

English prose

Experience, Meaning of Life



english prose 1. Free to Soar One windy spring day, I observed young people having fun using the wind to fly their kites. Multicolored creations of varying shapes and sizes filled the skies like beautiful birds darting and dancing. As the strong winds gusted against the kites, a string kept them in check. Instead of blowing away with the wind, they arose against it to achieve great heights. They shook and pulled, but the restraining string and the cumbersome tail kept them in tow, facing upward and against the wind. As the kites struggled and trembled against the string, they seemed to say, "Let me go! Let me go! I want to be free!" They soared beautifully even as they fought the restriction of the string. Finally, one of the kites succeeded in breaking loose. "Free at last," it seemed to say. "Free to fly with the wind." Yet freedom from restraint simply put it at the mercy of an unsympathetic breeze. It fluttered ungracefully to the ground and landed in a tangled mass of weeds and string against a dead bush. "Free at last" free to lie powerless in the dirt, to be blown helplessly along the ground, and to lodge lifeless against the first obstruction. How much like kites we sometimes are. The Heaven gives us adversity and restrictions, rules to follow from which we can grow and gain strength. Restraint is a necessary counterpart to the winds of opposition. Some of us tug at the rules so hard that we never soar to reach the heights we might have obtained. We keep part of the commandment and never rise high enough to get our tails off the ground. Let us each rise to the great heights, recognizing that some of the restraints that we may chafe under are actually the steady force that helps us ascend and achieve.

2, Beauty There were a sensitivity and a beauty to her that have nothing to do with looks. She was one to be listened to, whose words were so easy to take

to heart. It is said that the true nature of being is veiled. The labor of words, the expression of art, the seemingly ceaseless buzz that is human thought all have in common the need to get at what really is so. The hope to draw close to and possess the truth of being can be a feverish one. In some cases it can even be fatal, if pleasure is one's truth and its attainment more important than life itself. In other lives, though, the search for what is truthful gives life. I used to find notes left in the collection basket, beautiful notes about my homilies and about the writer's thoughts on the daily scriptural readings. The person who penned the notes would add reflections to my thoughts and would always include some quotes from poets and mystics he or she had read and remembered and loved. The notes fascinated me. Here was someone immersed in a search for truth and beauty. Words had been treasured, words that were beautiful. And I felt as if the words somehow delighted in being discovered, for they were obviously very generous to the as yet anonymous writer of the notes. And now this person was in turn learning the secret of sharing them. Beauty so shines when given away. The only truth that exists is, in that sense, free. It was a long time before I met the author of the notes. One Sunday morning, I was told that someone was waiting for me in the office. The young person who answered the rectory door said that it was "the woman who said she left all the notes." When I saw her I was shocked, since I immediately recognized her from church but had no idea that it was she who wrote the notes. She was sitting in a chair in the office with her hands folded in her lap. Her head was bowed and when she raised it to look at me, she could barely smile without pain. Her face was disfigured, and the skin so tight from surgical procedures that smiling or

laughing was very difficult for her. She had suffered terribly from treatment to remove the growths that had so marred her face. We chatted for a while that Sunday morning and agreed to meet for lunch later that week. As it turned out we went to lunch several times, and she always wore a hat during the meal. I think that treatments of some sort had caused a lot of her hair to fall out. We shared things about our lives. I told her about my schooling and growing up. She told me that she had worked for years for an insurance company. She never mentioned family, and I did not ask. We spoke of authors we both had read, and it was easy to tell that books are a great love of hers. I have thought about her often over the years and how she struggled in a society that places an incredible premium on looks, class, wealth and all the other fineries of life. She suffered from a disfigurement that cannot be made to look attractive. I know that her condition hurt her deeply. Would her life have been different had she been pretty? Chances are it would have. And yet there were a sensitivity and a beauty to her that had nothing to do with looks. She was one to be listened to, whose words were so easy to take to heart. Her words came from a wounded but loving heart, very much like all hearts, but she had more of a need to be aware of it, to live with it and learn from it. She possessed a fine-tuned sense of beauty. Her only fear in life was the loss of a friend. How long does it take most of us to reach that level of human growth, if we ever get there? We get so consumed and diminished, worrying about all the things that need improving, we can easily forget to cherish those things that last. Friendship, so rare and so good, just needs our care--maybe even the simple gesture of writing a little note now and then, or the dropping of some beautiful words in a basket, in the hope that such

beauty will be shared and taken to heart. The truth of her life was a desire to see beyond the surface for a glimpse of what it is that matters. She found beauty and grace and they befriended her, and showed her what is real. 3, If I were a boy again If I were a boy again, I would practice perseverance more often, and never give up a thing because it was or inconvenient. If we want light, we must conquer darkness. Perseverance can sometimes equal genius in its results. " There are only two creatures, " syas a proverb, " who can surmount the pyramids-the eagle and the snail. " If I were a boy again, I would school myself into a habit of attention; I would let nothing come between me and the subject in hand. I would remember that a good skater never tries to skate in two directions at once. The habit of attention becomes part of our life, if we begain early enough. I often hear grown up people say " I could not fix my attention on the sermon or book, although I wished to do so" , and the reason is, the habit was not formed in youth. If I were to live my life over again, I would pay more attention to the cultivation of the memory. I would strengthen that faculty by every possible means, and on every possible occasion. It takes a little hard work at first to remember things accurately; but memory soon helps itself, and gives very little trouble. It only needs early cultivation to become a power If I were a boy again, I would cultivate courage. " Nothing is so mild and gentle as courage, nothing so cruel and pitiless as cowardice, " syas a wise author. We too often borrow trouble, and anticipate that may never appear. " The fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear. " Dangers will arise in any career, but presence of mind will often conquer the worst of them. Be prepared for any fate, and there is no harm to be freared. If I were a boy again, I would look on the cheerful side. Life is

very much like a mirror: if you smile upon it, it smiles back upon you; but if you frown and look doubtful on it, you will get a similar look in return. Inner sunshine warms not only the heart of the owner, but of all that come in contact with it. " who shuts love out , in turn shall be shut out from love. " If I were a boy again, I would school myself to say no more often. I might write pages on the importance of learning very early in life to gain that point where a young boy can stand erect, and decline doing an unworthy act because it is unworthy. If I were a boy again, I would demand of myself more courtesy towards my companions and friends, and indeed towards strangers as well. The smallest courtesies along the rough roads of life are like the little birds that sing to us all winter long, and make that season of ice and snow more endurable. Finally, instead of trying hard to be happy, as if that were the sole purpose of life, I would , if I were a boy again, I would still try harder to make others happy.

