

Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?
Draw near them then in being merciful;
Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge

- *Shakespeare, Titus Andronicus, I.I.122*

O SON OF BEING! Thou art My lamp and My light is in thee. Get thou from it thy radiance and seek none other than Me. For I have created thee rich and have bountifully shed My favor upon thee.

- *Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, Arabic, 11*

Arise therefore! And with the help of thy Spirit lift up thy soul: allow not thy soul to fall. For thy soul can be thy friend, and thy soul can be thine enemy. The soul of man is his friend when by the Spirit he has conquered his soul; but when a man is not lord of his soul then this becomes his own enemy. When his soul is in peace he is in peace, and then his soul is in God. In cold or in heat, in pleasure or pain, in glory or disgrace, he is ever in Him. When, happy with vision and wisdom, he is master of his own inner life, his soul sublime set on high, then he is called a Yogi in harmony. To him gold or stones or earth are one. He has risen on the heights of his soul. And in peace he beholds relatives, companions and friends, those impartial or indifferent or who hate him: he sees them all with the same inner peace. Day after day, let the Yogi practise the harmony of soul: in a secret place, in deep solitude, master of his mind, hoping for nothing, desiring nothing.

- *Krishna, Bhagavad Gita, 6.5-10*

When you sit before a Master like me,
Even if you are a drooling mess,
My eyes sing with Excitement -
They see your divine worth.

- *Khwāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī (Hafez)*

To be a good father and mother requires that the parents defer many of their own needs and desires in favor of the needs of their children. As a consequence of this sacrifice, conscientious parents develop a nobility of character and learn to put into practice the selfless truths taught by the Savior Himself.

- *James E. Faust*

Our daily deeds as ordinary South Africans must produce an actual South African reality that will reinforce humanity's belief in justice, strengthen its confidence in the nobility of the human soul, and sustain all our hopes for a glorious life for all.

- *Nelson Mandela*

Indeed, O Brother, if we ponder each created thing, we shall witness a myriad perfect wisdoms and learn a myriad new and wondrous truths.

- *Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, 6, pg 32*

At the same time, I hope you also recognize the upside of irrationality - that some of the ways in which we are irrational are also what makes us wonderfully human (our ability to find meaning in work, our ability to fall in love with our creations and ideas, our willingness to trust others, our ability to adapt to new circumstances, our ability to care about others, and so on). Looking at irrationality from this perspective suggests that rather than strive for perfect rationality, we need to appreciate those imperfections that benefit us, recognize the ones we would like to overcome, and design the world around us in a way that takes advantage of our incredible abilities while overcoming some of our limitations.

- *Dan Ariely, The Upside of Irrationality*

It [nobility of character] means that you should forgive him who has wronged you, re-establish ties with him who has broken them off, give to him who has denied you something, and tell the truth even if it is against your own interests.

- Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow men. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self.

- Ernest Hemingway

People hold dear those

Who have done their own work,
Complete in virtue and vision,
Established in the Dhamma,
And who speak the truth.

- Gautama Buddha, *Dhammapada: 58 - 217*

O SON OF BEING! With the hands of power I made thee and with the fingers of strength I created thee; and within thee have I placed the essence of My light. Be thou content with it and seek naught else, for My work is perfect and My command is binding. Question it not, nor have a doubt thereof.

- Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Arabic, 12*

Nobility of spirit has more to do with simplicity than ostentation, wisdom rather than wealth, commitment rather than ambition.

- Riccardo Muti

Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit.

- e. e. cummings

It's kind of bittersweet, the human spirit is not measured by the size of the act, but by the size of the heart.

- Yakov Smirnoff

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

- Emily Dickinson

True religion is the cause of the development of praiseworthy qualities.

- Abdu'l-Bahá

Run my dear,
From anything
That may not strengthen
Your precious
Budding wings.

- Khwāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī (Hafez)

Everyone has inside of him a piece of good news. The good news is that you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is!

- *Anne Frank*

Without opening your door,
You can open your heart to the world.
Without looking out your window,
You can see the essence of all things.

- *Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching 47*

I have been sent to perfect the nobility of your character.

- *Prophet Muhammad ﷺ*

Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess. [...] Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.

- *Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, CXXII*

Our awesome responsibility to ourselves, to our children, and to the future is to create ourselves in the image of goodness, because the future depends on the nobility of our imaginings.

- *Barbara Grizzuti Harrison*

No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new doorway for the human spirit.

- *Helen Keller*

Become a dedicated fighter for civil rights. Make it a central part of your life. It will make you a better doctor, a better lawyer, a better teacher. It will enrich your spirit as nothing else possibly can. It will give you that rare sense of nobility that can only spring from love and selflessly helping your fellow man. Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for human rights. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.

- *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Praise is like sunlight to the warm human spirit; we cannot flower and grow without it. And yet, while most of us are only too ready to apply to others the cold wind of criticism, we are somehow reluctant to give our fellow the warm sunshine of praise.

- *Dale Carnegie*

For I can see in your eyes

That you are exquisitely woven
With the finest silk and wool

And that Pattern upon your soul
Has the signature of God

And all your moods and colors of love
Come from His Divine vats of dye and
Gold.

- *Khawāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī (Hafez)*

Free the child's potential, and you will transform him into the world.

- *Maria Montessori*

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

- *Leo Buscaglia*

Do not look at your weakness, nay, rely upon the confirmations of the Holy Spirit. Verily, it maketh the weak strong, the lowly mighty, the child grown [...] and the small great.

