**Motivational Minutes on Quiet Time from 2015**

**(Also see Self-Care and Self-worth files.)**

1. **Quiet Time Poem**

 

**Quote of the day:**

“We need quiet time to examine our lives openly and honestly... spending quiet time alone gives your mind an opportunity to renew itself and create order.” -- Susan Taylor

**Reflection:**

If you have spent any time reading the Motivational Minutes you know that I am a big fan of taking quiet time—a time to reflect, meditate, think and just to let my mind wonder and dream. Recently one of our fellow community members sent me a poem about quiet time.

***In My Quiet Spot***

*By Pat Quinn

As I slide back into the chair
Then drift off into My Quiet Spot
Majestic purple mountains
Staggering on the horizon*

*As the perfect sunset is setting
Beyond the horizon
In My Quiet Spot
As evening approaches
Everything gets serene
In My Quiet Spot
When dawn breaks
A beautiful sunrise
Breaks into a new day
In My Quiet Spot
A faint smell of jasmine fills the air
As the sun warms my face
With a gentle breeze blowing
Thru my hair*

*In My Quiet Spot
The sand on the beach glistens in the sun
As the water lazily laps the shore
In My Quiet Spot
When the hustle and bustle of the day
Gets you down and tired*
*Just remember the things
In My Quiet Spot*

Don’t forget to find and take time in your own quiet spot to refresh your soul.

**2. Slow Down**



**Quote of the day:**

“Slow down and enjoy life. It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast--you also miss the sense of where you are going and why.” — Eddie Cantor

**Reflection:**

Imagine a traveler, sitting quietly in a boat as it floats down a river that meanders through a green valley. Trees and shrubs, some in full bloom, line the riverbank. Majestic, snow-covered peaks rise in the distance, and yet this traveler doesn't notice the beauty of his surroundings; he is too busy studying the guidebook, learning about the history of the area and where the river will take him.

“Look up! You're missing the view!” We call to him, but to no avail. He just keeps on reading, his head bowed, his mind elsewhere.

There are times when we need to study the guidebook, as well as times when we need to think back or forward, but there should also be times when we stop and take in the moment.

For the next week, take five or ten minutes each day to look closely at the world around you. Focus your attention on the fluffy white clouds as they drift effortlessly across the vivid blue sky. Study the intricate design on the petals of a flower, or the graceful architecture of a tree, or the pattern of a flock of birds in flight. Look for something different each day, and be thankful.

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1. **Remember You Must Die**

 

**Quote of the day:**

“The key to immortality is first living a life worth remembering.” — Bruce Lee

**Reflection:**

There is a novel by Muriel Spark called *Memento Mori*. It tells about a group of friends, all over sixty-five, who one by one receive anonymous phone calls telling them, "Remember, you must die!" The novel, partly serious, partly humorous, tells how different individuals come to terms with the telephone message. Though reactions vary, a common reaction is fear. Still, the anonymous caller often causes characters to think back over their lives and assess how they have lived, about the good they have done as well as the not-so-good. In a strange way, the message they receive about death forces them to come to terms with the meaning of the life they have lived. Somehow death leads them back into life.

Sometimes it’s good to think about death so that you can live your life more fully. It can help bring into perspective the things that are truly important. Take time to reflect on your life thus far. Ask yourself if you need to make appropriate changes, so that your life will be one worth remembering.

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1. **The Brick**

 

**Quote of the day:**

“There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self.” — Ernest Hemingway

**Reflection:**

This story is a little longer than I usually post but I think it had a good lesson worth sharing.

