

A Guide to Success & Happiness

by Tim Barrett



*A Guide
to Success
and Happiness*

© Copyright 1996-1999 by Tim Barrett
Illustrations by Oai Huynh

Foreword
20 / 4 / 1997

Contrary to popular belief, our level of happiness is something that we have ultimate control over. We can look at a glass half filled with water and view it in a positive light (saying it is half full) or a negative light (saying it is half empty). In a car accident, we can be thankful that our lives were spared, or we can be upset about the damage to the car. No material thing creates or sustains happiness. If viewed in a negative light, almost anything could cause unhappiness whereas viewed in a positive light, life itself can be a source of great joy.

In a similar way, we also have ultimate control over our destiny and each of us is capable of achieving great things. With desire and determination we can achieve our highest goals and live happy and fruitful lives.

This book contains numerous ideas and examples of how to be happy and successful. Use it to get ideas about what changes you may want to make to yourself or your life, and then all you have to do is implement them. No doubt some of the ideas expressed will not ring true, though if the book makes you smile or helps you make the slightest difference to your life then it has achieved its goal.

Have a wonderful, joyous life.

Tim.
barrett@aztech.com.au

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Learning | 5 |
| Taking Responsibility | 21 |
| Thinking for yourself | 43 |
| Being Understanding | 53 |
| Solving Problems | 75 |
| Being Positive or Negative | 89 |
| Courage | 101 |
| Trusting your Heart | 109 |
| Making an Effort | 117 |
| Direction and Focus | 131 |
| Taking Action | 141 |
| Making a Difference | 157 |
| Expectations | 163 |
| Caring & Giving | 177 |
| Letting Go | 195 |
| Change | 205 |
| Forgiveness | 219 |
| Perceptions & Judgements | 231 |
| Making Your Own Reality | 243 |
| The Law of Karma | 255 |
| Objectiveness & Religion | 265 |
| Destiny & Opportunity | 277 |

Using the Guide

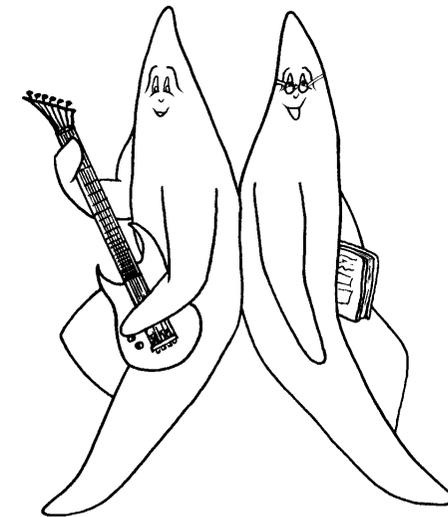
This book is divided into a number of topics, each of which has a number of maxims with an accompanying explanation. When reading the Guide, read the saying, then the explanation, then re-read the saying and think for a minute about how it might relate to you.

Note that this book is by no means a Bible and should not be treated as such. Rather, it is just a collection of ideas that may be applied in every day life. I hope you enjoy it!

Learning

*View life as an opportunity
to learn.*

We can learn from every experience. Often, the more difficult the situation, the more we can learn from it. It is wonderful to be able to look back on difficult times and be grateful that we have learnt so much from them.



Be open to new ideas.

Be careful not to fall into the trap of complacency where our ideas become static and we cease to grow. A new idea may challenge the way we think, but it may well have merit. It is certainly worth exploring or thinking about new ideas, even if only to determine how valid they may be.

*Remember that everyone we
meet knows something we
don't.*

There is potential to learn from everything and everyone we encounter. It takes wisdom to learn from a fool.

We often find ourselves in situations where we can get hurt. Ultimately, however, we have control over how hurt we feel. There is little benefit in feeling hurt too deeply, for too long or too often.

Learn from life, love it, but don't let yourself be hurt by it.

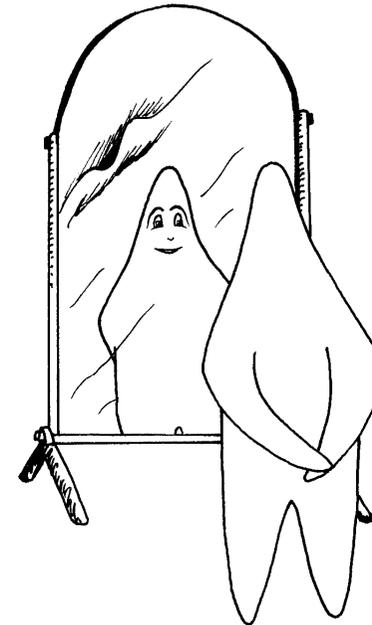


Do not discount the opinions of others, even if you disagree. There must be some reason why they believe it.

Try and understand why others feel the way they do. In doing so you may find that their opinions have more validity than you think, or at very worst you may learn something.

It is important to get to know and understand yourself.

Understanding yourself gives you more control over your own feelings and a greater capacity to achieve your goals.



