

The Up Side of Down

The Poems and Quotations

Compiled by Christine Ostertag Timmins



FOREWORD FROM THE AUTHOR

I have always loved reading books or collections of quotes. I know right away which ones speak to me, and which ones might be appropriate for someone else I know. I used to look for quotes to put on the board in my classroom. Now I save them for myself. There are many that I keep in the header or footer of my “To Do List” so that I view them daily. Others I keep posted on my computer screen, mirror, or the dashboard of my car. They are great reminders for things that are important to me, and strong affirmation for what I believe in.

The quotes and poems in this ebooklet are taken directly from my book, *The Up Side of Down*, and are separated by the chapter titles therein. Most of them were saved in my files for “the someday when I might write a book.”

May these quotes bring you laughter, boost your faith, be thought-provoking, and add perspective to your lives.

Chris

Breathe in – feel gratitude; Breathe out – offer thanks

Author of *The Up Side of Down*

Available at <http://braidedstreams.com>

Note: The following collection of quotes has been copyrighted in my book, *The Up Side of Down*.

INTRODUCTION

Life is not the way it's supposed to be. It's the way it is.
The way you deal with it is what makes the difference.

— Virginia Satir

The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you got to put up with the rain.

— Dolly Parton

We grow through adversity. We need not seek it out; we can all look back at moments when our lives were in utter chaos, desolation and despair.

Growth comes when we respond to adversity by stretching just an edge beyond our talent and experience.

— Dr. Robert D. Wald

BRAIDED STREAMS



We do not believe in ourselves until someone reveals that deep inside us something is valuable, worth listening to, worthy of our trust, sacred to our touch.

— e.e. cummings

Some days you feel life is on the upswing; other days it's flat. Sometimes you sense the miracle in your life; other times life seems very ordinary.

Are you energized today to meet a challenge head-on? Or do you feel tired and trapped? Life's circumstances can make you feel like a yo-yo, but don't allow the "ups and downs" to get you down.

Commit to God to fight the good fight...finish the race...keep the faith.

— *Joni Eareckson Tada,*
from Pearls of Great Price

THE ACCIDENT

In his heart, a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

— *Proverbs 16:9*

REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY

This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But, it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

— *Sir Winston Churchill*

Courage Doesn't Always Roar

When you run out of strength
and you want to give up
because it's too much to bear...
I want to remind you, my precious friend
that you have what it takes inside...
extraordinary courage that may not ROAR
but it doesn't cower and hide.

It's the quiet voice inside you that says,
"Tomorrow I'll try again."

It's the courage to keep on going...
to see things through to the end
You are not defined by this moment in time.
You are not what has happened to you;
It's the way you choose to respond that matters
and what you decide to do.

Courage is not the absence of fear,
but a powerful choice we make...
the choice to move forward with PURPOSE
...regardless of what it takes

It's the courage that's found in ordinary women
who are HEROES in their own way,
exhibiting strength and fortitude
in life's challenges every day...
Valiant woman of exceptional courage
with enduring power to cope...
taking each problem one day at a time
and never giving up HOPE.

We're encouraged by the faith of others
to survive and overcome,
with the courage to say, "I may be down...
but the battle is not done!"

For the WOMAN of COURAGE is a winner...
regardless of what she loses;
She displays amazing beauty and strength
with the attitude she chooses.

She gives herself the permission she needs...
to feel disappointed or sad.
But then she empowers herself with faith...
to focus on good things...not bad.

Her story is one of gentle strength
reminding us all once more...
Steel is sometimes covered in velvet
and...

Courage doesn't always roar

-- Paula Fox

ENDINGS and BEGINNINGS

A divorce is like an amputation: you survive it, but there's less
of you.

— Margaret Atwood

I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that He didn't trust me so much.

— *Mother Teresa*

Endings

Endings are so hard for me, God.
They don't seem as painful for other people,
But everything within me cries out for sameness,
Continuity, Familiarity.

New beginnings are scary for me to even consider
Far away they are exciting,
But up close, new beginnings terrify me.

Tonight I am hating the responsibility
Of "yes and no" decisions that I am facing.
Maybe my idealism simply can't handle
Clear-eyed reality.

That is why I can't stand realistic movie endings
that leave me sad,
Despondent, angry.

I want to be able to gaze clear-eyed,
I want to be objective, level with perspective.
Yet I hate the pain of ending a dream,
A relationship, a good book.

A lovely evening with someone.
There is a deep sigh that escapes
from the depths of me
when I consider a new home,

A new set of people, New values,
New lifestyles, new goals.

