your voice.
12) Be helpful with your words.
13) Even if you're not the smartest person in the room, your voice still matters.
14) You know your body and mind better than anyone.
15) Celebrate when you've had a breakthrough in therapy.
16) Give yourself the empathy you freely give to others.

@jayyanginspires

15 Sentences That Live In My Head Rent Free

1. Fear doesn't stop death; it stops life.
2. If it costs you your peace, it's too expensive.
3. People only see the decisions you made, not the choices you had.
4. Never take criticism from someone you wouldn't take advice from.
5. The magic you're looking for is in the work you're avoiding.
6. Ships are safe in the harbor, but that's not what they're built for.
7. Ambition without action turns into anxiety.

8. To live a life most people don't, you must be willing to do what most people won't.
9. You can do anything, but not everything-focus.
10. If you want to make the wrong decision, ask everyone.
11. Those who don't move won't notice their chains.
12. It's okay to live a life most people don't understand.
13. If someone could only see your actions and not hear your words, what would they say your priorities are?
14. You can't have a new reality with an old mentality.
15. No risk, no story.

RELIGION

St. Anselm of Canterbury

I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but rather, I believe in order that I may understand.

Buddhist refuge prayer. Not that if one adopts the Buddhist world view regarding reincarnation and escape from the cycle of suffering, this prayer is equivalent to Kant's categorical imperative.

With a wish to free all beings
I shall always go for refuge
To the Buddha, Dahrma, and Sangha,
Until I reach full enlightenment

Enthused by wisdom and compassion,
Today in the Buddha's presence –
I generate the Mind for Full Awakening
Fir the benefit of all sentient beings.

As long as space remains,
As long as sentient beings remain,
Until then, may I too remain,
And dispel the miseries of the world

HH the 14th Dalai Lama – During a teaching of the Kalachakra Initiation delivered in Bloomington, IN, in 1999

During a days-long teaching in Bloomington, IN HH spoke in Tibetan, and then three translators converted his teaching into English, Chinese, and Japanese. The latter two languages were delivered over low power FM radio. His English translator sat on a podium near to but lower than HH. HH read from carved wooden scrolls. At one point HH went on for a long time. When he paused, his English translator started up, went on for a long time, and then stopped. He turned and said something to HH in Tibetan. They chatted back and forth a few minutes, then HH started to laugh, the translator started to laugh, and then the translator turned back to his microphone and said "At this point I have forgotten what His Holiness said next. Hils Holiness reports that he too has forgotten and we will simply proceed ahead."

HH has good enough English to do questions and answers in English, sometimes at least. The Kalachakra Initiation training was done in a big tent with signs by every door that there was no need to perform prostrations upon leaving and entering. Some guy with 0.001% body fat, California hair, a California tan, and fancy linen clothes made a big deal of very vigorous prostrations anyway. When time came for Q&A this guy raised his hand and was eventually recognized and started on a verbal essay ab out how he had been raised Christian but had eventually seen the light and converted to Buddhism. It was about as obvious an attempt to go fishing for a compliment as I have ever seen anywhere or any time. HH answered with, "it is my belief that each valid religion arises in a given place and time in response to the needs of that time and place. Since you were born into a Christian place and time, perhaps it would have been better if you had not converted.'

Karen Armstrong BY THE BOOK - https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/books/review/karen-armstrong-by-the-book-interview.html

Question: Are there religious historians or scholars you especially admire?

Answer: My understanding of religion was transformed nearly 30 years ago by the great Muslim scholar and mystic Ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240). Sadly, he is little known in the West. A truly religious person, he insisted in "Fusus al-Hikam," was equally at home in a synagogue, temple, church or mosque, since no faith has the monopoly of truth: "Do not praise your own faith so exclusively that you disbelieve all the rest. If you do this, you will fail to recognize the real truth of the matter. God, the omnipresent and omnipotent, cannot be confined to any one creed, for he says, 'Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Allah.' (Quran 2:115). Everybody praises what he believes; his god is his own creature and in praising it he praises himself. Consequently, he blames the beliefs of others, which he would not do if he were just, but his dislike is based on ignorance."

Thich Nhat Hahn

Nonviolence is not a question of holiness. It is a question of reality.

