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|  | “Indra’s Net” | There is an endless net of threads throughout the universe. The horizontal threads are in space. The vertical threads in time. At every crossing of threads there is an individual. And every individual is a crystal bead. The great light of absolute being illuminates and penetrates every crystal being. And every crystal being reflects not only the light from every other crystal in the net, But also every reflection of every reflection throughout the universe. |
|  | Cracked Pot | A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on each end of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.  For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been  Made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream.  "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you."  "Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"  "I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.  The water bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot, and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path."  Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure.  The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of your path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them.  For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."  Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But if we will allow it, the Lord will use our flaws to grace His Father's table. In God's great economy, nothing goes to waste. So as we seek ways to serve together, and as God calls you to the tasks He has appointed for you, don't be afraid of your flaws. Acknowledge them, and allow. Him to take advantage of them, and you, too, can be the cause of beauty in His pathway. |
|  |  | You can always have your way . . . if you have more than one way |
|  |  | Comedy = tragedy + time |
|  |  | Mindfulness  Show up.  Pay attention.  Tell the truth.  Be open to what happens next. |
| Alan Cohen | “A Deep Breath of Life” | As you enter this new year,  nothing in the past has any power to  effect what you do now.  You are an entirely new person,  different from the person you were.  This year has never been lived before,  and you have never had the consciousness you now have.  You are setting sail on a great adventure determined only  by how grand you are willing to think. |
| Alan Watts | Indras Net | "Imagine a multidimensional spider's web in the early morning covered with dew drops. And every dew drop contains the reflection of all the other dew drops. And, in each reflected dew drop, the reflections of all the other dew drops in that reflection. And so ad infinitum. That is the Buddhist conception of the universe in an image.". |
| Barbara DeAngelis |  | The journey between what you once were  and who you are now becoming  is where the dance of life really takes place. |
| Byron Katie | Loving What Is | I am a lover of what is. When I argue with reality, I lose—but only 100 percent of the time. |
| Byron Katie | Loving What Is | A thought is harmless unless we believe it. It is not our thoughts, but the *attachment* to our thoughts, that causes suffering. Attaching to a thought means believing that it’s true, without inquiring. A belief is a thought that we’ve been attaching to, often for years. |
| Byron Katie | Loving What Is | No one has ever been able to control his thinking, although people may tell the story of how they have. I don’t let go of my thoughts—I meet them with understanding. Then *they* let go of *me*. |
| Byron Katie | Loving What Is | How do I know that I don’t need what I want? I don’t have it |
| Clarissa Pinkola Estes | ““Our Inner Beings” | "In a single human being there are many other beings, all with their own values, motives, and devices. Some psychological technologieRumis suggest we arrest these beings, count them, name them, force them into harness till they shuffle along like vanquished slaves. But to do this would halt the dance of wildish lights in a woman's eyes; it would halt her heat lightning and arrest all throwing of sparks. Rather than corrupt her natural beauty, our work is to build for all these beings a wildish countryside wherein the artists among them can make, the lovers love, the healers heal."  page 39 of Women Who Run with the Wolves. |
| Clarissa Pinkola Estes | “Gifts of the 12 Fairies” | <http://www.amazon.com/Bedtime-Stories-Relaxation-Program-Entering/dp/1564559610/ref=pd_bbs_sr_4?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1221402929&sr=8-4> |