I ache to stay with what is familiar.
Mostly, I ache to stay with what is secure.
I struggle to weigh endings and beginnings, God.
But, paradoxically, I can't live without them.
Crises, change, endings, beginnings....

They are my source of life, direction, hope.

-- Robin Williams

VICTIM OR VICTOR

I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be
reduced by it.

— Maya Angelou

Wishing, waiting, and hoping —that's the language of victims.
Those are all passive words. They're not active. If you want
things to happen in your life, you have to get moving —even if
it's just one small step.

— Cathy Conheim

Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass...
It's about learning to dance in the rain.

— Vivian Greene

Life at any time can become difficult: life at any time can become easy. It all depends upon how one adjusts oneself to life.

— *Morarji Desai*
Prime Minister of India

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.

— *Carl Bard*

FIRST, LIKE YOURSELF

Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.

— *Maya Angelou*

The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, and start searching for different ways or truer answers.

— *Unknown*

FAITH

I have called you by your name; you are mine

— *Isaiah 43:1*

I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me.
— *Revelation 3:20*

What You Once Believed in the Light

When hardship settles in, dark and brooding emotions can surge over us in a tide of doubt and fear. The only sure dike against a flood of glum feelings is to remember. We must recall sunnier times when we drove the pilings of God's goodness deep in our hearts. Happier times when we felt our moorings of trust hold ground. When we lived on His blessings, knew His favor, were grateful for His gifts, and felt the flesh and blood of His everlasting arms underneath us.

—*Unknown*

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain... "I am making everything new!"

— *Revelation 21: 4-5*

... When we die and leave these bodies, we will have...an eternal body made for us by God himself... We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long for the day when we will put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing.... We want to slip into our new bodies....

— *2 Corinthians 5:1-4*

Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.

— *Mark 11:24*

Prayer is the verbal release of faith — a specific faith for a specific purpose, all based on a specific promise from God.

— Source *Unknown*

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

— Philippians 4:6

In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.

— Proverbs 3:5, 6

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

— Psalm 118:24

GRACE

Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace; and your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace.

— *Unknown*

I Needed the Quiet

I needed the quiet, so He drew me aside
Into the shadows, where we could confide
Away from the hustle, where all the day long
I hurried and worried, when active and strong,

I needed the quiet, tho at first I rebelled
But gently so gently my cross He upheld

And whispered so sweetly of spiritual things;
Tho weakened in body, my spirit took wings
To heights never dreamed of when active all day.

He loved me so greatly, He drew me away.
I needed the quiet, no prison my bed
But a beautiful valley of blessings instead
A place to grow richer, in Jesus to hide;
I needed the quiet, so He drew me aside.

— *Alice H. Mortenson*

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

I am confident that each of us is responsible for creating a
meaningful life for ourselves and for what we can do for others.

— *Paulo Coelho*

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the
overcoming of it.

— *Helen Keller*

The most authentic thing about us is our capacity to create, to
overcome, to endure, to transform, to love and to be greater
than our suffering.

— *Ben Okri*

Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of
the human freedoms— to choose one's attitude in any given set
of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

— *Victor Frankl*

The willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life is the source from which self-respect springs.

— *Joan Didion*

LIFE CYCLES

Life is a celebration of awakenings, of new beginnings, and of wonderful surprises that enlighten the soul.

— *Cielo*

And we know that in all things God works for the good for those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

— *Romans 8:28*

Rise from your fears and go out into the sunlight to meet Me, your Risen Lord.

Each day will have much in it that you will meet either in the spirit of the tomb, or in the spirit of Resurrection.

Deliberately choose the one and reject the other.

— from *God Calling*

BUILDING A MEANINGFUL LIFE

The purpose of life is a life of purpose.

— *Robert Byrne*

Our talent is God's gift to us and what we do with it is our gift back to God.

— *Leo Buscaglia*

Our souls are hungry for meaning, for the sense that we have figured out how to live so that our lives matter, so that the world will be at least a little bit different for our having passed through it... What frustrates us and robs our lives of joy is this absence of meaning... Does our being alive matter?

— *Harold S. Kushner*

When you love people and have the desire to make a profound, positive impact upon the world, then will you have accomplished the meaning to life.

— *Sasha Azevedo*

SERVICE

...I am only one, but I am one. I can't do everything, but I can do something. The something I ought to do, I can do. And by the grace of God, I will.

— *Edward Everett Hale*

Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.

— *John F. Kennedy*

You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

— *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

We cannot build our own future without helping others to build theirs.

— *Bill Clinton*

One of the deep secrets of life is that all that is really worth the doing is what we do for others.