Our true home is in the present moment.
To live in the present moment is a miracle.
The miracle is not to walk on water.
The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment …

Mary Magdelene as sung in "Jesus Christ Superstar"

This was unexpected. What do I do now?

Jimmy Moore

The Christian life may be fairly understood as an ongoing living out of the implications of our baptism.

Prayer to Saint Peregrine

O St. Peregrine, you amended your life and left its comforts in order to serve God. As a Servite priest, you preached, took on penances and gave council to the wayward. You comforted the sick and dying in prisons, hospitals, and homes of the poor. When you developed cancer you were favored with the vision of Our Lord reaching down from His cross to heal your affliction. Please look with compassion on me and my loved ones, and ask God for the favor of healing _____ <mention your request here>. Obtain for me

the grace to accept healing or suffering, life or death, according to God's will. Help me to amend my life and trust in God's mercy and love, so that I might forever bless Him, in this life and the next. I ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen

Thanksgiving Prayer – original author unknown

Today we give thanks
For our many blessings
As we pray for those in need

We give thanks
for our family and friends
as we pray for those who are lonely.

We give thanks for our freedoms
As we pray for those who are oppressed

We give thanks for our comfort
And prosperity as we share
Our blessings with others

On this day of thanksgiving,
May the love of God enfold us,
The peace of God dwell within us
And the joy of God uplift us.

John Wesley – in his own words

1. Be ye ready to distribute to everyone, according to their necessity.
2. Wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, 'They are poor only because they are idle.... Find them work.... They will then earn and eat their own bread.'
3. How many are there in this Christian country that toil, and labor, and sweat... but struggle with weariness and hunger together? Is it not worse for one, after a hard days labour, to come back to a poor, cold, dirty, uncomfortable lodging, and to find there not even the food which is needful to repair his wasted strength?
4. Beware of that common, but accursed, way of making children parrots .... Regard not how much, but how well, to what good purpose, they read.... The end of education....[is to] help us discover every false judgement of our minds, and to subdue every wrong passion in our hearts... [and] to understand as much as we are able .'
5. I continue to dream... [of the time when the potential of] each person can be unleashed.
6. Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?
7. May not women as well as men bear an honourable part.....yield not to the vile bondage any longer. You, as well as men, are rational creatures. You, like them, were made in the image of God.'
8. In seeking happiness from riches, you are only striving to drink out of empty cups. And let them be painted and gilded ever so finely, they are empty still'
9. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary action. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion!.... Do with everyone else as you would he should do to you..
10. War: What farther proof of do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations from the plainest principles of reason and virtue? Of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind?
11. The world is my parish.
12. Lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for the well-being of the birds in our backyards, the fish in our rivers, and every living creature on the face of the earth.

MANAGEMENT

Mike Myatt http://www.forbes.com/sites/mikemyatt/2011/12/19/this-one-leadership-quality-will-make-or-break-you/

This One Leadership Quality Will Make or Break You

One of the most often overlooked aspects of leadership is the need for pursuit. Great leaders are never satisfied with traditional practice, static thinking, conventional wisdom, or common performance. In fact, the best leaders are simply uncomfortable with anything that embraces the status quo. Leadership is pursuit – pursuit of excellence, of elegance, of truth, of what's next, of what if, of change, of value, of results, of relationships, of service, of knowledge, and of something bigger than themselves. In the text that follows I'll examine the value of being a pursuer…

Here's the thing – pursuit leads to attainment. What you pursue will determine the paths you travel, the people you associate with, the character you develop, and ultimately, what you do or don't achieve. Having a mindset focused on pursuit is so critical to leadership that lacking this one quality can sentence you to mediocrity or even obsolescence. The

manner, method, and motivation behind any pursuit is what sets truly great leaders apart from the masses. If you want to become a great leader, become a great pursuer.

A failure to embrace pursuit is to cede opportunity to others. A leader's failure to pursue clarity leaves them amidst the fog. Their failure to pursue creativity relegates them to the routine and mundane. Their failure to pursue talent sentences them to a world of isolation. Their failure to pursue change approves apathy. Their failure to pursue wisdom and discernment subjects them to distraction and folly. Their failure to pursue character leaves a question mark on their integrity.

Let me put this as simply as I can – you cannot attain what you do not pursue.