| Clarissa Pinkola Estes | An assignment from | A Prescription From Dr. E.  I assign you to be a beautiful, good, kind, awakened, soulful person, a true work of art as we say, ser humano, a true human being. In a world filled with so much darkness, such a soul shines like gold; can be seen from a far distance; is dramatically different.  Want to help? Show your deepest most divine self to the world. There is nothing more rare, more strange, more needed. Why would you wait? Not worthy? Oh piffle. Not ready? Okay, so when? Next lifetime? Don't be silly with me about this. Inferiority complex? Okay, let me put it this way to you: you're not good enough to think you're not good enough. And you can quote me to yourself whenever you have need... Dr. E. said so.  Have you forgotten that you made promises to your Beloved before you ever came to earth? The time to fulfill these is truly now. You want to cease feeling helpless, and you want to help the aching world? Serve someone and something. Everyone on earth serves someone and something. This means being your truest self now, fulfilling the promises you made to heaven long ago.  Anything you do from the soulful self will help lighten the burdens of the world. Anything. You have no idea what the smallest word, the tiniest generosity can cause to be set in motion. Be outrageous in forgiving. Be dramatic in reconciling. Mistakes? Back up and make them as right as you can, then move on. Be off the charts in kindness. In whatever you are called to, strive to be devoted to it in all aspects large and small. Fall short? Try again. Mastery is made in increments, not in leaps. Be brave, be fierce, be visionary. Mend the parts of the world that are "within your reach." To strive to live this way is the most dramatic gift you can ever give to the world.  Consider yourselves assigned.  No lack of love,  tu abuelita,  Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Ph.D. |
| David Whyte | The House of Belonging | I awoke this morning in the gold light turning this way and that thinking for a moment it was one day like any other. But the veil had gone from my darkened heart and I thought it must have been the quiet candlelight that filled my room, it must have been the first easy rhythm with which I breathed myself to sleep, it must have been the prayer I said speaking to the otherness of the night.  And I thought this is the good day you could meet your love, this is the black day someone close to you could die. This is the day you realize how easily the thread is broken between this world and the next and I found myself sitting up in the quiet pathway of light, the tawny close grained cedar burning round me like a fire and all the angels of this housely heaven ascending through the first roof of light the sun has made.    This is the bright home in which I live, this is where I ask my friends to come, this is where I want to love all the things it has taken me so long to learn to love.  This is the temple of my adult aloneness and I belong to that aloneness as I belong to my life.    There is no house like the house of belonging. |
| David Whyte: | "The Well Of Grief” | Those who will not slip beneath the still surface on the well of grief turning down to its black water to the place that we can not breathe will never know the source from which we drink the secret water cold and clear nor find in the darkness the small gold coins thrown by those who wished for something else |
| Dawna Markova | “Fully Alive” | I will not die an unlived life. I will not live in fear of falling or catching fire. I choose to inhabit my days, to allow my living to open me, to make me less afraid, more accessible, to loosen my heart until it becomes a wing, a torch, a promise. I choose to risk my significance;to live so that which came to me as seed goes to the next as blossom and that which came to me as blossom goes on as fruit. |
| Derek Walcott | Love After Love | The time will come When, with elation, You will greet yourself arriving  At your own door, in your own mirror, And each will smile at the other’s welcome, And say, sit here, Eat. You will love again the stranger who was your self. Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart To itself, to the stranger who has loved you. All your life, whom you ignored For another, who knows you by heart. Take down the love letters from the bookshelf, The photographs, the desparate notes, Peel your image from the mirror. Sit. Feast on your life. |
| Ellen Cooney | The Old Ballerina | I say to my pupils, "This is what we do. We want our souls to show themselves through some things that a body can do, which is a little like saying that, through a hole in a window shade about the size of a pinpoint, when the shade's pulled all the way down, you can make out a pinpoint of sunlight." |
| **Gary Zukav** | **The Mind of the Soul** | *Imagine that you are at a large house party. Some of the guests are kind, some angry, patient, gentle, jealous, and some are so rude that you wonder how they got invited. You recognize some of the guests but not others. The house represents your personality and the guests different parts of your personality. All have been invited by your Soul. You stand at the door greeting them. If you are not aware that each has an invitation from your Soul, you will welcome some, ignore others and try to throw others out. If you know how special the guests are, you will greet even the loud, jealous and frightened ones warmly and want to know them better. You are always at this party. If you welcome only the generous, gentle and caring guests, the angry, jealous and frightened guests will still be at the party and will continue to*  *quarrel with the others. You can try to ignore them, but their conflicts will remain.*  If you don’t meet all of your aspects – the guests you ignore don’t ignore you, they act out when your buttons are pushed. When you challenge these parts, no matter how strong they are, they begin to lose their power over you. When you ignore or indulge them, their power over you increases. They cause damage with undesirable consequences. When you meet them you can decide for yourself whether their intentions are your intentions. |