— *Lewis Carroll*

An effort made for the happiness of others lifts us above ourselves.

— *Lydia M. Child*

Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us daily.

— *Judith Kelman*

We tend to forget that happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have.

— *Frederick Koenig*

... but we so often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us.

— *Alexander Graham Bell*

Circumstances don't determine character — they reveal it.
— *Unknown*

Gratitude is not a fair-weather virtue. True gratitude means appreciating your life and thanking your God... no matter what.
— *Mac Anderson*

OFF TO BATTLE...AGAIN

Never allow a person to tell you no who doesn't have the power to say yes.
— *Eleanor Roosevelt*

A Strong Woman Vs. A Woman of Strength

A strong woman believes that she is strong enough to face her journey. But a woman of strength has faith that it is in the Journey that she will become strong.
— *Unknown*

Nothing is impossible; the word itself says, "I'm possible!"
— *Audrey Hepburn*

Being defeated is often a temporary condition. Giving up is what makes it permanent.
— *Marilyn Savant*

DISAPPOINTMENT

The sudden disappointment of a hope leaves a scar which the ultimate fulfillment of that hope never entirely removes.

— *Thomas Hardy*

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.

— *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Life's disappointments are harder to take when you don't know any swear words.

— *Calvin and Hobbes*

WORDS TO LIVE BY

A man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life.

— *James Allen*

Did you know...that when you walk past a flower, whether it be in somebody's garden or on a vacant hillside, the flower will always smile at you. The most polite way to respond, I've been told, is to cheerfully return the smile.

— *Ron Atchison*

Comes the Dawn

After a while, you learn the subtle difference
between holding a hand and chaining a soul,
and you learn that love doesn't mean leaning
and company doesn't mean security.

And you begin to learn that kisses aren't contracts
and presents aren't promises.
and you begin to accept your defeats
with your head up and your eyes open
with the grace of a woman, not the grief of a child.

And you learn to build all your roads on today,
because tomorrow's ground is too uncertain for plans,
and futures have a way of falling down in mid-flight.
After a while you learn that even sunshine
burns if you get too much.

So you plant your own garden
and decorate your own soul
instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers.

And you learn that you really can endure...
that you really are strong
and you really do have worth.

And you learn and learn...
with every goodbye you learn.

– *Jorge Luis Borges*
(Original in Spanish)

AFFIRMATIONS & QUOTES

Breathe in—feel gratitude; breathe out—offer thanks.

— *The Dalai Lama*

Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass... It's about learning to dance in the rain.

— *Vivian Greene*

COMPANIONSHIP

The more one does and sees and feels, the more one is able to do; and the more genuine may be one's appreciation of fundamental things like home, and love, and understanding companionship.

— *Amelia Earhart*

There is not enough celebration of companionship.
Relationships aren't just about eroticism and sexuality.

— *Francesca Annis*

Some people come into our lives and leave footprints on our hearts and we are never ever the same.

— *Flavia Weedn*

WORK WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT

Never mind searching for who you are. Search for the person you aspire to be.

— *Robert Brault*

People often say that this or that person has not yet found himself. But the self is not something one finds, it is something one creates.

— *Thomas Szasz*

INDEPENDENCE

Promise me you'll always remember: You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

— *Christopher Robin to Pooh*

DOG = BEST FRIEND

He Is Just My Dog

He is my other eyes that can see above the clouds; my other ears that hear above the winds. He is the part of me that can reach out into the sea.

He has told me a thousand times over that I am his reason for being; by the way he rests against my leg; by the way he thumps his tail at my smallest smile; by the way he shows his hurt when I leave without taking him.

When I am wrong, he is delighted to forgive. When I am angry, he clowns to make me smile. When I am happy, he is joy unbounded. When I am a fool, he ignores it. When I succeed, he brags. Without him, I am only another man. With him, I am all-powerful.

He is loyalty itself. He has taught me the meaning of devotion. With him, I know a secret comfort and a private peace. He has brought me understanding where before I was ignorant. His head on my knee can heal my human hurts.

His presence by my side is protection against my fears of dark and unknown things. He has promised to wait for me... whenever... wherever...in case I need him. And I expect I will — as I always have.

He is just my dog.

— *Gene Hill*

Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened.

— *Anatole France*

PATIENCE

Patience is the ability to count down before you blast off.

—*Unknown*

How can a society that exists on instant mashed potatoes, packaged cake mixes, frozen dinners, and instant cameras teach patience to its young?

— *Paul Sweeney*

Learn the art of patience. Apply discipline to your thoughts when they become anxious over the outcome of a goal. Impatience breeds anxiety, fear, discouragement and failure. Patience creates confidence, decisiveness, and a rational outlook, which eventually leads to success.

