



# The Book Of Values

Yael Eylat-Tanaka

# **Yael Eylat-Tanaka**

## **The Book Of Values**

### **Аннотация**

A compendium of moral values discussed as social imperatives, rather than under the mantle of religion. Listed alphabetically, values ranging from Acceptance, Allegiance, Beauty, Work and Zeal are written in poetic prose accessible to everyone.

Society has become all too casual, from attire to speech. Behavior has followed suit, as have attitudes and sentiments. Within the pages of this book are time-honored principles that are as relevant today as they have always been, and do not impede freedom in society, but rather encourage harmony and a healthy expression of societal conventions.

Morality is as applicable to today's lifestyle as it was in the past.

Our moral values have not been lost. They are sometimes displayed in magnificent glory, as in the memorial museum of 9/11; at other times, they seem to lie dormant. Yet, they are present in all of us, and like the seedling that bursts through the fresh snow, they ultimately lift up their hearts and shine toward the light.

# Содержание

Copyright	6
Other books by this author	7
Preface	13
Introduction	15
Acceptance	17
Accountability	19
Allegiance	21
Ambition	22
Appreciation	23
Beauty	24
Benevolence	26
Bravery	27
Bushido	28
Caring	30
Caution	31
Character	32
Chastity	33
Cheerfulness	34
Commitment	36
Compassion	38
Confidence	39
Consideration	40
Contentment	41

Cooperation	42
Courage	43
Courtesy	45
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	46

The Book of Values  
An Inspirational Guide to Our Moral Dilemmas  
####

**Yaël Eylat-Tanaka**

# Copyright

**Copyright 2014 © Yaël Eylat-Tanaka.** The Book of Values. All rights reserved forever. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, graphic, electronic, or mechanical without express written permission from the author.

**Legal Disclaimer:** The contents of this book represent the views of its author. No warranty as to the efficacy and appropriateness of the advice and techniques mentioned or alluded to should be inferred. The author hereby disclaims any personal or professional loss or liability caused or alleged to be caused, directly or indirectly, by the use of the information herein presented.

# Other books by this author

Common Bits of Life

Diet Proof Your Life

Publish Your Book Using CreateSpace

Publish Your Book on Kindle

Publish Your Book With NOOKPress

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Copyright](#)

[Other books by this author](#)

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Acceptance](#)

[Accountability](#)

[Allegiance](#)

[Ambition](#)

[Appreciation](#)

[Beauty](#)

[Benevolence](#)

[Bravery](#)

[Bushido](#)

[Caring](#)

[Caution](#)

[Character](#)

[Chastity](#)

Cheerfulness

Commitment

Compassion

Confidence

Consideration

Contentment

Cooperation

Courage

Courtesy

Creativity

Curiosity

Decorum

Defiance

Dependability

Detachment

Determination

Devotion

Diligence

Discernment

Discipline

Discretion

Eloquence

Empathy

Endurance

Enthusiasm

Ethics

Excellence

Faith

Faithfulness

Fidelity

Flexibility

Focus

Forbearance

Forgiveness

Fortitude

Freedom

Friendship

Frugality

Generosity

Gentleness

Grace

Graciousness

Gratitude

Grit

Happiness

Helpfulness

Honesty

Honor

Hope

Humility

Humor

Idealism

Impartiality

Innocence

Integrity

Joy

Justice

Kindness

Knowledge/Study

Love

Loyalty

Meekness

Mercy

Modesty

Moderation

Morality

Moxie/Mettle

Nobility

Openness

Optimism

Orderliness

Patience

Peace

Perfection

Perseverance/Persistence

Piety

Pleasure

Politeness

Pride

Prudence

Punctuality

Purity

Purposefulness

Reliability

Remorse

Reputation

Resilience

Resolve

Resourcefulness

Responsibility

Restraint

Righteousness

Self-Respect

Sensitivity

Serenity

Silence

Simplicity

Sincerity

Sobriety

Spontaneity

Steadfastness

Substance

Tact

Temperance

[Tenacity](#)