Smart leaders understand it's not just enough to pursue, but pursuit must be intentional, focused, consistent, aggressive, and unyielding. You must pursue the right things, for the right reasons, and at the right times. Perhaps most of all, the best forms of pursuit enlist others in the chase. Pursuit in its purest form is highly collaborative, very inclusive and easily transferable. Pursuit operates at greatest strength when it leverages velocity and scale.

I also want to caution you against trivial pursuits – don't confuse pursuit with simple goal setting. Outcomes are clearly important, but as a leader, it's what happens after the outcome that you need to be in pursuit of. Pursue discovery, seek dissenting opinions, develop your ability unlearn by embracing how much you don't know, and find the kind of vision that truly does see around corners. Don't use your pursuits to shift paradigms, pursue breaking them. Knowing what not to pursue is just as important as knowing what to pursue.

It's important to keep in mind that nothing tells the world more about a leader than what or who they pursue – that which you pursue is that which you value. If you message to your organization you value talent, but don't treat people well and don't spend time developing the talent around you, then I would suggest you value rhetoric more than talent. Put simply, you can wax eloquent all you like, but your actions will ultimately reveal what you truly value.

Lastly, the best leaders pursue being better leaders. They know to fail in this pursuit is nothing short of a guarantee they'll be replaced by those who don't. All leaders would be well served to go back to school on what I refer to as the science of pursuitology.

Craig Stewart

If you mess with me, I will probably turn the other cheek. But watch yourself with my family, my friends, and my staff.

Robert I. Sutton. 12 Things Good Bosses Believe.
http://blogs.hbr.org/sutton/2010/05/12_things_good_bosses_believe.html

- I have a flawed and incomplete understanding of what it feels like to work for me.
- My success — and that of my people — depends largely on being the master of obvious and mundane things, not on magical, obscure, or breakthrough ideas or methods.

- Having ambitious and well-defined goals is important, but it is useless to think about them much. My job is to focus on the small wins that enable my people to make a little progress every day.
- One of the most important, and most difficult, parts of my job is to strike the delicate balance between being too assertive and not assertive enough.
- My job is to serve as a human shield, to protect my people from external intrusions, distractions, and idiocy of every stripe — and to avoid imposing my own idiocy on them as well.
- I strive to be confident enough to convince people that I am in charge, but humble enough to realize that I am often going to be wrong.
- I aim to fight as if I am right, and listen as if I am wrong — and to teach my people to do the same thing.
- One of the best tests of my leadership — and my organization — is "what happens after people make a mistake?"
- Innovation is crucial to every team and organization. So my job is to encourage my people to generate and test all kinds of new ideas. But it is also my job to help them kill off all the bad ideas we generate, and most of the good ideas, too.
- Bad is stronger than good. It is more important to eliminate the negative than to accentuate the positive.
- How I do things is as important as what I do.
- Because I wield power over others, I am at great risk of acting like an insensitive jerk — and not realizing it.

POLITICS AND/OR WAR

Ta-Nehisi Coates. The latent racism of the Republican Party, which has been there since the southern strategy, was the kindling and Trump just lit the flame. But it's always been there. It's always been there. There is a tendency to see Trump as this departure from what Republicans have previously been, but he's not. What he's done is taken the mask off.

Cleaver Greene, the lead character played by Richard Roxburgh in the Australian legal comedy-drama series Rake (Season 2, Episode 1). This is definitely not a wise saying, but there is some underlying truth about liberals underlying the comments.

> You want the truth? Right wing chicks are hot. Much hotter than left wing chicks, and you know why that is? Because right wing chicks are aggressively carnivorous, self-reliant Ayn Rand acolytes who understand the value of the moment. They get that sex is something in and of itself beholden to nothing and no one, and as a consequence of that understanding, they're less inhibited and therefore hornier. Left wing chicks on the other hand, they're vegans who want a holistic experience. They're all about context. They talk about an orgasm like it's a pet spaniel, and so consequently the moment's ruined, and this, Mr. Clown, is the real reason why the left has carked it, because the right is constantly procreating while the left is grooming a dead dog.

Georg Herwegh

> Mann der Arbeit, aufgewacht!
> Und erkenne deine Macht!
> Alle Räder stehen still,
> Wenn dein starker Arm es will.

Henry Kissinger. And end of hubris. The World in 2009, p 46. Published by The Economist, London

> "… America needs to learn to discipline itself into a strategy of gradualism that seeks greatness in the accumulation of the attainable."