| Goethe | Epirrhema J. | “In the study of nature you must always consider each single thing as well as the whole. Nothing is inside, nothing is outside. For what is within, is without. So hurry onwards and try to grasp the Universally-open Holy Secret. Rejoice in the true illusion as well in the serious game; nothing alive is ever a one, always it is a many.” |
| Howard Thurman |  | Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive. |
| Jan Phillips | The Artists Creed | I believe i am worth the time it takes to create whatever i feel called to create. I believe that my work is worthy of its own space, Which is worthy of the name sacred. I believe that, when i enter this space, I have the right to work in silence, uninterrupted, For as long as i choose. I believe that the moment i open myself To the gifts of the muse, I open myself to the source of all creation And become one with the mother of life itself. I believe that my work is joyful, Useful and constantly changing, Flowing through me like a river with no beginning and no end. I believe that what it is i am called to do will make itself known When i have made myself ready. I believe that the time i spend creating my art is as precious As the time i spend giving to others. I believe that what truly matters in the making of art Is not what the final piece looks like or sounds like, Not what it is worth or not worth, But what newness gets added to the universe In the process of the piece itself becoming. I believe that i am not alone in my attempts to create, And that once i begin the work, settle into the strangeness,  The words will take shape, the form find life, and the spirit take flight. I believe that as the muse gives to me, So does she deserve from me: Faith, mindfulness, and enduring commitment. |
| Joan Chittister (www.benetvision.org) | “A Prayer for You” | May your journey through the universal questions of life bring you to a new moment of awareness. May it be an enlightening one. May you find embedded in the past, like all the students of life before you, the answers you are seeking now.   May they awaken that in you which is deeper than fact, truer than fiction, full of faith.  May you come to know that in every human event is a particle of the divine to which we turn for meaning here, to which we tend for fullness of life hereafter. |
| John O’Donohue |  | There is a sure place within you, where you have never been damaged or diminished, a place where there dwells serenity, courage, confidence, forgiveness and the endless adventure of imagination. |
| [John O’Donohue](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6224.John_O_Donohue) ([Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom](http://www.goodreads.com/book/quotes/74445)) | Coming Home to Yourself | Behind your image, below your words, above your thoughts, the silence of another world waits. A world lives within you. No-one else can bring you the news of this inner world.  When you cease to fear your solitude, a new creativity awakens within you. Your forgotten or neglected inner wealth begins to reveal itself. You come home to yourself and learn to rest within.  When you learn to love and let yourself be loved, you come home to the hearth of your own spirit. You are warm and sheltered. You are completely at one in the house of your own longing and belonging.  You need to be generous to yourself in order to receive the love that surrounds you. You can suffer from a desperate hunger to be loved. You can search long years in lonely places, far outside yourself. Yet the whole time, this love is but a few inches away from you. It is at the edge of your soul but you have been blind to its presence.  When a great moment knocks on the door of your life, it is often no louder than the beating of your heart, and it is very easy to miss it.  All the possibilities of your human destiny are asleep in your soul. |
| [John O’Donohue](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6224.John_O_Donohue) ([Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom](http://www.goodreads.com/book/quotes/74445)) |  | “If you try to avoid or remove the awkward quality, it will pursue you. The only effective way to still its unease is to transfigure it, to let it become something creative and positive that contributes to who you are.  Nietzche said that one of the best days in his life was the day when he rebaptized all his negative qualities as his best qualities. Rather than banishing what is at first glimpse unwelcome, you bring it home to unity with your life…..One of your sacred duties is to exercise kindness toward them. In a sense, you are called to be a loving parent to your delinquent qualiites” |