4 Chemistry on an experiment called the crystal. First the formation of chemical substances dissolved in water solution, solution Sheng Yu evaporating dish, the evaporating dish placed in steel tripod, the following alcohol lamp heating, control-related conditions, can be a different crystals. Crystal is the fruits of victory, a different experimenter get fruit is not the same: Some people have a beautiful blue vitriol crystals, a person granted a dazzling crystal, more people are harvested white crystals, such as ordinary salt crystal, alum crystals and so on. In fact, one's life and the chemistry of the crystallization experiments are very similar. To be crystal, first of all have chemicals, which is the prerequisite and foundation. What is the ultimate prize of a person, with his original prepared " substances". These " material" that is, family background, parental care, education level

and the subsequent attitude of the community, etc., no matter who will be affected by these factors, precisely because conditions are different, so that the result was completely different. Of course, the availability of crystals, or what kind of crystals, and is closely related to experimental conditions.

During the experiment, it was accidentally knocked over a evaporating dish,

he will gain nothing, It is like the life of those self-serving greed of some

Crown expansion will eventually destroy the same. Heating experiment is a

long waiting process that requires persistence and perseverance, while also

note that method, first stir a slow fire, after the last use of waste heat

evaporated to get crystals. Life it not so? In a young man worked hard and

work hard; in middle age, when a down-man, cautious and conscientious

work. Not only the warmth of the small family business, but also make

contributions to society. Life on the road, beautiful landscape lot, but

certainly there will be ups and downs, disappointment in love blow, pain

torture, career setbacks, friends, misunderstandings, and even the family

misfortune, death of their loved ones and so on and so forth, no doubt will

give us life, various kinds of obstacles the road, we like to do the same as

the crystallization experiments to pay persistence and perseverance, with a

smile the face of life, and put all kinds of problems in life as a landscape of

Another, I believe will ultimately have to get a beautiful crystal 5,

MyViewonLifeValue We all come to the world, but why do some of us make

great achievements known forever and why are they remembered forever

even though they leave the world? And why do some leave the world without

anything valuable to his generation and the people? Every one of us will

hope to have a significant and valuable life. But what kind of life is both

significant and valuable? "Answers to the questions are ... " If you cherish your value of your own life, you will create something valuable for the world." Johann Goethe said. " The life value should be judged from his contribution rather than his profession." Einstein said. Lei Feng, a communist soldier, said, " one lives to make others a more beautiful life." As we all know, Marx is an outstanding and great man. He founded his brilliant and scientific theory of communism. The theory guides the ways for the human being's liberation. Marx said, " If we can elect one suitable profession, we won't be demoralized with its pressure, because we make sacrifice for human beings. " Only by this way will we not be addicted to the joy of narrow-minded and individualism. Our happiness belongs to thousands upon thousands of people. I see, although it may be unknown, our cause will never be forgot forever. Even when we depart to God, the kind people will tear down upon our ashes." When he said these words, he was only 17 years old. He meant his word with his deeds in his late lifetime period. After his death, on his 100-birthday anniversary, the proletarian and the revolutionary people of the whole world still cherish the memory of Marx and mourn him respectively. It is his distinguishingable contribution to the mankind that his life is that significant. It is his great devotion to the human being that his life value is beyond measure. We also know that Lu Xun is a man of great. " Without his nobility " Fierce-browed, I woolly defy a thousand point fingers, head bowed like a willing ox I serve the children", and without his spirit of his loyalty and devotion to the last for the bright future of the Chinese people, his life would not have been so significant and so great. Actually, didn't those regarded as essence of human who live forever in the hearts of people make

great contributions to the cause of the people? Wouldn't the people remember those whose great achievements for human are recorded in history? We know for certain that not every of us will be a second Marx or Lu Xun. However, a person of noble aspirations will do solid work. Struggle continuously and effortless. He will try to make his greatest contribution in his shortest time. He will try what he can to bring benefit to the people in his lifetime. ¶ We'd say it is impossible for one to live alone if he isolates society and people. If he hopes to make a benefit life, he will bring benefit and make contribution to people. As a socialist youth, he will devote his life to the cause of communism in order to make a benefit life. Moreover, we say that a value of life will be only in direct proportion to achievement and contribution he makes to our society. In our real life, we can see many revolutionary martyrs die young for the people. Don't you think they cherish the life? Yes. They do. They are sentimentally attached to life; they are full of hope and desire. But they confront the death bravely and resolutely in order to make many more people live. Their brilliant status will be living in the hearts of people. They die glorious and great. The life of those who die busy about his lifetime without any achievements can not be compared with their life. ¶ In our real life, we have many cases like those. Life is endless and tackling key problems will be continuous. Let's take these as examples. Mr. Jing Zhuying worked for the Chinese science causes to the last of his life. Mr. Zhang Hua sacrificed his own young life for the sake of others, which set a good example of the communist. Mr. An Ke died for fulfillment for the duty as a citizen. Ms Zhang Haiti, compared to be Paul of our time, worked very hard and faced frustrations of her life, though she was disabled. She still