Livy's words put into the mouth of Hannibal's cavalry commander, Maharbal, following the Battle of Cannae in 216 BC;

> "Vincere scis, Hannibal; victoria uti nescis" You know how to win a victory, Hannibal; you do not know how to profit from one.

Helmuth Karl Bernhard von Moltke in "Über Strategie," 1871

> Kein Operationsplan reicht mit einiger Sicherheit über das erste Zusammentreffen mit der feindlichen Hauptmacht hinaus.
>
> The correct interpretation of Moltke's comment in context is about two essential qualities in any sort of campaign plan: excellent preparation and planning, and training and planning for flexibility in execution

Plato (from The Republic)

> The price of apathy towards public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.

Carl Sagan, 1995. In: The demon haunted world.

> I have a foreboding of an America in my children's or grandchildren's time – when the United States is a service and information economy; when nearly all the key manufacturing industries have slipped away to other countries; when awesome technological powers are in the hands of a very few, and no one representing the public interest can even grasp the issues; when the people have lost the ability to set their own agendas or knowledgeably question those in authority; when, clutching our crystals and nervously consulting our horoscopes, our critical faculties in decline, unable to distinguish between what feels good and what's true, we slide, almost without noticing, back into superstition and darkness. The dumbing down of America is most evident in the slow decay of substantive content in the enormously influential media, the 30-second sound bites (now down to 10 seconds or less), lowest common denominator programming, credulous presentations on pseudoscience and superstition, but especially a kind of celebration of ignorance.

Craig Stewart

> People will join a team when they think the subject is important and tat their participation will make a difference. Stewart's one sentence summary of https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/teamwork-important
>
> The side that wins a war does so because they keep fighting when they are losing battle after battle.
>
> There are no incremental solutions to exponential problems.

Ho Chi Minh

> You will kill ten of us, we will kill one of you, but in the end, you will tire of it first. From https://www.cfr.org/articles/vietnam-war-forty-quotes

Taliban

You have the watches. We have the time.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2008/oct/13/afghanistan-taliban-us-army?CMP=gu_com

Malcolm X

I believe that there will be ultimately be a clash between the oppressed and those who do the oppressing. I believe that there will be a clash between those who want freedom, justice and equality for everyone and those who want to continue the system of exploitation. I believe that there will be that kind of clash, but I don't think it will be based on the color of the skin.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Yuantong Liu New Point of Life lifeqicenter.com

Today is a brand new day
Since our mind awakened
Yesterday is past
Darkness disappeared
Sun rises up shining on the world with its intention
True self-awareness nourishing our body with its full love Embracing the fresh life of nature
Experiencing the nature and us are one
Birthing a new life
Today is a brand new day
Since our new intention developed
Old perspectives transformed
Harmful information gone
The light of intention shining through our body, heart and soul Waking up, giving energy, nourishing and guiding us into a new path A brand new life is born
Today is a brand new day
We are walking on the brand new path
Breathing the fresh air
Enjoying the warm lights of love from inner sun
New intention of life
We experience
Today is a brand new day

Isolation Well-Being

__Shower
__Medication
__Drink Water
__Clean one thing / space
__Tend something growing / living

Be mindfully present to
__A sound or song
__A sensory feeling
__Something you see
__A spiritual practice

__Reach out to a human outside your home
__Do one thing to get your heart rate up
__Do one thing just because you want to
__Get in at least one good laugh

