

what  
i learned  
from  
a dog



freddy silva

## I've written some pretty serious books.

Two decades later, the world itself has become too serious a place. I feel it is my duty to address the situation by writing, or more accurately, compiling a book that offers solace, levity, reflection, self-empowerment and inner joy in these times of stress. Mark Twain once said, "I can live for two months on one good compliment." And he was right. When the fire within is extinguished and motivation is spent, we grasp outside for a spark to regenerate our self worth. I collected the following inspirations, quotations and invocations over the years, specifically during a difficult and dark time in my own life. Some are attributed, some I created, and many were written anonymously. Regardless of origin, they helped to raise me off the ground, even prevented me from ending up under it. And therein lies the intent behind this little tome. May it motivate and sustain you when your eyes open upon another dawn and the test it brings.



There's no set direction. You can read it forwards, backwards, or simply dive in as the mood dictates. The important thing is to take any page and make its message your mantra for the day.

I feel I've reached the top floor of my own building, so the best I can offer is to send the elevator back down to assist those on the way up.

— Freddy Silva, *somewhere between London and Wellington*



**RECIPE FOR HAPPINESS.  
KHABAROVSK OR ANYPLACE**

One grand boulevard with trees  
with one grand cafe in sun  
with strong black coffee in very small cups.

One not necessarily very beautiful  
man or woman who loves you.

One fine day.

— *Lawrence Ferlinghetti*

An optimist is someone who  
goes after Moby Dick in a  
rowboat and takes the  
tartar sauce with him.

— Zig Ziglar



Death is not the greatest loss in life.  
The greatest loss is what dies  
within us while we live.

— anon

Help others get ahead. You will always  
stand taller with someone else  
on your shoulders.

— Bob Moawad

## C H A N G E

But start slowly,  
because the direction is more important  
than the speed.

Sit on another chair,  
at the other side of the table.  
Later on, sit at another table.

When you go out,  
walk on the other side of the street.  
Later on take another route,  
walk on other streets,  
calmly,  
observing with attention  
the places you pass by.

Take another bus.  
For a while, change the style of your clothing.  
Give up your old shoes.  
Walk barefoot for a few days.

Take a whole afternoon  
to roam freely in the fields,  
or in the park

and listen to the song of birds.  
Watch the world from other perspectives.  
Open and close the drawers  
and doors with your left hand.

Sleep on the other side of bed.  
Later on, try to go to sleep in  
other beds in the house.

Watch different TV programmes,  
buy other newspapers.  
Read other books,  
Live other romances.

Don't let habit become a life style.  
Love what is new.  
Go to bed later.  
Go to bed earlier.

Learn a new word per day  
in another language.  
Correct your posture.  
Eat a bit less,  
choose different food,  
different seasonings,  
new colors, new delicacies.

Try something new every day,  
a new method,



a new flavor,  
a new pleasure,  
a new love.  
A new life.

Try.  
Make new friends.  
Try new loves.  
Build new relationships.

Have lunch in other places,  
go to other restaurants,  
have another type of drink,  
buy bread from another bakery.  
Have lunch earlier  
have dinner later. Or vice versa.

Choose another grocery store,  
another type of soap,  
another tooth paste,  
take a shower at different times.

Use pens in different colors.  
Take walks in different places.  
Love a lot,  
more and more,  
in different ways.

Change your handbag,

your wallet,  
your travelling bags,  
change your car,  
buy new spectacles,  
write verses and poems.

Throw away the old watches,  
break delicately  
those harsh alarm clocks.

Open an account at a different bank.  
Go to other cinemas,  
other beauty salons,  
other theatres,  
visit new museums.

Change.  
Remember that Life is precious.  
Think seriously about getting another job,  
a lighter type of work,  
with more pleasure,  
more dignity,  
a more humane work.

If you do not find reasons to be free,  
invent them.  
Be creative.  
Cry out as loud as you can in the open air.

Let others think you are crazy.

Take the chance to go on a long  
unpretentious trip,  
if possible without destination.

Experience new things.  
Change again.  
Try the new.  
Experiment once again.

You certainly will get to know better  
and worst things than the ones you already knew,  
but this is not what matters.  
What really matters is the change,  
the movement,  
the dynamism,  
the energy.  
The positivity that you are feeling now.

Only what is dead does not change!

I repeat, for the pure joy of living,  
salvation takes place with risk taking,  
without which  
life is not worth while!

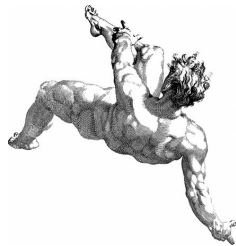
— Clarice Lispector

Success is not measured by what one brings  
but rather by what one leaves.



“When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and, for a time, they can seem invincible but, in the end, they always fall. Think of it – always.”

— *Mahatma Gandhi*



## **RIGHT NOW**

somebody is thinking of you

somebody is caring about you

somebody misses you

somebody wants to talk to you

somebody wants to be with you

somebody hopes you aren't in trouble

somebody is thankful for the support you provided

somebody wants to hold your hand

somebody hopes everything turns out all right

somebody wants you to be happy

somebody wants you to find him/her

somebody is celebrating your successes

somebody wants to give you a gift

somebody thinks that you are a gift

somebody loves you

somebody admires your strength

somebody is thinking of you and smiling

somebody wants to be your shoulder to cry on

## FAILURES

'Tis better to have tried in vain,  
Sincerely striving for a goal,  
Than to have lived upon the plain  
An idle and a timid soul.  
'Tis better to have fought and spent  
Your courage, missing all applause,  
Than to have lived in smug content  
And never ventured for a cause.  
For he who tries and fails may be  
The founder of a better day;  
Though never his the victory,  
From him shall others learn the way.

— *Edgar A. Guest*

## LESSONS

I've learned...

That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

I've learned...

That when you're in love, it shows.

I've learned...

That just one person saying  
"You've made my day!" makes mine.

I've learned...

That being kind is more important  
than being right.

I've learned...

That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act goofy with.

I've learned...

That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I've learned...

That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.



I've learned...

That we should be glad we don't get everything  
we ask for.

I've learned...

That money doesn't buy class.

I've learned...

That under everyone's hard shell is someone  
who wants to be appreciated.

I've learned...

That the Source didn't build Earth in one day.  
What makes me think I can?

I've learned...

That to ignore the facts does not change  
the facts.

I've learned...

That the easiest way to grow is to surround  
yourself with people who are smarter.

I've learned...

That no one is perfect until you  
fall in love with them.

I've learned...

That life is tough, but I'm tougher.

I've learned...

That the less time I have to work with,  
the more things I get done.

I've learned...

That one should keep their words soft and  
tender, because tomorrow you may have to  
eat them.

I've learned...

That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve  
your looks.

I've learned...

That someone will take the opportunities  
you neglect.

I've learned...

That when you harbour bitterness,  
happiness will dock elsewhere.

I've learned...

That everyone wants to live on top of the  
mountain, but all the growth takes place  
at the foot, in the soil.





*A compilation of reflections  
and inspirations to uplift all  
the weariness in your world.*

Mark Twain once said, "I can live for two months on one good compliment." He was right. When our inner fire is extinguished and motivation is lacking, a single spark is enough to ignite our self worth.

This collection of 144 inspirations, quotations and invocations was selected to inspire, empower, and to offer reflection, solace and levity in times of stress. Choose a page and let its message be your mantra for the day. Or a lifetime. May this book help you keep your head about you when all around are losing theirs.

*Freddy Silva is a bestselling author of  
ancient systems of knowledge.*

\$12

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