

When the going gets tough



*A collection of inspiring thoughts
compiled by*

Frédérique Herel

To Pete

Foreword

If some emotions cause you problems,
If you have been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, recently or in your
childhood,
If you are struggling with confusion or depression.
If you need an emotional boost,
If you feel you can't see the end of the tunnel,
This book is for you.

Browse through it, looking for words that correspond to what you are feeling. The
topics are arranged in alphabetical order and cross-referenced. Or read it from
cover to cover. I only hope that it will help you feel better. Happy reading!

Frédérique

ABANDONMENT (See also Childhood)

Of all the people you will ever know, you are the only one you will never leave or lose.

Jo Coudert



A silent message

I believe
Angels softly whisper
Messages
Of hope and courage
In our darkest hours.
They are illuminating lights
At the end of this weary tunnel,
The dawn
After the darkness.
The silver lining
Shining
Black through the clouds.
You are never alone
An angel
Will help you face
Another tomorrow.

Claire Morrison



Abandonment is emotional energy left frozen. It engenders primal rage and a sense of hurt. Those feelings need to thaw in order to allow the person to heal. But it took a long time to get stuck and frozen and it will take time to heal.

Inspired by John Bradshaw



What I didn't know was that I needed to embrace my heart broken little boy's loneliness and unresolved grief about his lost father, his lost family and his lost childhood. I had to embrace my original pain.

John Bradshaw

ADDICTION (See also Emotions)

Addictions work at suppressing emotions. Alcohol suppresses fear. Nicotine suppresses anger. Caffeine suppresses the results of anesthesia (which is the suppression of physical pain). Marijuana suppresses sadness. Stimulants suppress just about anything. And as far as other addictions are concerned — such as sex, love, food, gambling, spending, or codependency — remember that pleasure hides pain, compulsivity hides anxiety, fantasy hides shame, and devaluation hides terror. Therefore, the only way to stop an addiction is TO FACE YOUR EMOTIONS.

Inspired by Colin P. Sisson and Patrick Carnes



You cannot clean yourself unless you remove your clothes. You cannot heal unless you break your addictions.

F. Herel



Codependency is when you cannot say NO to OTHERS. Addiction is when you cannot say NO to YOURSELF.

F. Herel

AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations? Why?

- Your subconscious cannot take a joke. It believes anything you tell it.
Bobbe Sommer
- Affirmations help replace negative messages with positive ones.
- Affirmations do not eliminate problems: they help solve them.
- Affirmations can be written or said, to oneself or someone else, alone or in a group, in the morning, at noon, in the evening, or at any time of the day, with or without belief, at peaceful times or in crises, ten times, a hundred times, a thousand times a day. The key is to repeat them enough so they become reality.

F. Herel



Affirming messages can even produce changes in the cardiac and respiratory rate of patients in a coma.

Pam Levin

ANGER (See also Addiction, Emotions)

Nobody can actually *make us* angry. Anger is an automatic reaction to a situation that reminds us of another one. It is useful to analyze the real reason for this reaction and ask oneself the question: “how old do I feel I am?”. Most of the time, we go back to being a little kid. We can therefore try to remember the original situation, understand that now is a different moment, and stop the hurt.

F. Herel



People either get mad, or get even.

Proverb



Some safe ways to express anger:

- Write about your emotions.
- Pound a bed or a chair with a foam bat or a tennis racquet.
- Break old dishes.
- Tear junk mail.
- Scream (if you are in a safe place).
- Burn or tear a photo.
- Do something physical (running, dancing, cutting wood, etc.).
- Fantasize about punching your “enemy” (without acting it out).
- Draw or paint a picture, or play with clay.

Abstain from using violence against property, animals or people (including yourself), from driving, taking alcohol or drugs.

F. Herel





It is okay to be angry about what was done to you when you were a child, even if the person did not do it intentionally.

F. Herel



It is hard to feel compassion for someone when you are angry with him or her. Feel your anger first, then be compassionate.

F. Herel

ANXIETY (See Panic)

ATTACHMENT

What we resist persists.



To “let go” takes love

To “let go” does not mean to stop caring,
It means I can’t do it for someone else.

To “let go” is not to cut myself off,
It is the realization that I can’t control another.

To “let go” is not to enable,
But to allow learning from natural consequences.

To “let go” is to admit powerlessness,
Which means the outcome is not in my hands.

To “let go” is not to try to change or blame another,

It is to make the most of myself.
To “let go” is not to care for but to care about.
To “let go” is not to fix, but to be supportive.
To “let go” is not to judge,
But to allow another to be a human being.
To “let go” is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes,
But to allow others to affect their own destinies.
To “let go” is not to be protective,
It is to permit another to face reality.
To “let go” is not to deny, but to accept.
To “let go” is not to nag, scold, or argue,
But instead to search out my own shortcomings and to correct them.
To “let go” is not to adjust everything to my desires,
But to take each day as it comes, and to cherish myself in it.
To “let go” is not to criticize and regulate everybody,
But to try to become what I dream I can be.
To “let go” is not to regret the past,
But to grow and live in the “now”,
To “let go” is not to fear less and to love more.
To “let go” is Unconditional Love!

Source unknown



If you want to become a butterfly, your desire to fly must be stronger than your attachment to being a caterpillar.

Inspired by Trina Paulus



Discipline is the balance between holding on and letting go. Used correctly it gives us freedom.

Inspired by John Bradshaw



The person who is in control is the one with the greatest flexibility (i.e., the person the most able to adapt to a situation).

Inspired by the Neuro-Linguistic Programming course

AUTOMATIC REACTIONS

When somebody says or does something that unconsciously I connect to a painful event from my past, I react with a “negative” feeling. Messages automatically appear and keep me from doing what I want. Now I am trying to recognize the messages when as soon as they come up, instead of a week or a month later!