continues to live on bravely. All these are the strong of their life. Their value of life is precious. "My fellow students, don't you say what a beautiful life they have? Beethoven once said; " I must learn to control my life which will never make me give myself up. Oh, If only I can live more than thousands times!" Paul Cocking also had a golden saying, " Life is but one." I think every youth of us keep this in our minds. let's turn it into reality with our deeds. Let's not be a man full of promises but without any deeds, like Lusting, one of the characters by Douglas. "My fellow students, let's not wander. Let's not hesitate. Only lament and vexation does not mean consideration and exploration. Only lament and vexation does not mean advancing and does not mean mature at all. Let's not kill our lifetime by playing cards. Let's not waste our youth by drinking. Let's not destroy our will without any achievements. Let's make great contribution to human. And only by these can we create benefit life. Every one will have to die and every body will be rotten. But every one may make achievements and contributions. We hate being rotten. Let's brighten up! Up! And up! 6 I will act now , My dreams are worthless, my plans are dust, my goals are impossible. All are of no value unless they are followed by action. I will act now. Never has there been a map, however carefully executed to detail and scale, which carried its owner over even one inch of ground. Never has there been a parchment of law, however fair, which prevented one crime. Never has there been a scroll, even such as the one I hold, which earned so much as a penny or produced a single word of acclamation. Action, alone, is the tinder which ignites the map, the parchment, this scroll, my dreams, my plans, my goals, into a living force.

Action is the food and drink which will nourish my success. I will act now. My procrastination which has held me back was born of fear and now I recognize this secret mined from the depths of all courageous hearts. Now I know that to conquer fear I must always act without hesitation and the flutters in my heart will vanish. Now I know that action reduces the lion of terror to an ant of equanimity. Henceforth, I will remember the lesson of the firefly who gives of its light only when it is on the wing, only when it is in action. I will become a firefly and even in the day my glow will be seen in spite of the sun. Let others be as butterflies who preen their wings yet depend on the charity of a flower for life. I will be as the firefly and my light will brighten the world. I will act now. I will not avoid the tasks of today and charge them to tomorrow for I know that tomorrow never comes. Let me act now even though my actions may not bring happiness or success for it is better to act and fail than not to act and flounder. Happiness, in truth, may not be the fruit plucked by my action yet without action all fruit will die on the vine. I will act now. I will act now. I will act now. Henceforth, I will repeat these words again and again and again, each hour, each day, every day, until the words become as much a habit as my breathing and the actions which follow become as instinctive as the blinking of my eyelids. With these words I can condition my mind to perform every act necessary for my success. With these words I can condition my mind to meet every challenge which the failure avoids. I will act now. I will repeat these words again and again and again. When I awake I will say them and leap from my cot while the failure sleeps yet another hour. I will

act now. When I enter the market place I will say them and immediately confront my first prospect while the failure ponders yet his possibility of rebuff. I will act now. When I face a closed door I will say them and knock while the failure waits outside with fear and trepidation. I will act now. When I face temptation I will say them and immediately act to remove myself from evil. I will act now. When I am tempted to quit and begin again tomorrow I will say them and immediately act to consummate another sale. I will act now. Only action determines my value in the market place and to multiply my value I will multiply my actions. I will walk where the failure fears to walk. I will work when the failure seeks rest. I will talk when the failure remains silent. I will call on ten who can buy my goods while the failure makes grand plans to call on one. I will say it is done before the failure says it is too late. I will act now. For now is all I have. Tomorrow is the day reserved for the labor of the lazy. I am not lazy. Tomorrow is the day when the evil become good. I am not evil. Tomorrow is the day when the weak become strong. I am not weak. Tomorrow is the day when the failure will succeed. I am not a failure. When the lion is hungry he eats. When the eagle has thirst he drinks. Lest they act, both will perish. I hunger for success. I thirst for happiness and peace of mind. Lest I act I will perish in a life of failure, misery, and sleepless nights. I will command, and I will obey mine own command. I will act now. Success will not wait. If I delay she will become betrothed to another and lost to me forever. This is the time. This is the place. I am the man. I will act now. -Youth Youth Youth is not a time

of life; it is a state of mind; it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a matter of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is the freshness of the deep springs of life. Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease. This often exists in a man of 60 more than a boy of 20. Nobody grows old merely by a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, fear, self-distrust bows the heart and turns the spirit back to dust. Whether 60 or 16, there is in every human being's heart the lure of wonders, the unfailing appetite for what's next and the joy of the game of living. In the center of your heart and my heart, there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, courage and power from man and from the infinite, so long as you are young. When your aerials are down, and your spirit is covered with snows of cynicism and the ice of pessimism, then you've grown old, even at 20; but as long as your aerials are up, to catch waves of optimism, there's hope you may die young at 80. -

Three Days to See(Excerpts) All of us have read thrilling stories in which the hero had only a limited and specified time to live. Sometimes it was as long as a year, sometimes as short as 24 hours. But always we were interested in discovering just how the doomed hero chose to spend his last days or his last hours. I speak, of course, of free men who have a choice, not condemned criminals whose sphere of activities is strictly delimited. Such stories set us thinking, wondering what we should do under similar circumstances. What events, what experiences, what associations should we crowd into those last hours as mortal beings, what regrets? Sometimes I have thought it would be

an excellent rule to live each day as if we should die tomorrow. Such an attitude would emphasize sharply the values of life. We should live each day with gentleness, vigor and a keenness of appreciation which are often lost when time stretches before us in the constant panorama of more days and months and years to come. There are those, of course, who would adopt the Epicurean motto of "Eat, drink, and be merry". But most people would be chastened by the certainty of impending death. In stories the doomed hero is usually saved at the last minute by some stroke of fortune, but almost always his sense of values is changed. He becomes more appreciative of the meaning of life and its permanent spiritual values. It has often been noted that those who live, or have lived, in the shadow of death bring a mellow sweetness to everything they do. Most of us, however, take life for granted. We know that one day we must die, but usually we picture that day as far in the future. When we are in buoyant health, death is all but unimaginable. We seldom think of it. The days stretch out in an endless vista. So we go about our petty tasks, hardly aware of our listless attitude toward life. The same lethargy, I am afraid, characterizes the use of all our faculties and senses. Only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight. Particularly does this observation apply to those who have lost sight and hearing in adult life. But those who have never suffered impairment of sight or hearing seldom make the fullest use of these blessed faculties. Their eyes and ears take in all sights and sounds hazily, without concentration and with little appreciation. It is the same old story of not being grateful for what we have until we lose it, of not being conscious of health until we are ill. I have often thought it would be a blessing if each

human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days at some time during his early adult life. Darkness would make him more appreciative of sight; silence would teach him the joys of sound.