- *Abdu'l-Bahá*

O My servants! Could ye apprehend with what wonders of My munificence and bounty I have willed to entrust your souls, ye would, of a truth, rid yourselves of attachment to all created things, and would gain a true knowledge of your own selves—a knowledge which is the same as the comprehension of Mine own Being. Ye would find yourselves independent of all else but Me, and would perceive, with your inner and outer eye, and as manifest as the revelation of My effulgent Name, the seas of My loving-kindness and bounty moving within you. Suffer not your idle fancies, your evil passions, your insincerity and blindness of heart to dim the luster, or stain the sanctity, of so lofty a station. Ye are even as the bird which soareth, with the full force of its mighty wings and with complete and joyous confidence, through the immensity of the heavens, until, impelled to satisfy its hunger, it turneth longingly to the water and clay of the earth below it, and, having been entrapped in the mesh of its desire, findeth itself impotent to resume its flight to the realms whence it came. Powerless to shake off the burden weighing on its sullied wings, that bird, hitherto an inmate of the heavens, is now forced to seek a dwelling-place upon the dust. Wherefore, O My servants, defile not your wings with the clay of waywardness and vain desires, and suffer them not to be stained with the dust of envy and hate, that ye may not be hindered from soaring in the heavens of My divine knowledge.

- *Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, 153*

Whosoever knows himself knows his Lord.

- *Prophet Muhammad ﷺ*

Survival is not so much about the body, but rather it is about the triumph of the human spirit.

- *Danitra Vance*

There is something in the human spirit that will survive and prevail, there is a tiny and brilliant light burning in the heart of man that will not go out no matter how dark the world becomes.

- *Leo Tolstoy*

If you can disentangle yourself
from your selfish self
all heavenly spirits will
stand ready to serve you.
If you can finally hunt down
your own beastly self
you have the right to claim Solomon's kingdom.
You are that blessed
soul who belongs to the garden of paradise!
Is it fair to let yourself fall apart in a shattered house?
You are the bird of happiness in the magic of existence!
What a pity
when you let yourself be chained and caged.
But if you can break free
from this dark prison
named body
soon you will see
you are the Sage and the Fountain of Life!

- *Jalál ad-Dín Muhammad Rūmī*

Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.

- Pope John XXIII

Ever since I was a child I have had this instinctive urge for expansion and growth. To me, the function and duty of a quality human being is the sincere and honest development of one's potential.

- Bruce Lee

The words you speak become the house you live in.

- Khwāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī (Hafez)

Therefore:

You should follow a good, intelligent person

Who is wise, insightful, learned,

Committed to virtue, dutiful, and noble,

As the moon follows the path of the stars.

- Gautama Buddha, *Dhammapada*: 55 - 208

O SON OF SPIRIT! I created thee rich, why dost thou bring thyself down to poverty? Noble I made thee, wherewith dost thou abase thyself? Out of the essence of knowledge I gave thee being, why seekest thou enlightenment from anyone beside Me? Out of the clay of love I molded thee, how dost thou busy thyself with another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting.

- Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Arabic*, 13

In the face of a world where economic hardships often ground the best of the human spirit into the worst, love provided a pathway into hidden chambers of the spirit where nobility and compassion might be salvaged, resurrected, and made stronger.

- Aberjhani

Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a better person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.

- Martin Luther King Jr.

O MY SERVANT! Thou art even as a finely tempered sword concealed in the darkness of its sheath and its value hidden from the artificer's knowledge. Wherefore come forth from the sheath of self and desire that thy worth may be made resplendent and manifest unto all the world.

- Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Persian*, 72

Deep down in the human spirit, there is a reservoir of courage. It is always available, always waiting to be discovered.

- Pema Chödrön

You wander from room to room
Hunting for the diamond necklace
That is already around your neck!

- Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

Man never made any material as resilient as the human spirit.

- Bernard Williams

You think you are nothing but a tiny entity, yet wrapped up inside you is the greatest universe.

- *Imam Ali (عليه السلام)*

Mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other.

- *The Holy Quran, 49: 13*

It is diversity which protects us and, it may be, perpetuates us.

- *Édouard Glissant*

The idea flow from the human spirit is absolutely unlimited. All you have to do is tap into that well. I don't like to use the word efficiency. It's creativity. It's a belief that every person counts.

- *Jack Welch*

O SON OF SPIRIT! Noble have I created thee, yet thou hast abased thyself. Rise then unto that for which thou wast created.

- *Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, Arabic, 22*

Human spirit is the ability to face the uncertainty of the future with curiosity and optimism. It is the belief that problems can be solved, differences resolved. It is a type of confidence. And it is fragile. It can be blackened by fear and superstition.

- *Bernard Beckett*

You have to, in some ways, trust in the human spirit and in human ingenuity.

- *Ariel Garten*

People went on reading the Quran, millions of times,
But they couldn't know the self within

- *Qazi Qadan*

Truly the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most righteous among you (atqakurn).

- *The Holy Quran, 49:13*

O SON OF SPIRIT! Vaunt not thyself over the poor, for I lead him on his way and behold thee in thy evil plight and confound thee for evermore.

- *Hidden Words, Arabic, 25*

We are all different. There is no such thing as a standard or run-of-the-mill human being, but we share the same human spirit.

- *Stephen Hawking*

O MY FRIEND! Thou art the daystar of the heavens of My holiness, let not the defilement of the world eclipse thy splendor. Rend asunder the veil of heedlessness, that from behind the clouds thou mayest emerge resplendent and array all things with the apparel of life.

- *Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, Persian, 73*

Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: The potential for greatness lives within each of us.

- *Wilma Rudolph*

Islam is good manners.

- *Prophet Muhammad*

Human Nobility

March 26th, 2016