F. Herel

BEAUTY

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Proverb



Garments

Upon a day Beauty and Ugliness met on the shore of a sea. And they said to one another, “Let us bathe.”

Then they disrobed and swam in the waters. And after a while Ugliness came back to shore and garmented himself with the garments of Beauty and walked his way.

And Beauty came out of the sea, and found not her raiment, and she was too shy to be naked, therefore she dressed herself with the raiment of Ugliness. And Beauty walked her way.

And to this very day men and women mistake the one for the other.

Yet some there are who have beheld the face of Beauty, and they know her notwithstanding her garments. And some there be who know the face of Ugliness, and the cloth conceals him not from their eyes.

Kahlil Gibran



Time is more visible on indifferent faces.

Yves Duteil



If you were confronted with a vast crowd of average people, well-dressed and physically healthy, and if you were gifted with the power to see their mental bodies, what a surprise and heartache you would have. You would observe their

mental bodies — with reason as the head, feeling and senses as the trunk, and will as the hands and feet — to be abnormal, diseased and deformed. You would see that some have a tiny head of undeveloped wisdom attached to a bulging trunk of sense appetite. Some would possess a withered body of pep and feeling, with the arm of business faculty very much overdeveloped in proportion. Others perhaps have a large, creative brain, but the trunk of sympathy and feeling is shrunken and dried up. Still others, normal in head and body, would be seen to possess impotent paralytic legs of will and self-control. You could go on and on.

Paramahansa Yogananda

BOUNDARIES (See also Intimacy)

We cannot set a boundary with someone and worry at the same time about his or her feelings.

F. Herel



Without boundaries you cannot say no to anyone or anything. Therefore you cannot say no even to the things you realize are bad for you.

F. Herel

CHANGE (See also Expectations)

When a room is dark and you want to see clearly, do you focus on darkness to push it out? Instead, you just bring the light in. Likewise when you want to change a negative behaviour, just give more room to the positive you already have.

F. Herel



As Earnie Larsen drills, “Nothing changes if nothing changes.” And the only person you can ever change is yourself. But sometimes, by doing that, you will change more that you can imagine.

Melody Beattie



You can't change other people. You can't *expect* people to react the way *you want* them to react. All you can do is change your own attitude.

F. Herel

CHILDHOOD (See also Abandonment, Love, Self-love)

When we're young, we don't have the experienced frame of reference adults have to make sense of things. When someone, especially someone we love, behaves inappropriately or treats us badly, we don't see the behaviour connected to a person's problem or addiction. We don't understand it is *their* issue. Our only frame of reference is "It must be me. There must be something wrong with me."

Scott Egleston



- Why didn't my Dad ever hug me, hold me, or tell me he loved me?
- Either he wasn't capable of it, or he didn't know how to show love.
- You mean it wasn't me? It wasn't my fault? I am not unlovable?
- No. You are not unlovable. You were just deprived of love.

Source unknown



No matter what happened in your childhood, remember that your parents *do* love you. They may have been too preoccupied with their own problems to be able to show their love. And the reason may be because of what happened in *their* childhood.

F. Herel



Here is a method, suggested by Ernie Larsen, which can help understand messages learnt in our childhood.

1. What is today the undesirable consequence of this message?
(My relationships never last more than a few months.)
2. What behaviour is causing the consequence?
(I tend to manipulate my partner so that he will give me his undivided attention. I scare him away.)
3. What is the rule (yesterday's message) that generates the behaviour?

- (I was deprived of attention when I was a child and I am trying to make up for it now.)
4. How can I counteract this rule?
(It is up to me to give myself the attention I need.)



If children became what their parents expect them to be, there would only be gods on Earth.

A. Poincelot



Our schools and prisons are the only places in the world where *time is more important than the job to be done*. If you and I head out for Bermuda and I get there an hour before you, you don't *fail* Bermuda. In our schools, if you did not learn geometry as fast as other kids your age, you failed geometry. To my mind, geometry is not a survival skill anyway — I almost never geomet! But the danger here is that your inner child may have been penalized for being immature.

John Bradshaw

CREATIVITY

The greatest learning of my life is that creativity overcomes violation and is the answer to violence.

John Bradshaw

CRITICISM

When people use negative criticism, they actually project onto others how they feel about themselves.

F. Herel



If you need to tell someone about something he did that disturbed you, tell him how you *feel* about it, not what you *think*. Make sure you emphasize those are your own feelings, not what he *made* you feel, even though this is what you probably think at the time. Making him responsible for your feelings will just make

the situation worse. Taking ownership of your feelings will bring understanding and an opportunity to solve any conflict.

F. Herel



If someone is blaming you, remember that nobody is perfect. Everyone can blame themselves for something. You are not worse nor better than anyone else. Those who judge you harshly may have made worse mistakes than yours. Forgive them and send them positive thoughts. They probably need them even more than you.

F. Herel



You may be mad at your mother because she is constantly criticizing your furniture, the way you eat, your habits, or your hobbies. But it may be the only way she knows how to express her feelings. She could possibly mean “I want you to be happier than I have been. I miss the little baby you used to be. I love you and I would like you to need me more.” She may be afraid to lose control. Criticizing you about material things may be the only way she can show she cares.

F. Herel

DEPRESSION (See also Life, Discouragement)

Of the following sentences, check the ones you would tell your best friend if he was depressed.

1. Stop acting this way!
2. You may be depressed, but you are still my friend.
3. Don't worry, it won't last forever!
4. Why are you depressed? I want an answer right now!
5. You are a real idiot to feel like that.
6. It's okay to feel sad.

Now, check the sentences you tell yourself when you feel depressed... Isn't it time you become your own best friend?

F. Herel



If everything looks black, you probably have your eyes shut.

Inspired by Melody Beattie



Every situation, however miserable, is complete in itself and contains the good as well as the bad.

Etty Hillesum



The sun is always shining somewhere, either above the clouds or somewhere else in the world.