Companionship of Books

A man may usually be known by the books he reads as well as by the company he keeps; for there is a companionship of books as well as of men; and one should always live in the best company, whether it be of books or of men. A good book may be among the best of friends. It is the same today that it always was, and it will never change. It is the most patient and cheerful of companions. It does not turn its back upon us in times of adversity or distress. It always receives us with the same kindness; amusing and instructing us in youth, and comforting and consoling us in age. Men often discover their affinity to each other by the mutual love they have for a book just as two persons sometimes discover a friend by the admiration which both entertain for a third. There is an old proverb, ' Love me, love my dog. ' But there is more wisdom in this: " Love me, love my book. " The book is a truer and higher bond of union. Men can think, feel, and sympathize with each other through their favorite author. They live in him together, and he in them. A good book is often the best urn of a life enshrining the best that life could think out; for the world of a man's life is, for the most part, but the world of his thoughts. Thus the best books are treasuries of good words, the golden thoughts, which, remembered and cherished, become our constant companions and comforters. Books possess an essence of immortality. They are by far the most lasting products of human effort. Temples and statues decay, but books survive. Time is of no account with great thoughts, which are as fresh today as when they first passed through their author's minds,

ages ago. What was then said and thought still speaks to us as vividly as ever from the printed page. The only effect of time have been to sift out the bad products; for nothing in literature can long survive e but what is really good. Books introduce us into the best society; they bring us into the presence of the greatest minds that have ever lived. We hear what they said and did; we see the as if they were really alive; we sympathize with them, enjoy with them, grieve with them; their experience becomes ours, and we feel as if we were in a measure actors with them in the scenes which they describe. The great and good do not die, even in this world. Embalmed in books, their spirits walk abroad. The book is a living voice. It is an intellect to which on still listens. If I Rest, I Rust The significant inscription found on an old key---“ If I rest, I rust"---would be an excellent motto for those who are afflicted with the slightest bit of idleness. Even the most industrious person might adopt it with advantage to serve as a reminder that, if one allows his faculties to rest, like the iron in the unused key, they will soon show signs of rust and, ultimately, cannot do the work required of them. Those who would attain the heights reached and kept by great men must keep their faculties polished by constant use, so that they may unlock the doors of knowledge, the gate that guard the entrances to the professions, to science, art, literature, agriculture---every department of human endeavor. Industry keeps bright the key that opens the treasury of achievement. If Hugh Miller, after toiling all day in a quarry, had devoted his evenings to rest and recreation, he would never have become a famous geologist. The celebrated mathematician, Edmund Stone, would never have published a mathematical dictionary, never have found the key to science of mathematics, if he had

given his spare moments to idleness, had the little Scotch lad, Ferguson, allowed the busy brain to go to sleep while he tended sheep on the hillside instead of calculating the position of the stars by a string of beads, he would never have become a famous astronomer. Labor vanquishes all---not inconstant, spasmodic, or ill-directed labor; but faithful, unremitting, daily effort toward a well-directed purpose. Just as truly as eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, so is eternal industry the price of noble and enduring success. ·Ambition It is not difficult to imagine a world short of ambition. It would probably be a kinder world: with out demands, without abrasions, without disappointments. People would have time for reflection. Such work as they did would not be for themselves but for the collectivity. Competition would never enter in. conflict would be eliminated, tension become a thing of the past. The stress of creation would be at an end. Art would no longer be troubling, but purely celebratory in its functions. Longevity would be increased, for fewer people would die of heart attack or stroke caused by tumultuous endeavor. Anxiety would be extinct. Time would stretch on and on, with ambition long departed from the human heart. Ah, how unrelieved boring life would be! There is a strong view that holds that success is a myth, and ambition therefore a sham. Does this mean that success does not really exist? That achievement is at bottom empty? That the efforts of men and women are of no significance alongside the force of movements and events now not all success, obviously, is worth esteeming, nor all ambition worth cultivating. Which are and which are not is something one soon enough learns on one's own. But even the most cynical secretly admit that success exists; that achievement counts for a great deal; and that the true myth is

that the actions of men and women are useless. To believe otherwise is to take on a point of view that is likely to be deranging. It is, in its implications, to remove all motives for competence, interest in attainment, and regard for posterity. We do not choose to be born. We do not choose our parents. We do not choose our historical epoch, the country of our birth, or the immediate circumstances of our upbringing. We do not, most of us, choose to die; nor do we choose the time or conditions of our death. But within all this realm of choicelessness, we do choose how we shall live: courageously or in cowardice, honorably or dishonorably, with purpose or in drift. We decide what is important and what is trivial in life. We decide that what makes us significant is either what we do or what we refuse to do. But no matter how indifferent the universe may be to our choices and decisions, these choices and decisions are ours to make. We decide. We choose. And as we decide and choose, so are our lives formed. In the end, forming our own destiny is what ambition is about.