*A young and successful executive was driving down a neighbourhood street, going a bit too fast in his new Jaguar. He was watching for kids darting out from between parked cars and slowed down when he thought he saw something. As his car passed, no children appeared. Instead, a brick smashed into the Jag's side door! He slammed on the brakes and backed the Jaguar back to the spot where the brick had been thrown.*

*The angry driver then jumped out of the car, grabbed the kid and pushed him up against a parked car shouting, 'What was that all about and who are you? Just what the heck are you doing? That's a new car and that brick you threw is going to cost a lot of money. Why did you do it?'*

*The young boy was apologetic. 'Please, mister...please, I'm sorry but I didn't know what else to do,' He pleaded. 'I threw the brick because no one else would stop...'*

*With tears dripping down his face and off his chin, the youth pointed to a spot just around a parked car. 'It's my brother,' he said. 'He rolled off the curb and fell out of his wheelchair and I can't lift him up.'*

*Now sobbing, the boy asked the stunned executive, 'Would you please help me get him back into his wheelchair? He's hurt and he's too heavy for me.'*

*Moved beyond words, the driver tried to swallow the rapidly swelling lump in his throat. He hurriedly lifted the handicapped boy back into the wheelchair, then took out a linen handkerchief and dabbed at the fresh scrapes and cuts. A quick look told him everything was going to be okay.*

*‘Thank you and may God bless you,' the grateful child told the stranger. Too shook up for words, the man simply watched the boy push his wheelchair-bound brother down the sidewalk toward their home.*

*It was a long, slow walk back to the Jaguar. The damage was very noticeable, but the driver never bothered to repair the dented side door. He kept the dent there to remind him of this message: 'Don't go through life so fast that someone has to throw a brick at you to get your attention!'*

God whispers in our souls and speaks to our hearts. Sometimes when we don't have time to listen, He has to throw a brick at us. It's our choice to listen or not.

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1. **Children Live in the Moment**

 

**Quote of the day:**

“The things which the child loves remain in the domain of the heart until old age.” — Khalil Gibran

**Reflection:**

At some point in life, most adults have looked at a child playing blissfully and wished they could turn back the clock. Children at play look happy, carefree, and thrilled about life. They laugh a lot, are easily entertained, and get excited about the simplest things. Naturally, they have their problems and hurts too, but for the most part, children are resilient. Children *live in the moment* and generally spend more time being happy than adults do. Here are a few ways you can recapture this childhood magic.

* Rediscover the world around you. Take a closer look at things that form the backdrop of your days.
* Learn something. Children don’t have time to get into ruts because they’re too busy discovering new things.
* Reward yourself. Set a goal for the week and pick out a reward for when you reach it. Anticipation is one of the best incentives, and it works at any age.
* Talk to a child. If you want a fresh perspective, ask a child about almost anything. Don’t be surprised if you are revisited by some of your own childhood thoughts.
* Take downtime. Your world won’t come crashing down if you stop doing and accomplishing for a few minutes. Relax. Contemplate happy thoughts. Let your imagination run wild.
* Be thankful for small things. A child can be delighted by a cheap gift, a chance to go outdoors, a bit of attention, a free swing at the park.

Think of the little things you enjoy, and give thanks.

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1. **Prepare for the next Year**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” — Abraham Lincoln

**Reflection:**

Sometimes we think we don’t have time to prepare for a project. When actually if we took a little time to plan and prepare our tools we would save time as the following story illustrates.

*Once upon a time, a very strong woodcutter asked a timber merchant for a job, and he got it. The pay was good and so were the work conditions. For those reasons, the woodcutter was determined to do his best. His boss gave him an axe and showed him the area where he was supposed to work. The first day, the woodcutter brought in 18 trees. “Congratulations,” the boss said. “Keep it up!” Motivated by the boss’ words, the woodcutter tried harder the next day, but he could only bring in 15 trees. The third day he tried even harder, but he could only bring in 10 trees. Day after day, he was bringing in fewer and fewer trees.“I must be losing my strength”, the woodcutter thought. He went to the boss and apologized, saying that he could not understand what was going on. “When was the last time you sharpened your axe?” the boss asked. “Sharpen? I had no time to sharpen my axe. I’ve been busy trying to cut trees.”*

Now would be a good time to sharpen your axe and get ready for the next year. If you haven’t done so already, take some time to prepare for the New Year.