F. Herel

DISCOURAGEMENT (See also Life, Depression)

Once a big fat frog and a lively little frog were hopping along together when they had the misfortune to jump straight into a pail of fresh milk. They swam for hours and hours, hoping to get out somehow; but the sides of the pail were steep and slippery, and death seemed certain.

When the big frog was exhausted he lost courage. There seemed no hope of rescue. "Why keep struggling against the inevitable? I can't swim any longer," he moaned. "Keep on! Keep on!" urged the little frog, who was still circling the pail. So they went for a while. But the big frog decided it was no use. "Little brother, we may as well give up," he gasped, "I am going to quit struggling."

Now only the little frog was left. He thought to himself, "Well, to give up is to be dead, so I will keep on swimming." Two more hours passed and the tiny legs of the determined little frog were almost paralyzed with exhaustion. It seemed as if he could not keep moving for another minute. But then he thought of his dead friend, and repeated, "To give up is to be meat for someone's table, so I'll keep on paddling until I die — if death is to come — but I will not cease trying — 'while there is life, there is hope!'"

Intoxicated with determination, the little frog kept on, around and around and around the pail, chopping the milk into white waves. After a while, just as he felt completely numb and thought he was about to drown, he suddenly felt something solid under him. To his astonishment, he saw that he was resting on a lump of butter which he had churned by his incessant paddling! And so the successful little frog leaped out of the milk pail to freedom.

Paramahansa Yogananda



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Don't be discouraged by everything that has to be done. Just take one step at a time, knowing that each step gets you closer to the goal. Don't try to run before you can walk or undertake a task that is too big for you. Trust yourself and know that you will be learning along the way. With each step, you will gain more experience and what seemed to be impossible yesterday will be easy tomorrow.

F. Herel

DOUBT

If we are not certain about what to do, we can wait.

Melody Beattie

❧

I noticed that the more you are invaded with doubt, the more you get attached to a false clear-mindedness hoping to clarify through reason what feeling has made blurred.

A. Moravia

❧

You need a little bit of doubt for safety reasons. This way, you won't jump off a cliff or check the fire temperature with your finger.

F. Herel, inspired by John Bradshaw

EMOTIONS (See also Fear, Anger, Excitement, Love, Addiction, Guilt)

Healthy expression of so-called “negative” emotions:

- with *anger* we protect and fight for our rights.
- *fear* gives us discernment.
- with *sadness* we grieve our losses and free up energy to be used in the present.

Inspired by John Bradshaw



Feelings don't have to be judged. Whether they are joy, anger, fear, or sadness, they just are. They don't need to be repressed. When I feel hunger, I express it and, if I can, I satisfy it. Why not do the same with anger or sadness?

F. Herel, inspired by Harriet Goldhor Lerner



If you feel you are always attracting the same emotions and this bothers you, realize that the emotions are the problem, not the different reasons that seem to justify them.

F. Herel



A feeling is the physiological reaction to a thought. Feelings are neither positive nor negative; they just ARE. Some are more pleasant than others, but they are only a reaction to what is happening inside our head. It is the thoughts behind feelings that can be negative or positive. Once we understand this and accept it, we are more able to create positive thoughts, which will replace or dissolve feelings of a negative nature.

Colin P. Sisson



Ironically, the very act of avoiding our negative emotions gives them the power to control our lives.

John Gray



Emotional energy that is “acted in” can cause severe physical problems including gastrointestinal disorders, headaches, backaches, neck aches, severe muscle tension, arthritis, asthma, heart attacks and cancer.

Source unknown

EXCITEMENT (See also Fear)

— The only things or people that excite me are bad for me. Why?
— Because you are confusing *excitement* with *fear*, and fear is familiar to you. Excitement is very close to fear: heart beating fast, shaking, shortness of breath. Excitement for things or people that you know are not good for you is actually a subconscious fear which is being triggered again and again. The key is to identify the fear under the excitement so that you can stay away from danger.

F. Herel

EXPECTATIONS (See also Change)

If our expectations are not met, we may feel anger, resentment, disappointment, abandonment, or other unpleasant feelings. Therefore, not having expectations is a blessing!

F. Herel



To have expectations requires effort, effort involves struggling, and struggling leads to pain.

Inspired by John Bradshaw



If you never expect anything, you will never go away empty-handed.

Inspired by Etty Hillesum

FATIGUE (See also Obsession, Stress)

Incredible amounts of energy are hidden in your brain; enough in a gram of flesh to run the city of Chicago for two days. And you say you are tired?

Paramahansa Yogananda

FEAR (See also Worry, Addiction, Emotions, Excitement)

FEAR is just an acronym for **F**alse **E**vidence **A**ppearing **R**eal.

Unknown



If we are afraid, it is because something scared us a long time ago and we have learned to be afraid that it might happen again. It may be helpful to realize that the worst thing we have always feared has already happened to us, and we have survived.

Inspired by John Bradshaw

FEELINGS (See Emotions)

FORGIVENESS (See also Therapy, Attachment)

“I am ready to forgive because I am tired of my own anger.”

Quoted by Joan Borysenko



Forgiving someone is a good deed you do to yourself.

F. Herel



Forgiving *is not* accepting a wrong behaviour blindly. It *is* loving the person despite his or her wrong behaviour, realizing that the behaviour is separate from the person.

F. Herel

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To understand is to forgive, even oneself.

Alexander Chase

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Asking for forgiveness

If it is not possible to communicate with the person you hurt directly, do it as part of a meditation. After you calm yourself down, imagine that you are in a safe and familiar place. Then imagine inviting the person you have hurt into that place and have a conversation. Tell them you are sorry, and explain what happened. Listen to their reply. And then ask them to forgive you. End by forgiving yourself.

Joan Borysenko

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If someone is unable to forgive you when you are *sincerely* apologizing, it is *their* problem not yours.