| John O’Donohue (Bantam Press 2007)  Benedictus: A Book of Blessings | For A New Beginning | In out-of-the-way places of the heart, Where your thoughts never think to wander, This beginning has been quietly forming, Waiting until you were ready to emerge.  For a long time it has watched your desire, Feeling the emptiness growing inside you, Noticing how you willed yourself on, Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.  It watched you play with the seduction of safety And the gray promises that sameness whispered, Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent, Wondered would you always live like this.  Then the delight, when your courage kindled, And out you stepped onto new ground, Your eyes young again with energy and dream, A path of plenitude opening before you.  Though your destination is not yet clear You can trust the promise of this opening; Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning That is one with your life’s desire.  Awaken your spirit to adventure; Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk; Soon you will be home in a new rhythm, For your soul senses the world that awaits you. |
| [John O’Donohue](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6224.John_O_Donohue) Anam Cara |  | “Your soul knows the geography of your destiny. Your soul alone has the map of your future, therefore you can trust this indirect, oblique side of yourself. If you do, it will take you where you need to go, but more important it will teach you a kindness of rhythm in your journey.” |
| John O’Donohue, from *Benedictus – A Book of Blessings*, Bantam Press, 2007] | “The Unknown Self” | So much of what delights and troubles you Happens on a surface You take for ground, Your mind thinks your life alone, Your eyes consider air your nearest neighbour, Yet it seems that a little below your heart There houses in you an unknown self Who prefers the patterns of the dark And is not persuaded by the eye’s affection Or caught by the flash of thought.  It is a self that enjoys contemplative patience With all your unfolding expression, Is never drawn to break into light Though you entangle yourself in unworthiness And misjudge what you do and who you are.  It presides within like an evening freedom That will often see you enchanted by twilight Without ever recognizing the falling night,  It resembles the under-earth of your visible life: All you do, and say and think is fostered Deep in its opaque and prevenient clay,  It dwells in a strange, yet rhythmic ease That is not ruffled by disappointment,  It presides in a deeper current of time Free from the force of cause and sequence That otherwise shapes your life.  Were it to break forth into day, Its dark light might quench your mind  For it knows how your primeval heart Sisters every cell of your life  To all your known mind would avoid,  Thus it knows to dwell in you gently, Offering you only discreet glimpses  Of how you construct your life. At times it will lead you strangely, Magnetized by some resonance That ambushes your vigilance.  It works most resolutely at night As the poet who draws your dreams, Creating for you many secret doors, Decorated with pictures of your hunger, It has the dignity of the angelic That knows you to your roots, Always awaiting your deeper befriending To take you beyond the threshold of want, Where all your diverse strainings. Can come to wholesome ease. |
| John O'Donohue | "Looking Out From Clare" | There’s a great spring in you all bud and blossom and March laughter I’ve always loved. Your face framed against the bay and the whisper of some arriving joke playing at the mouth, your lightning raid on the eternal melting the serious line to absurdity.  I look around and see the last days of winter broken away for all those  listening or watching, all come to life now with the first pale sun on their face  for many a month, remembering how to laugh.  But most of all I love the heft and weight and swing of that sea behind it all, some other tide racing toward the shore, or receding to the calmness  where no light or laughter lives for long.  The way you surface from those atmospheres gain and again, your emergence seems to make you a lover of horizons but your visitation of darkness shows.  Then away from you I can see you only alone on the strand walking to the sea on the north coast of Clare toward the end of an unendurable winter taking your first swim of the year.  The March scald of cold ocean even in May about to tighten and bud you into spring.  You look across to the mountains in Connemara framing, only for now,  your horizon.  You look and look, and look, beyond all looking. |
| [John O'Donohue](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6224.John_O_Donohue) ([To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Invocations and Blessings](http://www.goodreads.com/book/quotes/1211497)) | "For Equilibrium, a Blessing: | Like the joy of the sea coming home to shore, May the relief of laughter rinse through your soul.   As the wind loves to call things to dance, May your gravity by lightened by grace.   Like the dignity of moonlight restoring the earth, May your thoughts incline with reverence and respect.   As water takes whatever shape it is in, So free may you be about who you become.   As silence smiles on the other side of what's said, May your sense of irony bring perspective.   As time remains free of all that it frames, May your mind stay clear of all it names.   May your prayer of listening deepen enough to hear in the depths the laughter of god." |
