

Turning Toward One Another _____

You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years trying to get other people interested in you.

Dale Carnegie

I think of a gesture of love as anything we do that helps others discover their humanity. Any act where we turn to one another. Open our hearts. Extend ourselves. Listen. Anytime we're patient. Curious. Quiet. Engaged.... Paulo Friere described love as "an act of courage, not of fear."

We are different so that we can know our need of one another, for no one is ultimately self-sufficient. A completely self-sufficient person would be sub-human.

Desmond Tutu

Good conversation connects us such that we discover we were never as separate as we thought. As we share our different human experiences we rediscover a sense of unity. And as an added joy, we also discover our collective wisdom. We see how we can be wise together. For conversation to take us into this deeper realm, these things are very important:

- we acknowledge one another as equals
- we try to stay curious about each other
- we recognize that we need each others help to become better listeners
- we slow down so we have time to think and reflect
- we remember that conversation is the natural way humans think together
- we expect it to be messy at times....

Margaret Wheatly

READINGS AND MEDITATIONS

To Share with Family and Friends...

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People's Church*

There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

Ask "What's possible?" not "What's wrong?" Keep asking.

Notice what you care about. Assume that many others share your dreams.

Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.
Talk to people you know.
Talk to people you don't know.
Talk to people you never talk to.

Be intrigued by the differences you hear.
Expect to be surprised
Treasure curiosity more than certainty.

Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible.
Acknowledge that everyone is an expert in something.
Know that creative solutions come from new connections.

Remember, you don't fear people whose story you know.
Real listening always brings people closer together.

Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.

Rely on human goodness. Stay together.

Margaret Wheatly

Mealtime Graces and Blessings

Spirit of Life, we are grateful to be together again.
We are thankful for good food to eat, and the health to enjoy it,
and for the love that binds us together and sustains us.
May we never forget this love;
may it strengthen us for whatever life brings to us.
May we be loyal and loving to one another,
may we be sensitive, caring and generous to those who are in need
and so may our lives be blessings to the world.

Adapted from Anthony Perrino

Let us send our gratitude to all that has given of itself this day.
The strong beans, and the hardy grains, the beautiful leafy green plants and
sweet juicy fruits. I thank the sun that warmed them, just as it does me, and
the earth that held and nourished them, just as it does me, and the waters
that refreshed them, just as they do for me.
I thank the fire that transformed them, just as I wish to be transformed by
the fires of the spirit. I thank the hands that grew and prepared this food, just
as I thank all those that have touched me in life-giving ways.

Sedonia Cahill

Daily Practice

God loves a cheerful giver.

– II Corinthians

In India we have a story about a man who was the perfect model of
respectability, who always did what the letter of the law demanded. When he
died, he was taken before the cosmic auditor. The auditor looked at the man's
record. There was not a single entry on the debit page. The auditor was
impressed. Then he turned to the credit page and stared in astonishment.
This page, too, was completely blank. He didn't know what to do. The man
had never helped anybody; never hurt anybody; never offended anybody;
never loved anybody. He couldn't be sent to heaven, but he couldn't be sent
to hell, either.

So the cosmic keeper of the books took him to the god of creation,
and said, "You made this guy. What shall I do with him?"
The Creator looked at the statute books and couldn't find a precedent to
cover the case. And since this is a Hindu story, he said, "Take him to
Krishna."

Krishna said, "The buck stops here." He examined the record very
carefully and there, almost illegible, was an ancient credit entry: "Gave two
cents to a beggar at the age of six." "There," Sri Krishna said, "return his two
cents and send him back to earth to try again." Until we have learned to give
freely of ourselves, we have not learned how to live.

10 Precepts for A Healthy Life

1. Not to kill, but to cherish all life.
2. Not to steal, but to respect the things of others.
3. Not to misuse sex, but to be respectful in mind and action
4. Not to lie, but to speak the truth
5. Not to misuse drugs or alcohol, but to keep the mind clear.
6. Not to speak of other's faults, but to be understanding and sympathetic.
7. Not to praise oneself and condemn others, but to overcome one's own shortcomings.
8. Not to withhold spiritual or material aid, but to give it freely when needed.
9. Not to get angry, but to exercise self-restraint.
10. Not to put down the community, but to respect and strengthen it.

Readings on Healing and Wholeness

Fear does not gladden.

Healing does.

Fear always makes exceptions.

Healing never does.

Fear produces dissociation because it induces separation.

Healing always produces harmony, because it proceeds from integration.

From A Course in Miracles

I am not a mechanism, an assembly of various sections.
And it is not because the mechanism is working wrongly
that I am ill.

I am ill because of wounds to the soul, to the deep emotional self
and the wounds to the soul can take a long, long time,
only time can help
and patience, and a certain difficult repentance, long difficult repentance
realisation of life's mistake
and the freeing of oneself
from the endless repetition of the mistake

which mankind at large has chosen to sanctify.

D.H. Lawrence

Write the wrongs that are done to you in the sand, but write the good things
that happen to you on a piece of marble. Let go of all emotions such as
resentment and retaliation, which diminish you, and hold onto the emotions,
such as joy and gratitude, which increase you.

Arabic proverb