F. Herel

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Refusing to forgive is to avoid responsibility for our own life.

Colin P. Sisson

GUILT (See also Shame, Criticism)

We don't have to punish ourselves by feeling guilty to prove to anyone else how much we care.

Inspired by Melody Beattie

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Guilt comes from believing that we have done something wrong, and by choosing to feel bad about it, we will somehow make it right. So rather than

choose to be happy, we sabotage our present moment happiness with feelings of guilt, in the hope that we will be forgiven... This habit can be overcome by concentrating on the present moment, and a determination to free ourselves from useless thoughts of another time which have no relevance to being here NOW!

Colin P. Sisson

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If you have made a mistake and feel bad about it (whether you or someone else tries to make you feel guilty), ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do I understand why?
2. Have I done something to avoid repeating the same mistake?
3. Blaming oneself takes a lot of energy. Isn't there something else that could use my energy in a more positive way?
4. Now, can I look at all the good things that I have done?

F. Herel

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To err is human.

Proverb

HAPPINESS (See also Life, Success)

To be happy, don't wait until things are perfect. Start now!

F. Herel

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Happiness rays are ever trying to pierce the closed doors of your mind. Open the windows of calmness and you will find a sudden burst of the bright sun of joy with your very self.

Paramahansa Yogananda

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Happy days are made by happy people. Happy people are made by choice.

Sally Huss

❧

Happiness is knowing what you believe in.

Shirley MacLaine



Hold on to your dreams.
Ask questions.
Plan to succeed.
Proceed with confidence.
Invest in the right attitude.
Never stop believing.
Enjoy the detours.
Save time for little things.
Share a smile every day.

Source unknown



Most people are as happy as they make up their minds to be.

Source unknown



If you wait to be happy, you will wait forever. If you are happy now, you will be happy forever.

Sally Huss

HATRED

In *Return from Tomorrow*, Dr. Ritchie relates how, when the war in Europe had just ended, his medical unit was ordered to a concentration camp near Wuppertal, Germany. It was a shattering experience to see the effects of slow starvation and to walk through barracks where thousands of men had died a little bit at a time. In spite of all the food and medicine rushed in at that time, many kept dying every day.

Ritchie was drawn to one Polish Jew who had obviously not been an inmate of the concentration camp very long. He was full of energy and people came to him with all sorts of problems. Even though he worked fifteen hours a day, he showed no sign of fatigue. He even seemed to gain strength.

One day, Ritchie was astounded to learn that *the man had been in Wuppertal since 1939!* For six years he had starved the same way, slept in the

same airless and disease-ridden barracks as everyone else, yet without the least physical or mental deterioration.

This is the man's story: "We lived in the Jewish section of Warsaw, my wife, our two daughters, and our three little boys. When the Germans reached our street they lined everyone against a wall and opened up with machine guns. I begged to be allowed to die with my family, but because I spoke German they put me in a work group. I had to decide right then whether to let myself hate the soldiers who had done this. It was an easy decision, really. I was a lawyer. In my practice I had seen too often what hate could do to people's minds and bodies. Hate had just killed the six people who mattered most to me in the world. I decided then that I would spend the rest of my life loving every person I came in contact with."



A man who hates always believes himself justified. He never hates anything that he believes to be good. He thinks he is being just, therefore, in his hatred, but the hatred itself forms a very strong claim that will follow him until he learns that only the hatred itself is the destroyer.

Seth through Jane Roberts

HELP (See also Prayer, Abandonment)

Even Mother Teresa has the Sisters of Mercy to help her.

Scott Peck



FOOTPRINTS

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with God. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonging to him, and the other to God. When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of his life.

This really bothered him and he questioned God about it. "God, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me." God replied, "My son, my precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."



Asking for help, does it work? If you ask for help and you don't get any, maybe it wasn't the right person or the right time for this person. Just ask someone else at another time.

F. Herel

HUMILIATION

Etty Hillesum, a Jewish woman who died in Auschwitz in 1943, was writing these words in 1942: "Humiliation always involves two. The one who does the humiliating, and the one who allows himself to be humiliated. If the second is missing, that is, if the passive party is immune to humiliation, then humiliation vanishes into thin air. All that remains are vexatious measures which interfere with daily life but that are not humiliations that weigh heavily on the soul."

INFLUENCE

It is difficult to be near a fragrant rose or an ill-odored skunk without being affected by it. So it is better to associate only with human roses.

Paramahansa Yogananda

INTIMACY (See also Boundaries, Trust)

Intimacy has to be enjoyed when it happens, because it comes and leaves without warning.

F. Herel



Intimacy is a wonderful feeling of connecting with someone else on an emotional, mental, sexual, or spiritual level. Unresolved anger, active addictions, serious past and current issues, abuse and lying prohibit intimacy, because it cannot exist without trust. To be intimate we need to let down our guard. We

welcome someone temporarily within our boundaries, knowing that we will be able to be self-contained again, otherwise we create dependence.

Inspired by Melody Beattie

JEALOUSY (See also Love, Relationships, Attachment, Self-love)

Jealousy within a relationship is based on an inferiority complex. We tend to compare ourselves to our “rival”. But competition doesn’t help. We should instead strive to understand what is lacking in ourselves and work on our personal dignity. If we can learn to love ourselves, the feeling of jealousy will disappear.

F. Herel



Basically, jealousy is born when we claim ownership of other people... We might as well try to own the sun or moon, than try to own another human being. With understanding we can view what happens between someone we love and someone else, as something between two people, rather than something against us. Certainly, we can view it as a situation that is totally unrelated to our own self-worth.

Colin P. Sisson



When you are jealous, you imagine your loved one with someone else. And then you react negatively to an image you have actually created yourself.

Inspired by Colin P. Sisson

LIFE (See also Happiness, Problems, Success)

Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans.

John Lennon



Whether you spend your life laughing or crying, it is still your life.