| Juan Ramon Jiminez”  Translated by Robert Bly | “I Am Not I”  [The Winged Energy of Delight](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/redirect?link_code=ur2&camp=1789&tag=poetrychaikha-20&creative=9325&path=ASIN/0060575867/), | I am not I. I am this one walking beside me whom I do not see, whom at times I manage to visit, and whom at other times I forget; the one who remains silent while I talk, the one who forgives, sweet, when I hate, the one who takes a walk when I am indoors, the one who will remain standing when I die. |
| Kabir | You know that the seed | You know that the seed is inside the horse chestnut tree And inside the seed there are the blossoms of the tree, and the chestnuts, and the shade. So inside the human body there is the seed, and inside the seed there is the human body again.  Fire, air, earth, water and space –if you don’t want the secret one, You can’t have these either.  Thinkers, listen, tell me what you know of that is not inside the soul? Take a pitcher full of water and set it down on the water – Now it has water inside and water outside. We mustn’t give it a name, Lest silly people start talking again about the body and the soul.  If you want the truth, I’ll tell you the truth: Listen to the secret sound, the real sound, which is inside you. The one no one talks of speaks the secret sound to himself, And he is the one who has made it all. |
| Kabir | “I have been thinking...” | I have been thinking of the difference between water and the waves on it. Rising, water’s still water, falling back, it is water, will you give me a hint  how to tell them apart? Because someone has made up the word “wave,” do I have to distinguish it from water? There is a Secret One inside us; the planets in all the galaxies pass through his hands like beads. That is a string of beads one should look at with luminous eyes. |
| Kabir | The musk is inside the deer | “The musk is inside the deer, but the deer does not look for it. It wanders around looking for grass.” |
| Kabir  edited by Robert Bly | The Soul Is Here for Its Own Joy | The Soul Is Here for Its Own Joy. Are you looking for me? I am in the next seat.  My shoulder is against yours. You will not find me in stupas, not in Indian shrine rooms, nor in synagogues, nor in cathedrals: not in masses, nor kirtans, not in legs winding around your own neck, nor in eating nothing but vegetables. When you really look for me, you will see me instantly — you will find me in the tiniest house of time.  Kabir says: Student, tell me, what is God?  He is the breath inside the breath. |
| Lisa Colt  Claiming the Spirit Within - | “Prayer” A Sourcebook of Women’s Poetry edited by Marilyn Sewell | May we reveal our abundance without shame. May we peel back our sleeping wintery layers like snake skins, like the silk chrysalis like clothing cast off during love. May we unravel with abandon like lover’s knots before knitting ourselves back to the heart. May we settle into our own rhythms as tides do-within the borders of the moon’s calling. May the music of our souls be accompanied by grand gestures and the persistent clapping of hummingbird’s wings. May the milky fingers of the moon reach down nightly to cherish and unveil us. May we turn our bodies generously in its light like tranquil fish glinting underwater, like precious stones. When we open our mouths to sing may the seasons pause in their long journey to listen and applaud. |
| Macrina Wiederkehr  a poem from “Seasons of Your Heart”  By | The Sacrament of Letting Go – | Slowly she celebrated the sacrament of Letting Go... First she surrendered her Green then the Orange, Yellow, and Red. Finally she let go of her Brown. Shedding her last leaf she stood empty and silent, stripped bare. Leaning against the sky she began her vigil of trust. Shedding her last leaf she watched its journey to the ground. She stood in silence wearing the color of emptiness, her branches wondering: How do you give shade, with so much gone? And then, the sacrament of waiting began. The sunrise and sunset watched with tenderness, clothing her with silhouettes they kept her hope alive. They helped her understand that her vulnerability her dependence and need  her emptiness her readiness to receive were giving her a new kind of beauty. Every morning and every evening she stood in silence and celebrated the sacrament of waiting. |
| Mark Nepo | “Breaking Surface” | Let no one keep you from your journey, no rabbi or priest, no mother who wants you to dig for treasures she misplaced, no father who won’t let one life be enough, no lover who measures their worth by what you might give up, no voice that tells you in the night it can’t be done.  Let nothing dissuade you from seeing what you see or feeling the winds that make you want to dance alone or go where no one has yet to go.  You are the only explorer. Your heart, the unreadable compass. Your soul, the shore of a promise too great to be ignored. |