[Thrift](#)

[Tolerance](#)

[Toughness](#)

[Tranquility](#)

[Tribute](#)

[Trustworthiness](#)

[Truth](#)

[Understanding](#)

[Valor](#)

[Veracity](#)

[Vitality](#)

[Virtue](#)

[Wisdom](#)

[Wonder](#)

[Work](#)

[Zeal](#)

[About The Author](#)

# Preface

## WHY THIS BOOK

Society has become all too casual, from attire to speech. Behavior has followed suit, as have attitudes and sentiments. Within the pages of this book are time-honored principles that are as relevant today as they have always been, and do not impede freedom in society, but rather encourage harmony and a healthy expression of societal conventions. Morality is as applicable to today's lifestyle as it was in the past.

Our moral values have not been lost. They are sometimes displayed in magnificent glory, as in the memorial museum of 9/11; at other times, they seem to lie dormant. Yet, they are present in all of us, and like the seedling that bursts through the fresh snow, they ultimately lift up their hearts and shine toward the light.

I have written this book without wishing to preach, without invoking religion, and without championing a particular philosophy. It is clear, however, that certain behaviors cause more problems than they solve, and therefore, it might behoove us to examine our thinking and belief systems so as to engender as much pleasure and happiness as possible for ourselves and those we interact with. This book should not be taken as a taskmaster, but should serve as a beacon, a guidepost to thought, and behavior.

You may find that some quotes and the text that follows, overlap; indeed, some of the values described share in significance and connotation.

The quotes herein are taken from historical luminaries, as well as from contemporary celebrities. I have attempted as best I can to assign proper attribution to each.

Yaël Eylat-Tanaka, 2014

####

# Introduction

*“Aspire to decency. Practice civility toward one another. Admire and emulate ethical behavior wherever you find it. Apply a rigid standard of morality to your lives; and if, periodically, you fail as you surely will adjust your lives, not the standards.”*

~ **Ted Koppel**

From the beginning of time, moral codes have governed society. Morals were a set of rules for behavior that made it possible for living things to coexist. Those living things comprise not only human beings, but also certain members of the animal kingdom – lions, hyenas, wolves, and several other species. Rules had to be developed in order to establish an acceptable pecking order and ascribe a role for the alpha male’s status versus the young male vis-à-vis mating or feeding rights within that society, all for the purpose of smooth coexistence and harmonious interaction of the group members. While the pecking order among animals has remained fairly constant and predictable in establishing acceptable behavior, such is not the case among humans has not.

As civilization evolved, many of the rules that had been so useful in promoting and sustaining successful societies have been examined, tested, and reconfigured in favor of the current much more relaxed, devil-may-care attitude that reflects upon all facets of contemporary society, from lack of scruples in business to

Wall Street greed and mendacity; from politics to the marital bed. Such overhaul in attitudes has also resulted in the epidemic of anxiety and depression that are rampant throughout the modern world.

This is not a summons to don the mantle of the cloth, or an endorsement to espouse a particular faith. It is about the timeless relevance of some rules of behavior that encompass much more than mere superficial courtesies; rules of behavior that are universal, that reach across our entire lives, both within our psyche and among our brethren.

Humans are flawed. We are endowed with all the qualities and potentials that can make us heroes or villains. It is a matter of choice, then, to decide the path our life will take, our role in the world, and the legacy we leave behind.

Wise men and women have spoken these thoughts before. From the eloquent lips of Winston Churchill to the ministerial heartfelt hopes of Mandela, from Michael Jackson and Oprah Winfrey to George Washington and Voltaire. Peace, faith, and charity are not simply lofty words heard from the pulpit; they are not old-fashioned and irrelevant – on the contrary: they are as relevant and significant today as they ever were.

Find your soul amid these words.