·The Road to Success It is well that young men should begin at the beginning and occupy the most subordinate positions. Many of the leading businessmen of Pittsburgh had a serious responsibility thrust upon them at the very threshold of their career. They were introduced to the broom, and spent the first hours of their business lives sweeping out the office. I notice we have janitors and janitresses now in offices, and our young men unfortunately miss that salutary branch of business education. But if by chance the professional sweeper is absent any morning, the boy who has the genius of the future partner in him will not hesitate to try his hand at the broom. It does not hurt the newest comer to sweep out the office if necessary. I was one of those sweepers myself. Assuming that you have all

obtained employment and are fairly started, my advice to you is "aim high". I would not give a fig for the young man who does not already see himself the partner or the head of an important firm. Do not rest content for a moment in your thoughts as head clerk, or foreman, or general manager in any concern, no matter how extensive. Say to yourself, "My place is at the top." Be king in your dreams. And here is the prime condition of success, the great secret: concentrate your energy, thought, and capital exclusively upon the business in which you are engaged. Having begun in one line, resolve to fight it out on that line, to lead in it, adopt every improvement, have the best machinery, and know the most about it. The concerns which fail are those which have scattered their capital, which means that they have scattered their brains also. They have investments in this, or that, or the other, here there, and everywhere. "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." is all wrong. I tell you to "put all your eggs in one basket, and then watch that basket." Look round you and take notice, men who do that not often fail. It is easy to watch and carry the one basket. It is trying to carry too many baskets that breaks most eggs in this country. He who carries three baskets must put one on his head, which is apt to tumble and trip him up. One fault of the American businessman is lack of concentration. To summarize what I have said: aim for the highest; never enter a bar room; do not touch liquor, or if at all only at meals; never speculate; never indorse beyond your surplus cash fund; make the firm's interest yours; break orders always to save owners; concentrate; put all your eggs in one basket, and watch that basket; expenditure always within revenue; lastly, be not impatient, for as Emerson says, "no one can cheat you out of ultimate success but yourselves." ·The

50-Percent Theory of Life I believe in the 50-percent theory. Half the time things are better than normal; the other half, they're worse. I believe life is a pendulum swing. It takes time and experience to understand what normal is, and that gives me the perspective to deal with the surprises of the future. Let's benchmark the parameters: yes, I will die. I've dealt with the deaths of both parents, a best friend, a beloved boss and cherished pets. Some of these deaths have been violent, before my eyes, or slow and agonizing. Bad stuff, and it belongs at the bottom of the scale. Then there are those high points: romance and marriage to the right person; having a child and doing those Dad things like coaching my son's baseball team, paddling around the creek in the boat while he's swimming with the dogs, discovering his compassion so deep it manifests even in his kindness to snails, his imagination so vivid he builds a spaceship from a scattered pile of Legos. But there is a vast meadow of life in the middle, where the bad and the good flip-flop acrobatically. This is what convinces me to believe in the 50-percent theory. One spring I planted corn too early in a bottomland so flood-prone that neighbors laughed. I felt chagrined at the wasted effort. Summer turned brutal---the worst heat wave and drought in my lifetime. The air-conditioned died; the well went dry; the marriage ended; the job lost; the money gone. I was living lyrics from a country tune---music I loathed. Only a surging Kansas City Royals team buoyed my spirits. Looking back on that horrible summer, I soon understood that all succeeding good things merely offset the bad. Worse than normal wouldn't last long. I am owed and savor the halcyon times. The reinvigorates me for the next nasty surprise and offer assurance that can thrive. The 50-percent theory even helps me see hope beyond my

Royals' recent slump, a field of struggling rookies sown so that some year soon we can reap an October harvest. For that on blistering summer, the ground moisture was just right, planting early allowed pollination before heat withered the tops, and the lack of rain spared the standing corn from floods. That winter my crib overflowed with corn---fat, healthy three-to-a-stalk ears filled with kernels from heel to tip---while my neighbors' fields yielded only brown, empty husks. Although plantings past may have fallen below the 50-percent expectation, and they probably will again in the future, I am still sustained by the crop that flourishes during the drought. ·What is Your Recovery Rate? What is your recovery rate? How long does it take you to recover from actions and behaviors that upset you? Minutes? Hours? Days? Weeks? The longer it takes you to recover, the more influence that incident has on your actions, and the less able you are to perform to your personal best. In a nutshell, the longer it takes you to recover, the weaker you are and the poorer your performance. You are well aware that you need to exercise to keep the body fit and, no doubt, accept that a reasonable measure of health is the speed in which your heart and respiratory system recovers after exercise. Likewise the faster you let go of an issue that upsets you, the faster you return to an equilibrium, the healthier you will be. The best example of this behavior is found with professional sportspeople. They know that the faster they can forget an incident or missed opportunity and get on with the game, the better their performance. In fact, most measure the time it takes them to overcome and forget an incident in a game and most reckon a recovery rate of 30 seconds is too long! Imagine yourself to be an actor in a play on the stage. Your aim is to play your part to the best of your ability.

You have been given a script and at the end of each sentence is a full stop. Each time you get to the end of the sentence you start a new one and although the next sentence is related to the last it is not affected by it. Your job is to deliver each sentence to the best of your ability. Don't live your life in the past! Learn to live in the present, to overcome the past. Stop the past from influencing your daily life. Don't allow thoughts of the past to reduce your personal best. Stop the past from interfering with your life. Learn to recover quickly. Remember: Rome wasn't built in a day. Reflect on your recovery rate each day. Every day before you go to bed, look at your progress. Don't lie in bed saying to you, " I did that wrong. " " I should have done better there. " No. look at your day and note when you made an effort to place a full stop after an incident. This is a success. You are taking control of your life. Remember this is a step by step process. This is not a make-over. You are undertaking real change here. Your aim: reduce the time spent in recovery. The way forward? Live in the present. Not in the precedent.

·Clear Your Mental Space Think about the last time you felt a negative emotion---like stress, anger, or frustration. What was going through your mind as you were going through that negativity? Was your mind cluttered with thoughts? Or was it paralyzed, unable to think? The next time you find yourself in the middle of a very stressful time, or you feel angry or frustrated, stop. Yes, that's right, stop. Whatever you're doing, stop and sit for one minute. While you're sitting there, completely immerse yourself in the negative emotion. Allow that emotion to consume you. Allow yourself one minute to truly feel that emotion. Don't cheat yourself here. Take the entire minute---but only one minute---to do nothing else but feel that emotion.