| Mark Nepo | “Walking North” | No matter how I turn the magnificent light follows. Background to my sadness.  No matter how I lift my heart my shadow creeps in wait behind. Background to my joy.  No matter how fast I run a stillness without thought is where I end.  No matter how long I sit there is a river of motion I must rejoin.  And when I can’t hold my head up it always falls in the lap of one who has just opened. When I finally free myself of burden there is always someone’s heavy head landing in my arms.  The reasons of the heart are leaves in wind. Stand up tall and everything  will nest in you. We all lose and we all gain. Dark crowds the light. Light fills the pain.  It is a conversation with no end a dance with no steps a song with no words  a reason too big for any mind. No matter how I turn the magnificence follows. |
| Mary Oliver | “Wild Geese” | You don’t have to crawl on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.  You just have to let the soft animal of your body. Love what it loves.  Tell me about despair, yours and I will tell you mine.  Meanwhile the world goes on.  Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain are moving across the landscapes over the prairies and deep trees, the mountains and the rivers.  Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air, are heading home again.  Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting, over and over announcing your place in the family of things. |
| Mary Oliver | “The Summer’s Day” | Who made the world?  Who made the swan, and the black bear?  Who made the grasshopper?  This grasshopper, I mean–  The one who flung herself out of the grass,  The one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  Who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—  Who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.  Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.  Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.  I don’t know exactly what a prayer is.  I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down  Into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,  How to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,  Which is what I have been doing all day.  Tell me, what else should I have done?  Doesn’t everything die at last, and too soon?  Tell me, what is it you plan to do  With your one wild and precious life? |
| Mary Oliver | “The Pond” | Every year the lilies are so perfect I can hardly believe their lapped light crowding the black, mid-summer ponds.  Nobody could count all of them – the muskrats swimming among the pads and the grasses can reach out their muscular arms and touch  Only so many, they are that rife and wild. But what in this world is perfect?  I bend closer and see how this one is clearly lopsided – and that one wears an orange blight – and this one is a glossy cheek half nibbled away – and that one is a slumped purse full of its own unstoppable decay.  Still, what I want in my life is to be willing to be dazzled – to cast aside the weight of facts and maybe even to float a little above this difficult world. I want to believe I am looking into the white fire of a great mystery.  I want to believe that the imperfections are nothing – that the light is everything – that it is more than the sum of each flawed blossom rising and fading.  And I do. |
| Mary Oliver: | “The Journey” | One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began, though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice–though the whole house began to tremble and you felt the old tug at your ankles. “Mend my life!” each voice cried. But you didn’t stop. You knew what you had to do, though the wind pried with its stiff fingers at the very foundations, though their melancholy was terrible. It was already late enough, and a wild night, and the road full of fallen branches and stones. But little by little, as you left their voices behind, the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds, and there was a new voice which you slowly recognized as your own, that kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper into the world, determined to do the only thing you could do–determined to save the only life you could save. |
| Mary Oliver: | “In Blackwater Woods” | Look, the trees are turning their own bodies into pillars of light, are giving off the rich fragrance of cinnamon and fulfillment, the long tapers of cattails are bursting and floating away over the blue shoulders of the ponds, and every pond, no matter what its name is, is nameless now. Every year everything I have ever learned in my lifetime leads back to this: the fires and the black river of loss whose other side is salvation, whose meaning none of us will ever know.  To live in this world you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go. |
| Mary Oliver: | “Some Questions You Might Ask” | Is the soul solid, like iron? Or is it tender and breakable, like the wings of a moth in the beak of an owl? Who has it, and who doesn’t? I keep looking around me. The face of the moose is as sad as the face of Jesus. The swan opens her white wings slowly. In the fall, the black bear carries leaves into the darkness. One question leads to another. Does it have a shape? Like an iceberg? Like the eye of a hummingbird? Does it have one lung, like the snake and the scallop? Why should I have it, and not the anteater who loves her children? Why should I have it, and not the camel? Come to think of it, what about maple trees? What about the blue iris? What about all the little stones, sitting alone in the moonlight? What about roses, and lemons, and their shining leaves? What about the grass? |