#####

# Acceptance

*"For after all, the best thing one can do when it is raining is let it rain."* ~**Henry Wadsworth-Longfellow**

Our lives are marred by change. Change is the only constant. Yet, how often do we endeavor to change our environment, change the people in it, or their reactions and consequent behaviors? Change oftentimes is beyond our control. From inclement weather at inappropriate times to the behavior of others, we cannot change what has been, nor largely manipulate what will be. Our childhood memories are emblazoned in our minds, sometimes intact, oftentimes distorted by emotions and interpretations; and what happened a second ago, such as a bit of bad news, is just as much part of our past. Yet we spin our wheels, tormenting ourselves with thoughts of what could have been, what we might have done differently, what we might have said, or indeed, what others could have or should have said or done, with nary a thought to the impossibility of changing what is.

If a friend said something hurtful, it is pointless to think of what she *should* have said; it is senseless to lie awake at night thinking of what we could have replied in retort. It is done. It is in the past. There is only acceptance of what is. It may have been hurtful, and our pained feelings must be acknowledged and accepted. Indeed, it is only from the point of acceptance that any

change can occur.

Stop engaging in mental calisthenics worrying about what you cannot change.

# Accountability

*“It is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one's acts.” ~Mahatma Gandhi*

A popular buzz phrase has evolved in our everyday lexicon: I am responsible. Everyone, it seems, from CEOs to politicians, is donning a mantle of “responsibility.” The word – and sentiment – has become so prevalent and popular, that it is almost losing its meaning. This is evidenced by some flowery speeches from some notables who mouth the words, but seem to escape without the consequences of such “assumed” responsibility.

What does it mean to be responsible? Without justifying mistakes, rationalizing poor judgment, or blaming misinformation, how do we manage this onus of responsibility? Can we find compelling reasons to explain away a situation?

To be responsible for one's actions and the outcomes of one's choices and decisions means that the onus is on us. Completely. We create everything that happens to us, good and bad. Indeed, nothing happens of its own. We are not victims; we are not helpless. Everything in our lives is there because of some choice we made. We cannot blame others for whatever predicament we are in.

The concept that we create everything in our lives is sometimes very difficult to accept, because it can be a formidable weight to grapple with. However, it is also extremely liberating,

because if we realize that we created something undesirable, however unconsciously or inadvertently, we can also create the opposite. We do not have to wait on the charity of others to get us out of our misery.

When events beyond our control wreak havoc, we still bear the responsibility of how we will react to those events. A major disaster, an illness, a death - all can be learning and growing opportunities, sharpening the blade, strengthening the twig.

Whatever the situation may be - joblessness, obesity, broken relationship - by accepting that we are at the center of the situation, and that we played a role in the situation, releases us from fretfulness, and begins to open doors to solutions and a redesigned life.

# Allegiance

*“Truth is a tyrant - the only tyrant to whom we can give our allegiance. The service of truth is a matter of heroism.” ~John F. Kennedy*

Allegiance is commitment to a cause or a people. It is loyalty, and the willingness to follow a purported hero, or submit to the rules of a cause. Allegiance to a sports team, for example, would include cheering them in glory or failure, yet retaining one's loyalty despite repeated losses. Allegiance to a television character is likewise displayed in a willingness to follow the character's actions throughout the series. One demonstrates allegiance to one's family when its members are less than completely appealing. Loyalty does not diminish when allegiance is strong.

# Ambition

*“Intelligence without ambition is a bird without wings.”*

**~Salvador Dali**

How does ambition fit in with values? Have we not all heard that ambition is evil, driving men to all forms of unscrupulous behavior? Indeed. However, ambition also has a motivating trait: that of impelling action. It is all well and good to come up with a bright idea; but how shall we implement it? Ambition is the hunger that compels us to achieve a desired goal, through hard work and determination; through curiosity and moxie.

# Appreciation

*“Dwell on the beauty of life. Watch the stars, and see yourself running with them.” ~ Marcus Aurelius*

Appreciation is the recognition of something. The word is used to denote thanks, and in fact, appreciation is closely connected with acknowledgment – for a job well done, or for the gifts one has been given, both material and otherwise. Appreciate what you have, in all its glory. When someone says, “I appreciate that,” it usually means thank you. But appreciation as an inner value goes much more deeply: It acknowledges and recognizes deeply felt contributions and gifts.