Source unknown

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Life is a series of moments.

Source unknown

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Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.

Source unknown

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Growth is moving from one set of problems to a better set of problems.

Terry Gorski

LOSS (See also Depression)

According to Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, in order to accept death, we need to go through five stages: denial and isolation (no, not me, it can't be true!), anger (why not someone else?), bargaining (if I ask nicely, maybe...), depression (what's the use?), and, finally, acceptance (the fight is over).

Those stages can actually be applied to any kind of loss that deeply affects us. We sometimes get stuck at one stage and may repress those feelings for years until something triggers them. In order to clear the past, it may be useful to check to see whether we are finished with our grieving.

☯

All your suffering can be perceived positively if you think about the wisdom you gained from it. The worst thing can be the best. Try to see the lesson and believe in it.

A few years ago, a friend of mine lost his job, his house, and his marriage ended, all at the same time. He was devastated.

He then decided to go back to university and became a chartered accountant. He remarried to a beautiful and gentle woman with whom he subsequently had four wonderful children. He was eventually hired back by the same company, but at a higher level than the person who had previously fired him. He is now happier than he has ever been. All this could not have happened if he had not lost everything at first. It was a blessing in disguise.

F. Herel

LOVE (See also Relationships, Self-love, Sex)

Our ability to love someone is based on our capacity to love ourselves.

Colin P. Sisson



To love is not to look at each other; it is to look together in the same direction.

Saint-Exupéry



Infatuation is when you think he's as gorgeous as Robert Redford, as pure as Solzhenitsyn, as funny as Woody Allen, as athletic as Jimmy Connors, and as smart as Albert Einstein. Love is when you realize that he's as gorgeous as Woody Allen, as smart as Jimmy Connors, as funny as Solzhenitsyn, as athletic as Albert Einstein, and nothing like Robert Redford in any category – but you'll take him anyway.

Judith Viorst



“I love you because I need you” is the greatest confusion there is about love. For years I thought I loved men when in fact I needed them emotionally. Love involves giving, need involves taking. When I say “I love you” meaning “I need you”, I am actually lying to myself and to the other person.

Realizing that I was needing instead of loving allowed me to identify what my needs were and to satisfy them in a more appropriate manner (meditation, public speaking, teaching, physical exercise, massage, etc.). I was then free to really love.

F. Herel



MUSIC

Here are a few interesting stories and facts about the effects of music that I found in an article written by Linda Stryker.

- Classical music has been used successfully at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. It worked so well as a painkiller that many cancer patients could be taken off analgesics completely.
- In Russia, some modern sanitariums for the aged prescribe flowers, music, and ocean sounds, instead of painkillers, tranquilizers, and sleeping pills.
- According to Dorothy Retallack who experimented with plants and music, her plants seemed to respond positively to classical music, but shriveled away and even died when heavy rock was played to them.
- A 7-Eleven store in British Columbia successfully played Musak in the parking lot to keep teenagers from loitering.
- According to scientists the effects of music complement each other: 1) music affects the body, which in turn relaxes the mind and emotions; 2) it calms the mind and emotions, which helps to heal the body.
- Downtown businesses in Edmonton, Alberta are using Bach and Mozart in a city park to drive drug dealers and their clients away. According to police, drug activity has dropped dramatically.
- In “Music and the Brain: Studies in the Neurology of Music”, M. Critchley and R.A. Henderson state that music, being non-verbal, carries no threat to our conscious mind. Therefore, 1) it goes to the centre of our emotional responses, 2) it activates memory, 3) it harmonizes the right and left parts of the brain, and 4) it stimulates the production of endorphins, the body’s natural painkillers.
- A few years ago, a doctor was called to a Benedictine monastery in the French Alps because of a strange disease that was affecting 70 out of the 90 monks. Their sickness was a physical and mental weakness for which the doctor could not find any reason. But he soon discovered that the new abbot,

not finding any use in daily Gregorian chanting, had eliminated the many hours of singing that had been a tradition for centuries. The doctor recommended that this practice be reinstated and all the monks recovered from their illness.

- Slow, peaceful classical music, such as largos and adagios tend to lower heart rate and blood pressure.

NEEDINESS (See also Relationships, Attachment, Love)

My own definition of codependency is losing yourself in someone else — a spouse, a parent, a child — forgetting that you have your life to live. You make somebody believe that he or she needs you, when you are actually the one who needs him or her.

F. Herel



I finally understood my neediness when I read those few words by John Bradshaw: “I found myself feeling jealous of any other therapist or speaker who was popular. As if there were not enough recovering people to go around; or as if there were a limited amount of love and admiration and, if another person got it, I would be left out.”



Your fear of missing out on things makes you miss out on everything.

Inspired by Etty Hillesum

NEGATIVE THINKING (See also Happiness, Success)

To be negative is to go against the vital force which was given to us at birth. In so doing we not only depress our mental state but also our organic defenses.

On the other hand by being positive we please our body cells, we have a better chance to succeed, and we are healthier.

F. Herel



Smile! It takes seven muscles to smile and eighty-four to frown!

Source unknown



Your attitude determines your altitude.

Source unknown

OBSESSION (See also Panic, Emotions)

If you feel obsessed, just “H.A.L.T.”!

H.A.L.T. stands for **H**ungry, **A**ngry, **L**onely, **T**ired. Study your feelings, you probably have one of those. Dealing with them will alleviate your obsession.

Inspired by the Twelve-Step programs

OVERWEIGHT (See also Addiction)

If you consider yourself fat and feel uncomfortable about it, you may want to lose weight. But first consider this: being fat is quite often a way of protecting a very vulnerable part inside of you. By getting thinner, you may hurt yourself more than you think. You have to find a healthy way of protecting yourself, like increasing your self-esteem, so that your weight loss won't destabilize you, throwing you into depression and addictions.