| Maya Angelou |  | “A bird doesn’t sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.” – |
| Naomi Shihab Nye | Kindness. Part of a poem: | Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside, you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing. You must wake up with sorrow, You must speak to it till your voice catches the thread of all sorrows and you see the size of the cloth.    Then it is only kindness that makes sense any more, only kindness that ties your shoes and sends you out into the day to mail letters and purchase bread,  only kindness that raises its head from the crowd of the world to say  It is I you have been looking for, and then goes with you everywhere  like a shadow or a friend. |
| Orson Card | Memory of Earth | What the voice of the Oversoul said inside Nafai's mind was this: If I had taken away the desire for violence then humanity would not have been humanity. No that human beings need to be violent in order to be human, but if you ever lose the will to control, the will to destroy, then it must be because you chose to lose it. My role was not to force you to be gentle and kind; it was to keep you alive while you decided for yourselves what kind of people you wanted to be. |
| Pablo Neruda | “Poetry” | And it was at that age ... Poetry arrived in search of me. I don’t know, I don’t know where it came from, from winter or a river. I don’t know how or when, no they were not voices, they were not words, nor silence, but from a street I was summoned, from the branches of night, abruptly from the others, among violent fires or returning alone, there I was without a face and it touched me.  I did not know what to say, my mouth had no way with names, my eyes were blind, and something started in my soul, fever or forgotten wings, and I made my own way, deciphering that fire, and I wrote the first faint line, faint, without substance, pure nonsense, pure wisdom if someone who knows nothing, and suddenly I saw the heavens unfastened and open, planets, palpitating plantations, shadow perforated, riddled with arrows, fire and flowers, the winding night, the universe.  And I, infinitesimal being, drunk with the great starry void, likeness, image of mystery, felt myself a pure part of the abyss, I wheeled with the stars, my heart broke loose on the wind. |
| Patrick O’Leary | The Gift | “Do you see what happened to the King?” the Teller asked. “He got a bad story in him.” “I see that you do not understand. Listen, then. There are stories that hide themselves inside of us like bats inside a cave. For instance:” “There once was a woman from Sottom’s Bay. A bad story got inside her and she was so young she believed it. Her husband was a harbor guard and he worked all night, and once a week she’d wake him at dawn to say what a pretty sunrise it was. And when her husband would growl at her, as any man might, she’d first look hurt, and then look huffy, and then she wouldn’t speak to him for days.” The married men on deck laughed. “You see, somebody told her a story once – someone she needed, someone she loved. And the point of the story was that she was bad. And she believed it. A bad story like that gets inside of you and there’s only one thing to do: Prove it. Tell it over and over again, the way you tongue an aching tooth.” “So she’d irritate her man until he’d bark, and she’d feel justified. She’d take her revenge, but on the wrong person, and she’d feel powerful. She would decide when she would be hurt. She could keep the illusion that the bad story was not about her but him. She could believe she was the Teller, not the Tale.” “It was easier to feel her husband’s better and pretend she didn’t care what he thought of her than to feel the poison tale inside. It is easier to tongue a bad tooth than to face the pain of extraction.” “It is always easier to keep a rotten tale than to learn a new one.” |
| Rachel Ramen  taken form Margaret J. Wheatley’s [Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time](http://www.margaretwheatley.com/findingourway.html) | “Everything Has A Deep Dream” | I’ve spent many years learning how to fix life, only to discover at the end of the day that life is not broken.  There is a hidden seed of greater wholeness in everyone and everything.  We serve life best when we water it and befriend it. When we listen before we act. In befriending life, we do not make things happen according to our own design. We uncover something that is already happening in us and around us and create conditions that enable it.  Everything is moving toward its place of wholeness always struggling against odds. Everything has a deep dream of itself and its fulfillment. |
| Rainier Maria Rilke | From Letters to a Young Poet, by | You must give birth to your images. They are the future waiting to be born. Fear not the strangeness you feel. The future must enter you long before it happens. Just wait for the birth, for the hour of new clarity. |