When the minute is over, ask yourself, “ Am I willing to keep holding on to this negative emotion as I go through the rest of the day? ” Once you’ve allowed yourself to be totally immersed in the emotion and really felt it, you will be surprised to find that the emotion clears rather quickly. If you feel you need to hold on to the emotion for a little longer, that is OK. Allow yourself another minute to feel the emotion. When you feel you’ve had enough of the emotion, ask yourself if you’re willing to carry that negativity with you for the rest of the day. If not, take a deep breath. As you exhale, release all that negativity with your breath. This exercise seems simple---almost too simple. But, it is very effective. By allowing that negative emotion the space to be truly felt, you are dealing with the emotion rather than stuffing it down and trying not to feel it. You are actually taking away the power of the emotion by giving it the space and attention it needs. When you immerse yourself in the emotion, and realize that it is only emotion, it loses its control. You can clear your head and proceed with your task. Try it. Next time you’re in the middle of a negative emotion, give yourself the space to feel the emotion and see what happens. Keep a piece of paper with you that says the following: Stop. Immerse for one minute. Do I want to keep this negativity? Breath deep, exhale, release. Move on! This will remind you of the steps to the process. Remember; take the time you need to really immerse yourself in the emotion. Then, when you feel you’ve felt it enough, release it---really let go of it. You will be surprised at how quickly you can move on from a negative situation and get to what you really want to do! ·Be Happy “ The days that make us happy make us wise. ”----John Masefield when I first read this line by England’s Poet Laureate, it startled me. What did Masefield

mean? Without thinking about it much, I had always assumed that the opposite was true. But his sober assurance was arresting. I could not forget it. Finally, I seemed to grasp his meaning and realized that here was a profound observation. The wisdom that happiness makes possible lies in clear perception, not fogged by anxiety nor dimmed by despair and boredom, and without the blind spots caused by fear. Active happiness---not mere satisfaction or contentment ---often comes suddenly, like an April shower or the unfolding of a bud. Then you discover what kind of wisdom has accompanied it. The grass is greener; bird songs are sweeter; the shortcomings of your friends are more understandable and more forgivable. Happiness is like a pair of eyeglasses correcting your spiritual vision. Nor are the insights of happiness limited to what is near around you. Unhappy, with your thoughts turned in upon your emotional woes, your vision is cut short as though by a wall. Happy, the wall crumbles. The long vista is there for the seeing. The ground at your feet, the world about you----people, thoughts, emotions, pressures---are now fitted into the larger scene. Everything assumes a fairer proportion. And here is the beginning of wisdom. -The Goodness of life Though there is much to be concerned about, there is far, far more for which to be thankful. Though life's goodness can at times be overshadowed, it is never outweighed. For every single act that is senselessly destructive, there are thousands more small, quiet acts of love, kindness and compassion. For every person who seeks to hurt, there are many, many more who devote their lives to helping and to healing. There is goodness to life that cannot be denied. In the most magnificent vistas and in the smallest details, look closely, for that goodness always comes shining

through. There is no limit to the goodness of life. It grows more abundant with each new encounter. The more you experience and appreciate the goodness of life, the more there is to be lived. Even when the cold winds blow and the world seems to be covered in foggy shadows, the goodness of life lives on. Open your eyes, open your heart, and you will see that goodness is everywhere. Though the goodness of life seems at times to suffer setbacks, it always endures. For in the darkest moment it becomes vividly clear that life is a priceless treasure. And so the goodness of life is made even stronger by the very things that would oppose it. Time and time again when you feared it was gone forever you found that the goodness of life was really only a moment away. Around the next corner, inside every moment, the goodness of life is there to surprise and delight you. Take a moment to let the goodness of life touch your spirit and calm your thoughts. Then, share your good fortune with another. For the goodness of life grows more and more magnificent each time it is given away. Though the problems constantly scream for attention and the conflicts appear to rage ever stronger, the goodness of life grows stronger still, quietly, peacefully, with more purpose and meaning than ever before. Facing the Enemies Within We are not born with courage, but neither are we born with fear. Maybe some of our fears are brought on by your own experiences, by what someone has told you, by what you've read in the papers. Some fears are valid, like walking alone in a bad part of town at two o'clock in the morning. But once you learn to avoid that situation, you won't need to live in fear of it. Fears, even the most basic ones, can totally destroy our ambitions. Fear can destroy fortunes. Fear can destroy relationships. Fear, if left unchecked, can

destroy our lives. Fear is one of the many enemies lurking inside us. Let me tell you about five of the other enemies we face from within. The first enemy that you've got to destroy before it destroys you is indifference. What a tragic disease this is! " Ho-hum, let it slide. I'll just drift along. " Here's one problem with drifting: you can't drift your way to the top of the mountain. The second enemy we face is indecision. Indecision is the thief of opportunity and enterprise. It will steal your chances for a better future. Take a sword to this enemy. The third enemy inside is doubt. Sure, there's room for healthy skepticism. You can't believe everything. But you also can't let doubt take over. Many people doubt the past, doubt the future, doubt each other, doubt the government, doubt the possibilities and doubt the opportunities. Worse of all, they doubt themselves. I'm telling you, doubt will destroy your life and your chances of success. It will empty both your bank account and your heart. Doubt is an enemy. Go after it. Get rid of it. The fourth enemy within is worry. We've all got to worry some. Just don't let it conquer you. Instead, let it alarm you. Worry can be useful. If you step off the curb in New York City and a taxi is coming, you've got to worry. But you can't let worry loose like a mad dog that drives you into a small corner. Here's what you've got to do with your worries: drive them into a small corner. Whatever is out to get you, you've got to get it. Whatever is pushing on you, you've got to push back. The fifth interior enemy is overcaution. It is the timid approach to life. Timidity is not a virtue; it's an illness. If you let it go, it'll conquer you. Timid people don't get promoted. They don't advance and grow and become powerful in the marketplace. You've got to avoid overcaution. Do battle with the enemy. Do battle with your fears. Build your courage to fight what's

holding you back, what's keeping you from your goals and dreams. Be courageous in your life and in your pursuit of the things you want and the person you want to become.