F. Herel



Food addiction is usually an attempt to fill the emptiness within. Here are a few suggestions that may help you overcome your emotional eating:

- You need to be able to know *what you are feeling*.
- Before you binge, get in touch with what you are feeling and put those feelings on paper.
- Note what you eat.
- Write how you feel after your binge.
- Become aware of what events trigger your binges.
- Note what kind of food you eat according to your feelings (e.g., salty, crunchy food when you are angry;;; milky, sweet food when you feel unloved).
- Later, write about the feelings that made you want to eat and figure out what you can do about them.
- Become aware of unmet needs and find ways to meet them (calling a friend, getting a massage, expressing your creativity).

- To fill your emptiness, learn how to take care of your inner child and include spiritual activities in your life (like getting in touch with nature or developing compassion for humankind).
- Try to understand what your weight protects you from.
- Start living your life now instead of waiting for your body to be perfect.

Inspired by an article in Vitality Magazine

PAIN

Talk about your pain. You will realize that you are not the only one who has suffered.

Inspired by John Bradshaw



When we try so hard to avoid pain, it may hurt a lot more. Accepting the pain could be a way to alleviate it.

F. Herel

PANIC (See also Emotions, Prayer, Obsession)

Sometimes when you panic, it is because you do not consider the whole picture. You may be looking at a detail and blowing it out of proportion.

F. Herel



If you start to feel panicky, breathe. Sit with the feeling. Often [people] think they have to do something quickly to get away from the scared feeling, but this frenzy to escape can escalate your fear rather than relieve it. Don't rush into action. Instead, reassure yourself that this is just a feeling, powerful though it may be.

Ellen Bass and Laura Davis



A few things to do when you are in a state of panic:

- Repeat affirmations such as “Every day, in every way, my life is getting better”, “I am still the same person” or “Whatever happens is the right happening”.
- Say the Serenity prayer (see Prayer).

- Replace a negative thought with a positive one, something pleasant and not dangerous. It would be a good idea to prepare a list of such thoughts (e.g., my vacation plans, a time in the past when I felt empowered, a person who inspires me, a funny story, a great movie, etc.)
- Call trusted friends.
- Take a bath.
- Write down what you feel.

F. Herel



The following text, which I wrote once when I was feeling anxious, always calms me down.

“If I could feel the feeling I want, it would be serenity, calm, inner peace. In this state, I feel linked inside. There is a sort of wide tube that links my head to my genitals. My breathing slows down. Instead of being tense, my solar plexus generates very pleasant waves. My stomach relaxes. Everything operates in harmony. I feel connected. It’s a little bit like a void, but a positive void. My insides are so light. I forget my breath. It unwinds by itself. I wish to be constantly in this state, so that nothing bothers me, no noise, no bad news, no negative reaction. I want to stay in this serene state which would allow me to concentrate fully on my actions, instead of my reactions, especially negative ones. I am a being of light. My nature is to be serene. This is what I want to be.”

F. Herel

PEACE

If there is beauty in the character
 There will be harmony in the home;
 If there is harmony in the home
 There will be order in the Nation;
 If there is order in the Nation
 There will be peace in the World.

Source unknown



You have to start with yourself. If Hitler had felt moral responsibility as a person, he would have stopped himself, wouldn't he? An individual can only judge his own behavior. If humans understood the consequences of their actions for *themselves*, they would think twice.

Shirley MacLaine



PERFECTIONISM

A few years ago, my aunt showed me how to sew a hem. Her stitches were small and regular, and she was fast and precise. My stitches and technique were quite the opposite. I started to complain about how bad I was doing. But my aunt answered: “Who do you think you are? Do you think that you can sew a perfect hem the first time you try? It took me years of practice to be this good. Are you a superhuman? Don’t be so proud!”

F. Herel



Perfection, what we strive for (perfect body, perfect behaviour, perfect job, etc.), is an impossible quest. Instead of trying to be *perfect*, let’s try to be *a little bit better*. It’s more human, more achievable. A little bit plus a little bit goes a long way, and before you know it, you have reached the stars.

F. Herel

PRAYER (See also Help, Spirituality, Affirmations)

Some scientific studies have been done about the effect of prayer. Here are a few facts demonstrated by an organization called Spindrift after extensive experiments.

1. Your choice of religion doesn't influence the effect of the prayer and the prayer doesn't need to be expressed in religious terms.
2. Prayer works better on *unhealthy* subjects than on healthy ones.
3. The subject you are praying for needs to be *identified* (it could be yourself).
4. As long as all the members of a group can be referred to as one group, there is *no loss of effect* of the prayer, no matter how big the group prayed for may be.
5. The *longer* you pray, the more effective the prayer will be.
6. The more *experienced* you are at praying, the more effective the prayer will be.
7. A *non-directed* prayer (e.g.: "Thy will be done") is a lot more powerful than a directed prayer (for a specific goal).
8. No matter how *far* you are from the person you are praying for, the effect of the prayer is as strong.



The Serenity prayer, used by all Twelve-Step programs, is always of great help to me:

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

Reinhold Niebuhr

PROBLEMS (See also Life, Psychotherapy, Happiness, Success)

Life is like a crossword puzzle. You get clues, which help you find solutions. But how much fun would it be if you were given all the solutions before you have a chance to play?

F. Herel



A problem is an opportunity in work clothes.

Source unknown



The mind's capacity is infinite ... Therefore, if you think deeply enough about a subject, the answer to any question about it will come.

Paramahansa Yogananda



Don't tell me this problem is difficult. If it wasn't difficult, it wouldn't be a problem.

F. Foch



Trauma can be either the opportunity to change or the cause for self-destruction. It is up to us to make that choice. Of course, it takes a lot of courage to get in touch with the pain and do the dirty work, but the result is well worth it. What counts is the meaning we decide to give to it.

I consider my childhood sexual abuse, the abandonment from my parents, my marriage breakup and my love addiction as great opportunities. Without them I would not have learned so much about myself and I would not be so aware of my happiness now.