— *Brian Adams*

A handful of patience is worth more than a bushel of brains.

— *Dutch Proverb*

One moment of patience may ward off great disaster.

— *Chinese Proverb*

TEACHING and LEARNING

We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.

— *Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.

— *Carol Buchner*

One hundred years from now, it will not matter what kind of car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, or how much money I had in the bank... But that the world may be a better place because I made a difference in the life of the child.

— *Forest Witcraft*

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.

— *Christopher Reeve*

Watch your thoughts, they become words.
Watch your words, they become your actions.
Watch your actions, they become habits.
Watch your habits, they become character.
Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

— *Frank Outlaw*

1994 Inaugural Speech

Our deepest fear is NOT that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that frightens us.

We ask, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you NOT to be? You are a child of God.

Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.
— *Nelson Mandela*

PEOPLE WHO NEED PEOPLE

People, people who need people are the luckiest people in the world. We're children, needing other children and yet letting a grown-up pride hide all the height need inside – acting more like children than children.

— *“People” from the musical and movie Funny Girl,
Lyrics by Jule Styne*

Vitamin F

Why do I have a variety of friends who are all so different in character? How can I get along with them all? I think that each one helps to bring out a “different” part of me.

With one of them I am polite. I joke with another friend. I sit down and talk about serious matters with one. With another I laugh a lot — or cry a lot. I may have a cup of tea with one and enjoy a happy hour drink with another. I listen to one friend’s problems. Then I listen to another one’s advice for me.

My friends are all like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. When completed, they form a treasure box. A treasure of friends! They are my friends who understand me better than myself, who support me through good days and bad days. We all pray together and for each other.

Doctors tell us that friends are good for our health. Dr. Oz calls them Vitamin Fs (for Friends) and counts the benefits of friends as essential to our well-being. Research shows that people in strong social circles have less risk of depression and terminal strokes. Furthermore, it is said that if you enjoy Vitamin Fs regularly you can “be” up to 30 years younger than your real age. The warmth of friendship stops stress and even in your most intense moments, it decreases the chance of a cardiac arrest or stroke by 50%. I’m so happy that I have a stock of Vitamin F!

In summary, we should value our friends and keep in touch with them. We should try to see the funny side of things and laugh together, and pray for each other in the tough moments.

Thank you for being one of my Vitamins!

—*Unknown*

LIVING IN COMMUNITY

People who are in the best position for happiness are the ones who have strong relationships and “interconnected webs” of people on whom they can depend for fun and support.

— *Fred Luskin*

We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community.

— *Dorothy Day*

If everybody picked just one other person to help, the world would be transformed.

– *Cathy Conheim*

We humans are social beings. We come into the world as the result of others’ actions. We survive here in dependence on others. Whether we like it or not, there is hardly a moment of our lives when we do not benefit from others’ activities. For this reason it is hardly surprising that most of our happiness arises in the context of our relationships with others.

— *Tenzin Gyatso, 14th Dalai Lama*

The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen. Together, our vision widens and strength is renewed.

— *Mark Morrison-Reed*

We don't accomplish anything in this world alone... and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one's life...

— *Sandra Day O'Connor*

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live.

— *George Bernard Shaw*

PLEASE HELP

Refusing to ask for help when you need it is refusing someone the chance to be helpful.

— *Ric Ocasek*

It's not the load that breaks you down; it's the way you carry it.

— *Lena Horne*

The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
the courage to change the things I can;
and the wisdom to know the difference.

— *Attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr*

Don't be shy about asking for help. It doesn't mean you're weak, it only means you're wise.

—*Unknown*

DISCOVERING JOY

If I keep a green bough in my heart, the singing bird will come.

— *Chinese Proverb*

Color is like music — It gives us a fast way to revive our senses and awaken our emotions.

— *Anna Maria Cimbali*

The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it.

— *Steve Jobs*

Think about what you love, really love about being alive, about what lifts you up and makes you dance and causes tears of joy to roll down your cheeks. Commit yourself to that — and to joy. You will see that it brings you out, takes you to the doorstep of others, and calls forth your voice, your strength, and your wisdom.

— *Jan Phillips*

EPILOGUE

Happiness has something to do with struggling, enduring, and accomplishing.

— *George Sheehan*

A Blessing

May there be peace within you today. May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith. May you use the gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content with yourself just the way you are.

Let this knowledge settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. Peace, contentment, faith, and joy are gifts that are available for each and every one of us.

— *Saint Therese of Lisieux*

Amen