Abundance is a Life Style Abundance is a life style, a way of living your life. It isn't something you buy now and then or pull down from the cupboard, dust off and use once or twice, and then return to the cupboard. Abundance is a philosophy; it appears in your physiology, your value system, and carries its own set of beliefs. You walk with it, sleep with it, bath with it, feel with it, and need to maintain and take care of it as well. Abundance doesn't always require money. Many people live with all that money can buy yet live empty inside. Abundance begins inside with some main self-ingredients, like love, care, kindness and gentleness, thoughtfulness and compassion. Abundance is a state of being. It radiates outward. It shines like the sun among the many moons in the world. Being from the brightness of abundance doesn't allow the darkness to appear or be in the path unless a choice to allow it to. The true state of abundance doesn't have room for lies or games normally played. The space is too full of abundance. This may be a challenge because we still need to shine for other to see. Abundance is seeing people for their gifts and not what they lack or could be. Seeing all things for their gifts and not what they lack. Start by knowing what your abundances are, fill that space with you, and be fully present from that state of being. Your profession of choice is telling you of knowing and possibilities. That is their gift. Consultants and customer service professionals have the ministrative assistants and virtual assistants have an abundance of coordination and time management. Abundance is all around you, and all within. See what it is; love yourself for what it is, not what you're

missing, or what that can be better, but for what it is at this present moment. Be in a state of abundance of what you already have. I guarantee they are there; it always is buried but there. Breathe them in as if they are the air you breathe because they are yours. Let go of anything that isn't abundant for the time being. Name the shoe boxes in your closet with your gifts of abundance; pull from them every morning if needed. Know they are there. Learning to trust in your own abundance is required. When you begin to be within your own space of abundance, whatever you need will appear whenever you need it. That's just the way the higher powers set this universe up to work. Trust the universal energy. The knowing of it all will humble you to its power yet let the brightness of you shine everywhere it needs to. Just by being from a state of abundance, it is being you.

Human Life a Poem I think that, from a biological standpoint, human life almost reads like a poem. It has its own rhythm and beat, its internal cycles of growth and decay. It begins with innocent childhood, followed by awkward adolescence trying awkwardly to adapt itself to mature society, with its young passions and follies, its ideals and ambitions; then it reaches a manhood of intense activities, profiting from experience and learning more about society and human nature; at middle age, there is a slight easing of tension, a mellowing of character like the ripening of fruit or the mellowing of good wine, and the gradual acquiring of a more tolerant, more cynical and at the same time a kindlier view of life; then In the sunset of our life, the endocrine glands decrease their activity, and if we have a true philosophy of old age and have ordered our life pattern according to it, it is for us the age of peace and security and leisure and contentment; finally, life flickers out

and one goes into eternal sleep, never to wake up again. One should be able to sense the beauty of this rhythm of life, to appreciate, as we do in grand symphonies, its main theme, its strains of conflict and the final resolution. The movements of these cycles are very much the same in a normal life, but the music must be provided by the individual himself. In some souls, the discordant note becomes harsher and harsher and finally overwhelms or submerges the main melody. Sometimes the discordant note gains so much power that the music can no longer go on, and the individual shoots himself with a pistol or jump into a river. But that is because his original leitmotif has been hopelessly over-showed through the lack of a good self-education. Otherwise the normal human life runs to its normal end in kind of dignified movement and procession. There are sometimes in many of us too many staccatos or impetuosos, and because the tempo is wrong, the music is not pleasing to the ear; we might have more of the grand rhythm and majestic tempo of the Ganges, flowing slowly and eternally into the sea. No one can say that life with childhood, manhood and old age is not a beautiful arrangement; the day has its morning, noon and sunset, and the year has its seasons, and it is good that it is so. There is no good or bad in life, except what is good according to its own season. And if we take this biological view of life and try to live according to the seasons, no one but a conceited fool or an impossible idealist can deny that human life can be lived like a poem. Shakespeare has expressed this idea more graphically in his passage about the seven stages of life, and a good many Chinese writers have said about the same thing. It is curious that Shakespeare was never very religious, or very much concerned with religion. I think this was his greatness; he took

human life largely as it was, and intruded himself as little upon the general scheme of things as he did upon the characters of his plays. Shakespeare was like Nature itself, and that is the greatest compliment we can pay to a writer or thinker. He merely lived, observed life and went away. Solitude I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows. The really diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert. The farmer can work alone in the field or the woods all day, hoeing or chopping, and not feel lonesome, because he is employed; but when he comes home at night he cannot sit down in a room alone, at the mercy of his thoughts, but must be where he can : see the folks,: " and recreate, and, as he thinks, remunerate himself for his day's solitude; and hence he wonders how the student can sit alone in the house all night and most of the day without ennui and : the blues;; but he does not realize that the student, though in the house, is still at work in his field, and chopping in his woods, as the farmer in his, and in turn seeks the same recreation and society that the latter does, though it may be a more condensed form of it. Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals three times a day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are.

We have had to agree on a certain set of rules, called etiquette and politeness, to make this frequent meeting tolerable and that we need not come to open war. We meet at the post-office, and at the sociable, and about the fireside every night; we live thick and are in each other's way, and stumble over one another, and I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for all important and hearty communications. Consider the girls in a factory---never alone, hardly in their dreams. It would be better if there were but one inhabitant to a square mile, as where I live. The value of a man is not in his skin, that we should touch him. I have a great deal of company in my house; especially in the morning, when nobody calls. Let me suggest a few comparisons, that some one may convey an idea of my situation. I am no more lonely than the loon in the pond that laughs so loud, or than Walden Pond itself. What company has that lonely lake, I pray? And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue angels in it, in the azure tint of its waters. The sun is alone, except in thick weather, when there sometimes appear to be two, but one is a mock sun. God is alone---but the devil, he is far from being alone; he sees a great deal of company; he is legion. I am no more lonely than a single mullein or dandelion in a pasture, or a bean leaf, or sorrel, or a horse-fly, or a bumblebee. I am no more lonely than the Millbrook, or a weathercock, or the north star, or the south wind, or an April shower, or a January thaw, or the first spider in a new house.