F. Herel

PSYCHOTHERAPY (See also Forgiveness, Pain)

I have discovered that for any therapy to work, it needs to have two parts. Most therapies focus on the first one, which is to stop denying there is a problem, really go into the past, and feel the repressed feelings. This allows us to understand who and what influenced us. But a lot of people and therapists stop there.

The second part involves the present and the future. What do I do now to take care of myself? How do I let go of the past? How do I forgive and forget? Once these issues are taken care of, we can then stop blaming everything and everyone and take responsibility for our lives. This is when therapy really works, but both parts need to be done and in the right order.

F. Herel

RECOVERY (See Addiction, Relapse)

I picture recovery like the performance of mutual funds, constantly going up and down but when you look at the whole picture, it slowly and steadily goes up.

F. Herel



In recovery the journey is the goal.

Pia Mellody



Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

I

I walk down the street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I fall in

I am lost ... I am helpless

It isn't my fault.

It takes me forever to find a way out.

II

I walk down the same street,

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I pretend I don't see it.

I fall in again.

I can't believe I am in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

III
I walk down the same street
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in ... it's a habit.
My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

IV
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

V
I walk down another street.

Portia Nelson

RELAPSE (See also Recovery, Problems)

Our greater glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

Confucius



Relapse... What a negative word! Why not see it as a cycle of growth? Or just growth? A relapse is a great opportunity to grow.

Inspired by Melody Beattie



What I want to know first and foremost is not if you have failed, but if you have accepted failure.

A. Lincoln

RELATIONSHIPS (See also Love, Jealousy, Sex)

Many see themselves as the letter C looking for another C — the soul mate — in order to make an O and be complete. But then, who will control that O?

It is so much more beneficial to become an O by developing, on our own, the qualities we want so much for our partner to have. An O is self-sufficient, but can also attract another O as complete as itself. Together they can build a solid construction made of two self-sufficient elements that will be able to focus on accomplishments instead of looking for power and control.

Inspired by James Redfield



Some relationships are doomed from the start because at least one of the partners is not *available*.

In order to assess your partner's availability, you should find out if he or she is:

- recently separated or divorced;
- thinking of someone else;
- active in an addiction (alcohol, drugs, sex, gambling, etc.);
- tied to a past family;
- a compulsive worker;
- living far away from you.

If he or she has one or more of these characteristics, your partner *is not available*.

Now ask yourself the following questions:

- Am I still entangled in a past relationship?
- Do I have time and energy to devote to a relationship?
- Am I emotionally available? If you are with someone with whom you do not want to be in a permanent, committed relationship, you are *unavailable*.

Inspired by Melody Beattie



If you want to attract someone great, be great yourself.

F. Herel



When we get into a relationship, many of us expect to find what we have been missing, usually the unconditional love that our parents were unable to give us. But our partners are *not* our ideal parents. They have their own problems. The only person able to give us this love is ourselves – through our spiritual connection with ourselves. Once we find this connection we stop desperately

looking for it in our partners. We stop expecting miracles. We can finally be happy.

F. Herel



In *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, John Gray explains the basic behavioral differences between men and women in relationships. Here are a few of them:

- In relationships, men pull back and then get close, while women rise and fall in their ability to love themselves and others.
- Men argue for the right to be free while women argue for the right to be upset. Men want space while women want understanding.
- A man's sense of self is defined through his ability to achieve results while a woman's sense of self is defined through her feelings and the quality of her relationships.
- To feel better, men go to their caves to solve problems alone. To feel better, women get together and openly talk about their problems.
- Men are motivated and empowered when they feel needed. Women are motivated and empowered when they feel cherished.

SADNESS (See Depression)

SELF-LOVE (See also Love)

Bill of rights for self-lovers

1. I have the right to be me — the way I am and the way I want to be.
2. I have the right to think and feel any way I choose, to be the ultimate judge of my actions and be completely responsible for them.
3. I have the right to love whomever I choose and allow myself to be loved in return.
4. I have the right to love and respect myself, to plan, to win and become the very best that I can possibly become so long as I am honest and manipulate no one in doing so.
5. I have the right to change, to grow, to learn about myself and my world, to make mistakes, and be responsible for them.
6. I have the right to say no and be independent of the approval of others.
7. I have the right to privacy, a time to be on my own, to keep a part of my life secret, no matter how important or trivial.

8. I have the right to question anyone in matters that affect my life, to be listened to and taken seriously.
9. I have the right to be trusted and taken at my word. If I am wrong, to be given the chance to make good.
10. I have the right to change my mind, and never give reasons or excuses to justify my actions.
11. I have the right to say I don't know or not to answer questions from those who have no right to ask.
12. I have the right to solve my own problems, to make my own decisions and find my own happiness in the world.

Colin P. Sisson



I am told I am stupid. So I must be.
 I am told I am pretty. So I must be.
 I am told I am ugly. So I must be.
 I am told I am smart. So I must be.

I am stupid, pretty, ugly, or smart, depending on what I am being told. But my body or my intelligence didn't change ... Only my perception. Since I am still the same person, why react to an external comment? I have the power to love and respect myself in any situation.

F. Herel



By loving and accepting myself unconditionally I don't negate my need to change and grow. On the contrary I give myself the right to love and grow.

Inspired by Melody Beattie



Do you love yourself?

- Can you readily accept praise and compliments with a simple "thank you", instead of feeling both overjoyed and embarrassed and brushing it off?
- Do you like every part of your body?
- Do you think that your opinions are as important as anyone else's?
- Can you easily buy something you like for yourself instead of saying you can't afford it when you actually can?
- Do you refrain from comparing yourself with others so that you never feel jealous or resentful?

If you answered "no" to any of those questions, the following suggestions may prove useful to you.