Recognition for a job well done is a gift, given freely and sincerely. Sincerity cannot be faked. Sincere appreciation is not flattery. Flattery does not feel genuine, and therefore does not feel good; in fact, it may actually feel demeaning and patronizing. But sincere acknowledgment is also deeply felt. The words used, the way they are used, the body language, and the situation in which they are used are all essential underpinnings of what is genuine, deserved, and ultimately pleasurable approval and thanks.

# Beauty

“For Attractive lips, speak words of kindness.

For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people.

For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry.

For beautiful hair, let a child run their fingers through it once a day.

For poise, walk with the knowledge that you never walk alone.

People, more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed, and redeemed.

Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, you will find one at the end of each of your arms.

*As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself and the other for helping others.” ~ Sam Levenson*

The great philosopher, Mortimer Adler, spoke about aesthetics, or what beauty means beyond personal taste or conventional agreement. In everyday speech, when people use words such as "beauty" or "beautiful," they typically mean something they subjectively think is pleasing to the eye. The concept of philosophical aesthetics somehow has escaped conventional consciousness.

St. Thomas Aquinas' definition of beauty as that which pleases upon being seen tends to support subjectivism. For "being seen," substitute "being beheld." What Aquinas is saying is that which,

when beheld, gives us pleasure, we call beautiful. Different persons get pleasure of this sort from different objects. They differ in their tastes. What one person finds enjoyable, another might behold with no pleasure at all.

However, there is another aspect of beauty that most people fail to consider. In addition to the enjoyable, there is the admirable. What makes one object more admirable than another is some excellence in the object itself? Leonardo da Vinci described the Golden Triangle as the special symmetry that results in a pleasing appearance.

There are those who still doubt that there is an objective aspect to beauty. What makes something beautiful and admirable frequently is its own excellence, its own inherent traits, rather than the subjective sense of the beholder.

Beauty is the characteristic of a person, animal, place, or idea that offers a perceptual impression of pleasure or satisfaction. It is the interpretation of something as being in harmony with nature. It may even give rise to feelings of well being, and so is believed to be useful as a survival tool.

# Benevolence

*“You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.” ~ **John Bunyan***

Benevolence is the act of doing good – not for political recognition; not for acknowledgement of any kind; not for a medal; and not as a line entry on a resume. Benevolence is an act of kindness done for its own sake. There is no heroism here, no seeking adulation. It is a silent act whose only reward is inwardly felt.

# Bravery

*“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.” ~Nelson Mandela*

The brave are not braver than you or I. They do not sport a mantle brighter or stronger. Their spines are not made of steel. They have simply learned to face their enemies, confront their demons, accept that fear is a force that protects rather than destroys. The brave are simply those who have befriended their fear.

# Bushido

*"The best fighter is never angry."* ~**Laozi**

The concept of bushido is foreign to the West. Its purest meaning is honor, or upstanding moral values. However, in the Japanese tradition of the days of the samurai, the code of bushido was deep indeed. It encompassed all of life.

The samurai were agents selected for their bravery to protect their master. Their master could have been anyone in a position of authority, from emperor to lower-ranked officials. The importance of the samurai tradition was their complete and total allegiance to their master, in all matters, including unto death.

The violent life of the samurai was mitigated by a philosophy of wisdom and serenity. It was their duty to defend their master to the death, but honor required that their killing be moderated by wisdom, never by anger. The tenets of bushido had to be practiced daily with study and meditation. In the words of William Scott Wilson, *Ideals of the Samurai: Writings of Japanese Warriors* (Kodansha, 1982), "If a man does not investigate into the matter of Bushido daily, it will be difficult for him to die a brave and manly death. Thus, it is essential to engrave this business of the warrior into one's mind well."