19¼ Giving Life Meaning Have you thought about what you want people to say about you after you're gone? Can you hear the voice saying, " He was a great man. " Or " She really will be missed. " What else do they say? One of the strangest phenomena of life is to

engage in a work that will last long after death. Isn't that a lot like investing all your money so that future generations can bare interest on it? Perhaps, yet if you look deep in your own heart, you'll find something drives you to make this kind of contribution---something drives every human being to find a purpose that lives on after death. Do you hope to memorialize your name? Have a name that is whispered with reverent awe? Do you hope to have your face carved upon 50 ft of granite rock? Is the answer really that simple? Is the purpose of lifetime contribution an ego-driven desire for a mortal being to have an immortal name or is it something more? A child alive today will die tomorrow. A baby that had the potential to be the next Einstein will die from complication is at birth. The circumstances of life are not set in stone. We are not all meant to live life through to old age. We've grown to perceive life³ as a full cycle with a certain number of years in between. If all of those years aren't lived out, it's a tragedy. A tragedy because a human's potential was never realized. A tragedy because a spark was snuffed out before it ever became a flame. By virtue of inhabiting a body we accept these risks. We expose our mortal flesh to the laws of the physical environment around us. The trade off isn't so bad when you think about it. The problem comes when we construct mortal fantasies of what life should be like. When life doesn't conform to our fantasy we grow upset, frustrated, or depressed. We are alive; let us live. We have the ability to experience; let us experience. We have the ability to learn; let us learn. The meaning of life can be grasped in a moment. A moment so brief it often evades our perception. What meaning stands behind the dramatic unfolding of life? What single truth can we grasp and hang onto for dear life when all other truths around us seem to fade with

time? These moments are strung together in a series we call events. These events are strung together in a series we call life. When we seize the moment and bend it according to our will, a will driven by the spirit deep inside us, then we have discovered the meaning of life, a meaning for us that shall go on long after we depart this Earth.

2014 Relish the Moment Tucked away in our subconsciousness is an idyllic vision. We see ourselves on a long trip that spans the moment. We are traveling by train. Out the windows, we drink in the passing scene of cars on nearby highways, of children waving at a crossing, of cattle grazing on a distant hillside, of smoke pouring from a power plant, of row upon row of corn and wheat, of flatlands and valleys, of mountains and rolling hillsides, of city skylines and village halls. But uppermost in our minds is the final destination. On a certain day at a certain hour, we will pull into the station. Bands will be playing and flags waving. Once we get there, so many wonderful dreams will come true and the pieces of our lives will fit together like a completed jigsaw puzzle. How restlessly we pace the aisles, damning the minutes for loitering---waiting, waiting, waiting for the station. " When we reach the station, that will be it! " we cry. " When I'm 18. " " When I buy a new 450SL Mercedes Benz! " " When I put the last kid through college. " " When I have paid off the mortgage! " " When I get a promotion. " " When I reach the age of retirement, I shall live happily ever after! " Sooner or later, we must realize there is no station, no one place to arrive at once and for all. The true joy of life is the trip. The station is only a dream. It constantly outdistances us. It isn't the burdens of today that drive men mad. It is the regrets over yesterday and the fear of tomorrow. Regret and fear are twin thieves who rob us of today. So stop pacing the aisles and

counting the miles. Instead, climb more mountains, eat more ice cream, go barefoot more often, swim more rivers, watch more sunsets, laugh more, cry less. Life must be lived as we go along. The station will come soon enough. -

Love of Beauty The love of beauty is an essential part of all healthy human nature. It is a moral quality. The absence of it is not an assured ground of condemnation, but the presence of it is an invariable sign of goodness of heart. In proportion to the degree in which it is felt will probably be the degree in which nobleness and beauty of character will be attained. Natural beauty is an all-pervading presence. The universe is its temple. It unfolds into the numberless flowers of spring. It waves in the branches of trees and the green blades of grass. It haunts the depths of the earth and the sea. It gleams from the hues of the shell and the precious stone. And not only these minute objects but the oceans, the mountains, the clouds, the stars, the rising and the setting sun---all overflow with beauty. This beauty is so precious, and so congenial to our tenderest and noblest feelings, that it is painful to think of the multitude of people living in the midst of it and yet remaining almost blind to it. All persons should seek to become acquainted with the beauty in nature. There is not a worm we tread upon, nor a leaf that dances merrily as it falls before the autumn winds, but calls for our study and admiration. The power to appreciate beauty not merely increases our sources of happiness---it enlarges our moral nature, too. Beauty calms our restlessness and dispels our cares. Go into the fields or the woods, spend a summer day by the sea or the mountains, and all your little perplexities and anxieties will vanish. Listen to sweet music, and your foolish fears and petty jealousies will pass away. The beauty of the world helps us to seek and find

the beauty of goodness. -The Happy Door Happiness is like a pebble dropped into a pool to set in motion an ever-widening circle of ripples. As Stevenson has said, being happy is a duty. There is no exact definition of the word happiness. Happy people are happy for all sorts of reasons. The key is not wealth or physical well-being, since we find beggars, invalids and so-called failures, who are extremely happy. Being happy is a sort of unexpected dividend. But staying happy is an accomplishment, a triumph of soul and character. It is not selfish to strive for it. It is, indeed, a duty to ourselves and others. Being unhappy is like an infectious disease. It causes people to shrink away from the sufferer. He soon finds himself alone, miserable and embittered. There is, however, a cure so simple as to seem, at first glance, ridiculous; if you don't feel happy, pretend to be! It works. Before long you will find that instead of repelling people, you attract them. You discover how deeply rewarding it is to be the center of wider and wider circles of good will. Then the make-believe becomes a reality. You possess the secret of peace of mind, and can forget yourself in being of service to others. Being happy, once it is realized as a duty and established as a habit, opens doors into unimaginable gardens thronged with grateful friends. -Born to Win Each human being is born as something new, something that never existed before. Each is born with the capacity to win at life. Each person has a unique way of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and thinking. Each has his or her own unique potentials---capabilities and limitations. Each can be a significant,