You probably connect your self-respect with negative thoughts or feelings you have about yourself, with your behaviour, and with others' behaviour towards you. Instead remember to:

- love whatever you are doing and love yourself for doing it

- love whatever you are thinking and love yourself for having this thought
 - love whatever you are feeling and love yourself for having this emotion
- Inspired by Colin P. Sisson*

SEX

Sex can only express the love that already exists.

Source unknown



The first thing we notice about a person is whether it is a man or a woman. Sex is not what we have but who we are.

Inspired by John Bradshaw



Wendy Maltz identified some of the most common misconceptions regarding sex. For each one, she indicated the healthy sexual attitude that can replace the old thinking.

Unhealthy attitude

Sex is uncontrollable energy.
 Sex is an obligation.
 Sex is addictive.
 Sex is hurtful.
 Sex is a condition for receiving love.
 Sex is “doing to” someone.
 Sex is a commodity.
 Sex is void of communication.
 Sex is secretive.
 Sex is exploitive.
 Sex is deceitful.
 Sex benefits one person.
 Sex is emotionally distant.
 Sex is irresponsible.
 Sex is unsafe.
 Sex has no limits.
 Sex is power over someone.

Healthy attitude

Sex is controllable energy.
 Sex is a choice.
 Sex is a natural drive.
 Sex is nurturing, healing.
 Sex is an expression of love.
 Sex is sharing with someone.
 Sex is part of who I am.
 Sex requires communication.
 Sex is private.
 Sex is respectful.
 Sex is honest.
 Sex is mutual.
 Sex is intimate.
 Sex is responsible.
 Sex is safe.
 Sex has boundaries.
 Sex is empowering.

SHAME (See also Guilt)

We're good, and we're good enough. Sometimes we make big mistakes, sometimes we make little mistakes. But the mistake is what we do, not who we are. We have a right to be, to be here, and to be who we are. If we're not certain who we are, we have a right to make that exciting discovery. And we don't even have to let shame tell us any differently.

Melody Beattie



A little bit of shame is okay – just enough to know that we are only human.

Source unknown

SMOKING (See also Addiction)

Heroin and nicotine are the two substances that are the most addictive to the body.

Source unknown



If you intend to quit smoking, any method can work as long as your will is strong enough **and** you work on an emotional level as well.

The role of nicotine is to suppress anger. People usually smoke in order to calm down. Anger makes the blood vessels expand and the person tends to get a red face. Nicotine stops this emotion on a physical level by causing the blood vessels to shrink.

Also, given that smoking is an addiction, stopping will create a void. If you want your good resolution to last, try to fill this void by dealing with repressed anger and by finding a positive activity such as a sport or a hobby.

Inspired by Colin P. Sisson

SPIRITUALITY (See also Prayer)

Religion is when you are trying not to go to Hell. Spirituality is when you have already been there.

Source unknown



You have a spark of divinity within yourself ... Step out from the crowd and discover how much power you really have.

Paramahansa Yogananda



I see everyone as a being of light covered with a layer of mud. Sometimes the mud is so thick that you don't even know there is light inside. But it is there, appearing furtively in your eyes. This is what makes them shine.

People who have suffered a lot often have a thick layer of mud and, when they start their process of introspection, they only see the mud at first. This paralyzes them. But if they keep working at it, they will eventually see the light.

For some, the mud is covered with a layer of sparkling paint which unfortunately chips easily. These are superficial beings.

When there is too much mud, we can be blinded by the light of those who only have a thin layer. We have a wrong perception of ourselves and others and tend to go into denial.

My spiritual journey impels me to get rid of this layer of mud in order to find the light which has always been deep inside me. I also want to see the light in everyone and understand how close I am to them.

This light is what I call God.

F. Herel



Nietzsche said “I could only believe in a God who dances”. My God always dances, sings and laughs with me and within me.

F. Herel



“... I understood that what they call God is actually love and that it is the very electricity that runs the body.”

quoted by Joan Borysenko

STRESS (See also Fatigue)

Stress is what keeps our body and mind from expressing themselves positively.

Source unknown

SUCCESS (See also Happiness)

To laugh often and much;
to win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children;
to earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;
to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others;
to leave the world a bit better,
whether by a healthy child,
a garden patch or a redeemed social condition;
to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived.

This is to have succeeded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (?)

SUICIDE

Suicide: a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

Common saying



Suicidal thoughts ... I have been there. Here is how I got out of it.

I was lying on my bed without any desire to live. Suddenly I became aware that I had a roof over my head. I decided to be grateful for this roof. Then I looked around me and expressed gratitude for the bed under my body, for the pictures on the wall, for the cat sleeping on the bed, for my clothes hanging in the closet, for the last meal I had had, and so on. I went on like this for ten minutes and eventually found out that I was lucky to be alive. Gratitude: I just had to think of it.

F. Herel



There are no suicides. There are only murders.

Elsa Triolet

TEARS

Scientists have demonstrated that tears offer a natural cleaning process not only physically but also emotionally, by removing stressful chemicals that our body produces when something upsets us.

Source unknown

TRUST (See also Boundaries, Intimacy)

A person who never learned to trust confuses intensity with intimacy, obsession with care, and control with security.

Patrick Carnes



To be able to live, you have to be able to risk.

Inspired by Leo Buscaglia

VIOLENCE (See also Creativity)

A witness to violence is a victim of violence.

John Bradshaw

WEAKNESS

It is only by accepting our weaknesses that we can gain strength.

Inspired by John Bradshaw

WORRY (See also Fear)

Worry is not preparation.

Common saying



If luck is on your side, why run?

If luck is not on your side, why run?

Joseph Kessel



Worrying is fearing a future which will likely be a lot more positive than we imagine it will be. The important thing is to focus on the present moment.

Inspired by Colin P. Sisson



Live each present moment completely and the future will take care of itself. Fully enjoy the wonder and beauty of each instant.

Paramahansa Yogananda