Similar sentiments were expressed by Kato, a ferocious warrior, who stated: "One should put forth great effort in matters of learning. One should read books concerning military matters,

and direct his attention exclusively to the virtues of loyalty and filial piety....Having been born into the house of a warrior, one's intentions should be to grasp the long and the short swords and to die."

The code of the samurai was distinguished by eight tenets, or virtues: Rectitude, Courage, Benevolence, Respect, Honesty, Honor, Loyalty, Filial Piety, Wisdom, and Care for the Aged. Those virtues are well described in the Bible, and hold sway even to the present day.

# Caring

*“The master of the garden is the one who waters it, trims the branches, plants the seeds, and pulls the weeds. If you merely stroll through the garden, you are but an acolyte.” ~Vera Nazarian*

Caring does not imply liking what you are doing. It does mean paying attention to someone or something, and mindfully helping. Caring might involve doing favors, consideration, and empathy. It is the sensitive sharing of your time and self. As the quote above implies, it is tending the roses, even if occasionally their thorns prick you, still you watch over them.

# Caution

*“Don't ever take a fence down until you know why it was put up.” ~ Robert Frost*

We teach our children to look both ways before crossing the street. That is caution. However, what about when we meet a potential mate, do we proceed with caution? Do we remain alert to red flags, or do we plunge ahead carelessly? Do we examine our motives when embarking on a new venture, analyzing the potential benefits and risks of that situation? We cannot guard against every imponderable. We would not be able to get out of bed if we did. But sober investigation and attention are necessary to avoid potential catastrophes.

# Character

“Seven Deadly Sins:  
Wealth without work,  
Pleasure without conscience  
Science without humanity  
Knowledge without character  
Politics without principle  
Commerce without morality  
Worship without sacrifice.”  
~Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhi was a wise man. He encapsulated the meaning of character in a few short words. Wealth without work, in and of itself, might not negate character, but what one does with that wealth is quite telling about his or her character. If that wealth leads to a life of waste and pleasure without conscience, then character is absent. Sadly, such a person does not value character as a worthy state to be cultivated. This is where caution is useful. If one were to meet a potential life mate, would his or her wealth be a selling point? Look deeper.

# Chastity

*“To be carnally minded is to be spiritually dead” ~David O.*

**McKay**

Sex is all around us. Indeed, it is part of life. However, the media exalts sex as if the act were a sensation, an unusual activity. We are bombarded with images and scenes of orgiastic activity as if the directors in Hollywood invented it. Are they trying to convince us of something? That sex is fun, desirable, indispensable, or inevitable? Sexuality is natural, and the pleasure associated with it is natural. Chastity is selective, discerning sexual activity. Consider that all the creatures engage in sex, without caring or consideration for their partners. It is merely a reproductive imperative. However, for humans, to jump into bed with someone for the momentary pleasure is a base and ignoble act. Emotions are aroused during sex; lives are changed by sex; kingdoms have fallen because of sex. This is not an endorsement for celibacy; it is an invitation to a sober regard for oneself, for one's partner, and by extension, all of society.

# Cheerfulness

*"I love those who can smile in trouble..."* ~**Leonardo da Vinci**

Is an unpleasant experience in the morning likely to dampen your entire day? You rush to get ready for work, but the toddler has just flushed the car keys down the toilet; or the boiler developed a leak just as you prepare to leave to make your most important presentation to a new client; or you are stuck in killer traffic on a rainy day. Whatever it may be, too many among us will use such situations to be in a foul mood all day. The scenario goes something like: You have an unexpected event, get to the office and glare at the receptionist, then are curt with your secretary and slam the door to your office. You are not able to concentrate well on your work, all the time replaying the unpleasant event, which makes you even angrier as you remember the details. As luck would have it, the general manager is visiting the office, and wants to have a "word" with you. Oh, no, what did I do now? You leave your office, anxiously holding the report you submitted yesterday, and meet the general manager with a long face. Nothing untoward happens, but you are still upset. When you get home, you growl at your wife, tell your children to leave you alone because you had a bad day, and when the cat tries to slink against your legs, you kick it. You had an unpleasant morning and ended the day by kicking the cat.