| Robert Bly |  | “So the person who has eaten his shadow spreads calmness, and shows more grief than anger. If the ancients were right that darkness contains intelligence and nourishment and even information, then the person who has eaten some of his or her shadow is more energetic as well as more intelligent. |
| Robert Fulghum | Crayon Bomb | “Maybe we should develop a Crayola bomb as our next secret weapon. A happiness weapon. A beauty bomb. And every time a crisis developed, we would launch one. It would explode high in the air–explode softly –and send thousands, millions, of little parachutes into the air. Floating down to earth–boxes of Crayolas. And we wouldn’t go cheap, either–not little boxes of eight. Boxes of sixty-four, with the sharpener built right in. With silver and gold and copper, magenta and peach and lime, amber and umber and all the rest. And people would smile and get a little funny look on their faces and cover the world with imagination.”  How about we all buy a box of crayons today (you SO deserve 64 colors and don’t let anyone tell you different), or find the one we have hidden deep in the recesses of [the place we call home](http://37days.typepad.com/37days/2008/05/where-is-home.html), draw a 3” square on a piece of paper, color it, perhaps even post it. What color is today? Tomorrow? We should be corny more often, perhaps. We should certainly use crayons more often |
| Robert Gen | Artist Prayer | The world's engagement of beauty is my bible, And Art is my religion.  I come to it as a child, and I add all the grown wisdom I can gather.  Creativity is my salvation. My easel is my altar.  My paints are the sacraments.  My brush is my soul’s movement,  And to do poorly, or not to work, is a sin. |
| Rumi |  | Out beyond ideas of wrong doing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there... |
| Rumi Mevlâna Jalâluddîn Rumi translated by Coleman Barks | “Be Melting Snow” | Totally conscious, and apropos of nothing, you come to see me. Is someone here? I ask. The moon. The full moon is inside your house.  My friends and I go running out into the street. I’m in here, comes a voice from the house, but we aren’t listening. We’re looking up at the sky. My pet nightingale sobs like a drunk in the garden. Ringdoves scatter with small cries, Where, Where. It’s midnight. The whole neighborhood is up and out in the street thinking, The cat burglar has come back. The actual thief is there too, saying out loud, Yes, the cat burglar is somewhere in this crowd. No one pays attention.  Lo, I am with you always means when you look for God, God is in the look of your eyes, in the thought of looking, nearer to you than your self, or things that have happened to you There’s no need to go outside.  Be melting snow. Wash yourself of yourself. A white flower grows in quietness. Let your tongue become that flower. |
| Rumi: | “The Guesthouse”, | This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival. A joy, a depression, a meanness, Some momentary awareness comes As an unexpected visitor. Welcome and entertain them all! Even if they’re a crowd of sorrows, Who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture, still, treat each guest honorably. He may be clearing you out for some new delight. |
| Suzie Wolfer | “The Dilemma of the Acorn” | An acorn fell from a magnificent oak tree.  It landed on fertile ground, content and safe inside its shell.  Then one day, after the sun shone and the rains had showered, as spring turned into summer. a strange thing happened. The acorn started to outgrow its shell.   Its shell started to crack.  The grand design coded deep in every cell of the acorn, the blueprint of the oak tree, began to reveal itself.  The acorn quivered in its dilemma – to hold on or to let go.   Both seemed impossible.  Then in a moment of insight,  it perceived a new possibility.  As it decided to relax its hold, the cap popped off, and the swollen shell fell away from the tender seed.  The acorn’s old identity fell away with it's shell.   Tiny roots searched for the cool darkness of the earth .  .  .  And after a rest, a tender green shoot emerged from deep within the heart of the acorn and reached for the sun. As the acorn opened, the oak tree took  its place. |
| Tina Tau McMahon | “What does this mean?” | What we are looking for is who is looking –St. Francis  What does this mean? The water flows along and we watch it, silver and clear  against the rocks, cold, sliding, foaming, settling, never the same but continual, a deep and elegant movement over the pebbles; we watch, looking for that same movement in ourselves, the way to flow as liberally, as endlessly, to just pour, to let go and ride the hillside down to the sea.  And who is watching the river? Could it be that we are not lost at all, not ever—that if we could be still enough on the riverbank or here in the quiet kitchen, could sit down with the one in us who notices everything but does not judge,  who keeps our soul awake inside us even when we have blurred ourselves  into oblivion, that we would be leaf-boats afloat on the safe and endless water: that we would wake up and find ourselves at home. |