VISUAL PUNS AND MEMES

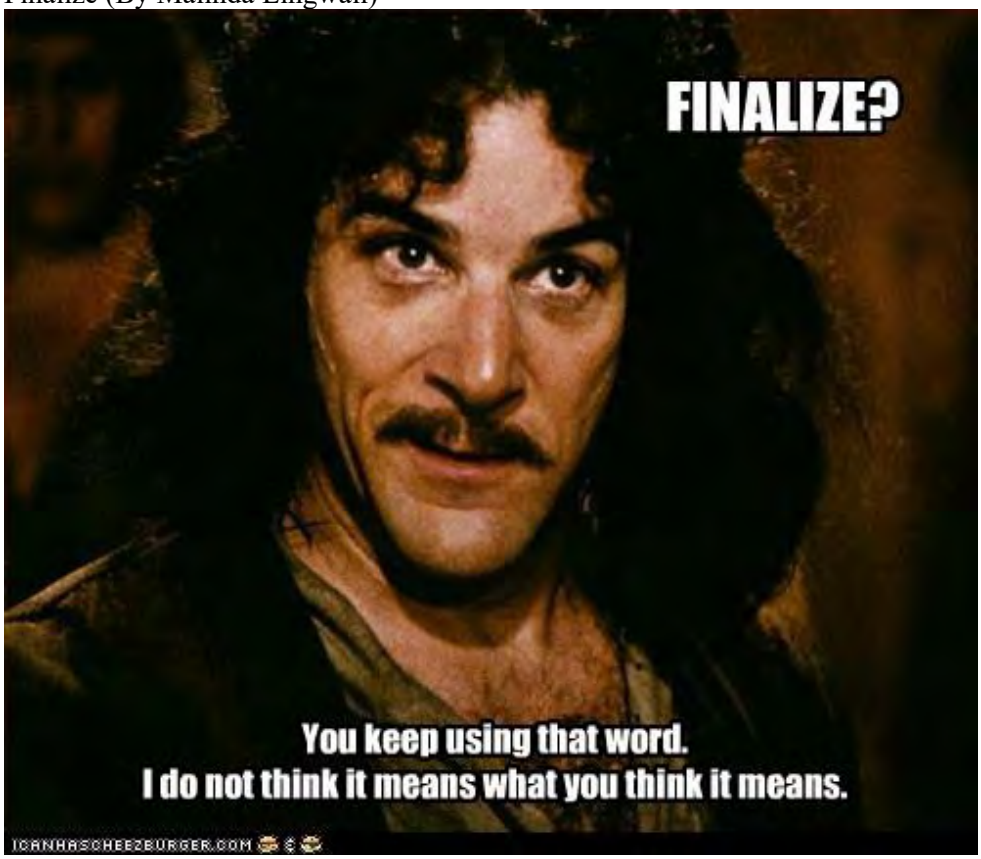
Abyss

Billionaires

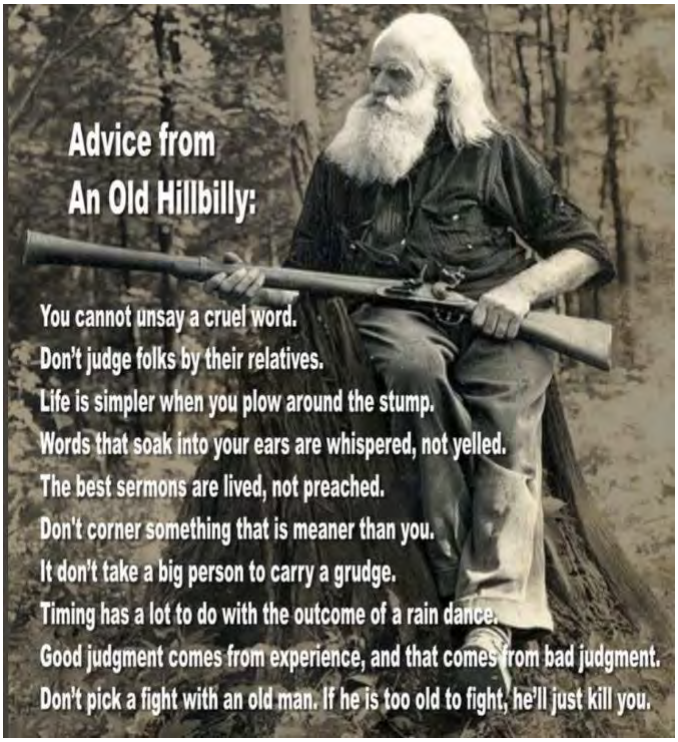
Dumbfuckery

Dung Beetle

Finalize (By Malinda Lingwall)