How about another choice? Is it possible to deal with these

events individually and as they occur? Surely, some of them cannot be dealt with on the spot: If the boiler springs a leak, you have to call the plumber and have it repaired. However, this is merely an inconvenience. Snarled traffic? Rainy day? Make sure you leave in plenty of time given the weather conditions. Listen to the traffic report. Be proactive. In addition, if you are still late, having done your best, explain and be done with it. If your toddler has flushed your keys down the toilet on a day when you are rushing to get to work, call the plumber to retrieve them, then resolve not to leave them again within reach of the baby. Whatever it is, deal with the events themselves as they occur, learn to compartmentalize them; learn to put them in perspective. Learn to recognize inconveniences for what they are. You do not have to respond with a bad mood. No, you are not having a "bad day." You can choose your mood (your reaction to the inconvenience). There is no such thing as a "bad mood" – it is merely a choice.

So, choose cheerfulness. After all, why not?

# Commitment

*“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits one-self, and then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now.”*

~ **William Hutchison-Murray**

The dictionary definition of commitment is pledge or promise; obligation. A deeper definition is engagement, keeping one's word, being involved (in a cause or relationship), behaving with integrity.

Each word above is full of significance, but the most direct connotation for commitment is keeping one's word, adhering to promises made. It is embodied in the Golden Rule. So few follow that rule, even though so many profess to a deep religious faith. Doing unto others as one would have others do unto one is a direct reflection of trying to sustain harmonious relationships

among our fellows. That means such simple things as arriving on time to an affair to which one has been invited. Do not treat an invitation casually. Extend yourself a bit beyond your own comfort zone; act with empathy to your host, and by extension, your fellow man. Imagine how you would feel, for example, if you prepared a large spread for 20 guests, yet only three showed up? Commitment is a promise – to others and to yourself. Commitment is a contract with others and yourself to keep your word, no matter what. It is thus that trust is established.

What about the commitment to complete a difficult task, from long years of advanced education to caring for a disabled child? Your commitment to the cause is your determination to keep going no matter what. It is dedication and steadfastness in the face of difficulties.

Commitment also invokes other unexpected abilities. As the quote above indicates, once we are committed on a course of action, the universe seems to converge in offering its answers and solutions to whatever may be obscure. Assistance seems to stream from many directions, often completely unforeseen.

Do the thing wholeheartedly.

# Compassion

*“A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts, and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.” ~Albert Einstein*

When we are compassionate, we feel another's pain and pleasure. We are not separate from our fellows, be they poor homeless refugees or the rich and famous. We are all one.

This is the philosophical idea of altruism; it is an appeal for us to realize that we are all endowed with emotions that help us summon up the hurt of another and wish to help. This emotion is ingrained within us, as a means of ensuring cooperation and the continuation of our species.

# Confidence

*“Because one believes in oneself, one doesn't try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one does not need others' approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her.” ~ Laozi*

We are confident when we can trust in ourselves. Confidence is self-assurance, self-reliance, autonomy, and self-sufficiency. If I am asked to speak before a group, I may at first tremble and squirm with stage fright, but I know that I have the skills necessary to overcome my anxiety and face the audience with confidence. If I lose my job, I can rely on whatever talents and proficiencies I have developed over the years to secure another position. If I am self-reliant, I know my strengths, and can take the necessary steps to exploit them.

Confidence is not wishful thinking, but rather self-knowledge, independence and ability in various aspects of living. What are you good at?

# Consideration

*“Courteousness is consideration for others; politeness is the method used to deliver such considerations.” ~Bryant McGill*

In the context of values, consideration is akin to compassion. It is a form of empathy for others' feelings and schedules that requires a certain behavior designed to ensure that we do not inconvenience our fellows. If we have accepted an invitation, yet find ourselves unable to attend, it is considerate for us to be aware of our host's schedule and plans, and offer our apologies in a timely manner. Consideration does not extend to flimsy excuses or transparent pretexts to evade obligations. It is thoughtfulness and caring for others.

Put yourself in someone else's place.

# Contentment

*“The greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions, and not upon our circumstances.” ~Martha Washington*

Abraham Lincoln expounded on the philosophy of contentment, stating that man is as happy as he makes up his mind to be. The concept that one can choose his disposition is evidently far older than pop psychology. Lincoln himself suffered more setbacks and hardships than the average human being can endure, yet, lived with the vision that he, and only he, and not his circumstances, had the capacity to choose his level of happiness.

Whatever your circumstances, choose contentment. Choose acceptance of the blessings you have been given – for there are many.

# Cooperation

*“A choir is made up of many voices, including yours and mine. If one by one all go silent then all that will be left are the soloists. Don’t let a loud few determine the nature of the sound. It makes for poor harmony and diminishes the song.” ~Vera Nazarian*

Man (and woman, of course) evolved to live in groups - just like the wolf and the whale, the dolphin and the elephant, the chimpanzee and the lion. Survival demands cooperation among the members of the group. In a pride of lions, the female hunts along with her sisters, while the males laze in the shade. This is as it should be. A pack of wolves hunts as a group, both males and females, but the hierarchy of feeding on the kill goes from alpha male to alpha female, and on down the line. These are all survival mechanisms that have evolved through the millennia. Humans, too, live in groups. Without cooperation, there would be no food, no safety, no shelter, and the species would perish.

This holds true for modern life as well. Even though our lives are harried, often frenetic, and we have become accustomed to living in our private shells in our cars, with our air conditioning and entertainment centers, separated by privacy walls, and protected by privacy laws, we are still are a group. We cannot escape this reality. In subtle or more explicit ways, cooperation among each other is essential for us to survive, physically, emotionally, and psychologically.

# Courage

*“Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.” ~Winston Churchill*

Courage is scary. It means facing our fears. We all know that, but what exactly does this look like? Here are some examples. If you have been abused as a child, courage might involve standing up to the abuser, and letting it be known that you will no longer accept that treatment. Courage may mean distancing yourself or removing yourself from the situation.

Courage implies a measure of fear. If fear were not involved, no courage would be needed. It requires courage to embark on a Ph.D. program in your 50s – facing years of intense study, research, and experimentation, writing theses, defending them to intimidating professors, and having to stick to the program while the rest of your life waits in the wings.

If you wish to shed some pounds, courage is needed here, too. To abstain from favorite foods and favorite activities, or engage in increased exercise that may produce sore muscles and a long uphill battle requires courage. The courage to stick it out, stay the course, even when immediate results are not forthcoming.

The payoff for acts of courage is enormous. The quote, “Do the thing you fear and the death of fear is certain” has been attributed variously to Ralph Waldo Emerson and Mark Twain. Regardless, I am not sure that the death of fear is certain, but

certainly, self-esteem increases in direct measure to the courage that is needed in a given situation. Fear is hard wired into our physiology. It is part of our reptilian brain, and serves us well to protect us from danger. But most situations we are customarily afraid of are either nonexistent or sheer fantasy. Of the things that are properly fear evoking, facing that fear may well be the only path to the other side.

# Courtesy

*“Courtesy is a silver lining around the dark clouds of civilization; it is the best part of refinement and in many ways, an art of heroic beauty in the vast gallery of man’s cruelty and baseness.” ~Bryant McGill*

Courtesy is one of the ways we are distinguished from the lower animals. As the quote above indicates, courtesy elevates us from baseness, the cruel and survivalist tendencies of the uncivilized. Courtesy is the grease of social interactions. Courtesy is diplomacy and tact; it is wearing kid gloves when touching a sensitive subject. Courtesy is consideration. You may not like someone’s skirt or shoes, but do you gain anything by voicing your opinion? Even if your opinion were sought, what would you gain by being cruel?

Courtesy is gentleness toward our fellows. It is an awareness and empathy; it is a gift.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.