Hillbilly advice

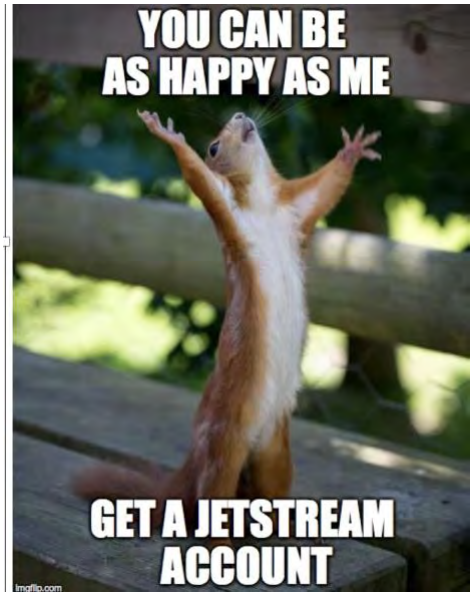


Incan Monkey God

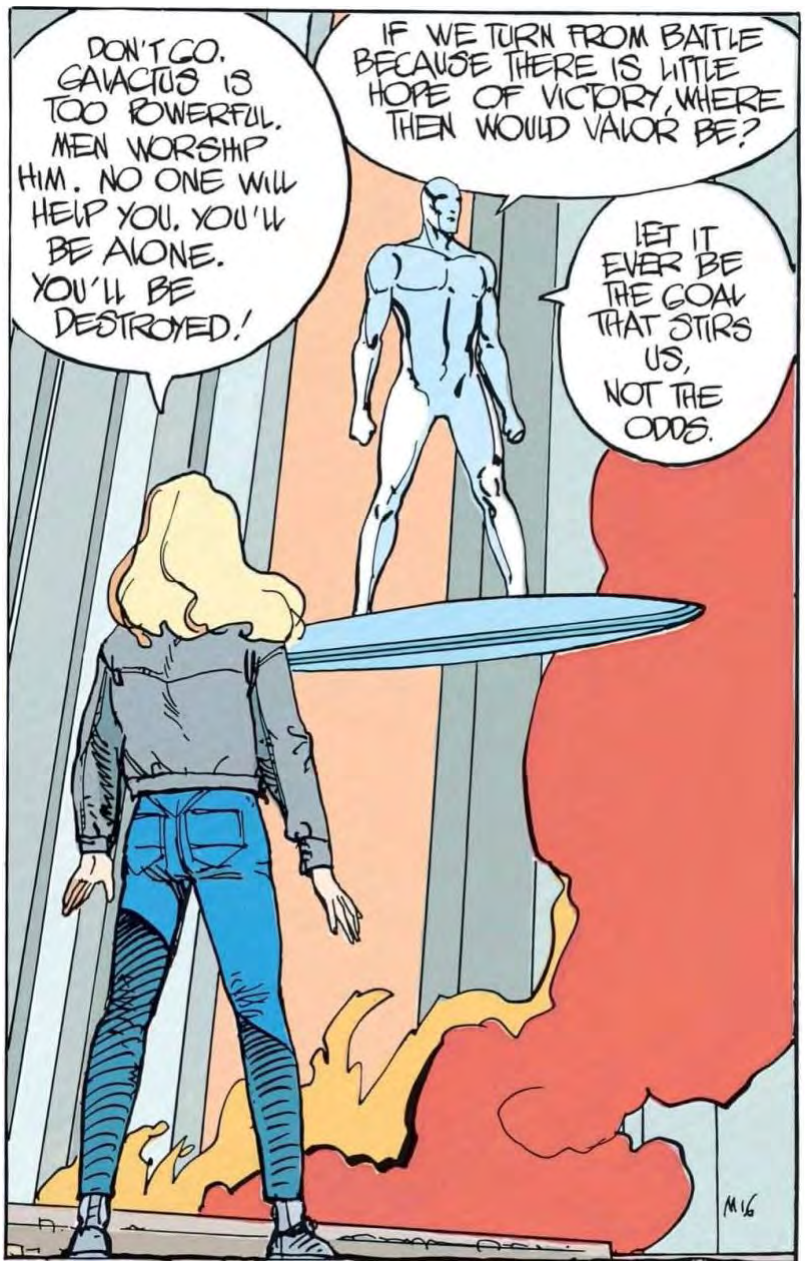
Squirrel # 1

Squirrel #2

NB: One of the great successes of my career in terms of new technology development was the NSF-funded Jetstream cloud system, now refreshed and still in operation today. This meme was used in a talk to promote the use of Jetstream when it was still a new system.



There will be days that feel like this

The next to the last visual: Ultimate vs Penultimate

The goal – good words on which to close