*We learn a little when we
succeed, a lot when we fail.*

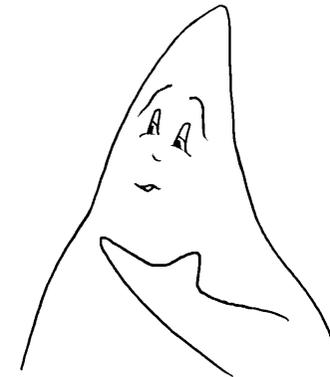
It is great to succeed but we tend to learn more from what we did wrong than what we did right. The way to make something better a second time around is to not make the same mistakes again.

Dwelling on the mistakes achieves nothing. Sort out what went wrong and don't make the same mistakes next time.

Taking Responsibility

Consider the consequences of what you do for you are responsible for all your own actions.

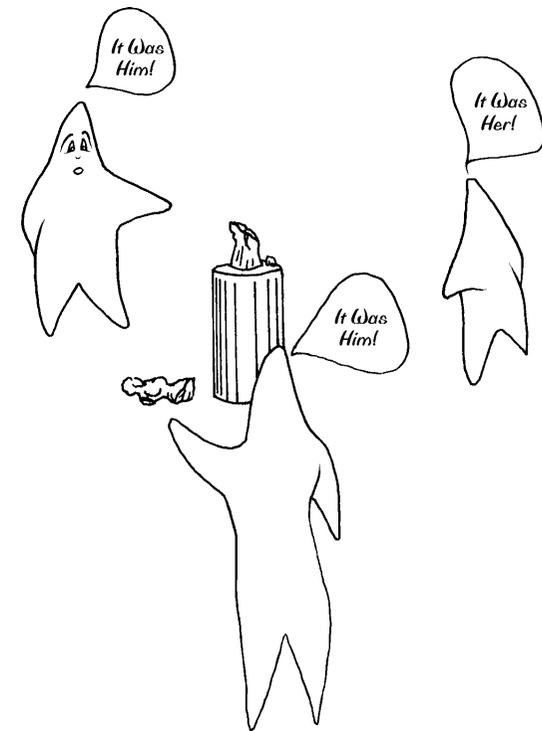
If you do not intend ill towards others, be careful about what you say and do. If you do intend ill, take a long hard look at yourself. In the long term, negative or thoughtless actions are bound to bring as much misery and suffering to you as they do to others.



Don't blame others for your problems.

When things are going badly, some of us have a tendency to place the blame on others. The chances are, however, that either we are the cause of the problem, or we are the only one that can solve it.

Taking control of the situation, be it our fault or not, gives us the power to solve it. Just apportioning blame achieves nothing and takes away our only hope of solving the problem.

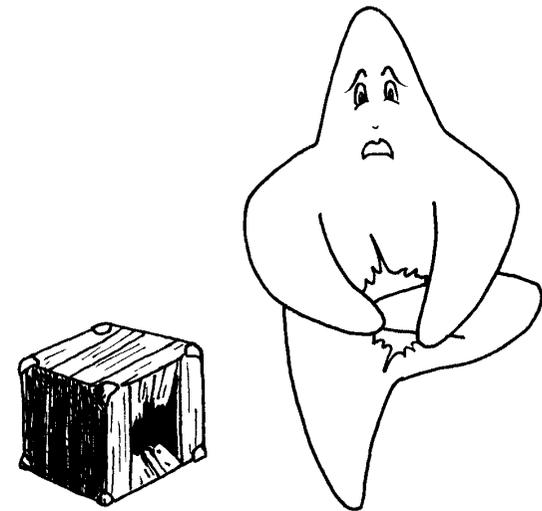


*Arrogance will get you
nowhere.*

It is easy to fall into the trap of being arrogant in an attempt to get people to see what a terrific person we are. The trouble is that they tend to just see us as being arrogant. If you would like people to see the real, wonderful you, be honest and open and avoid arrogance.

Selfish, destructive or violent actions seldom bring benefit to anyone and sooner or later, they will cause us pain.

On occasion we feel like breaking or hitting something, or just being selfish. Although we may feel a bit better for a short time if we act on these feelings, in the long run it achieves nothing and we are likely to end up feeling worse because of it. We are far better off solving the problem some other way.



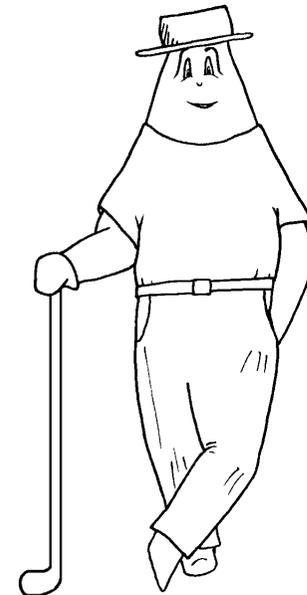
What you achieve, where you go and how you feel is up to you. No one else but you has control over your life. Be positive, and have faith in yourself.

With enough effort, desire and determination we can achieve our highest goals and be what we want to be.

You have the potential to achieve anything. All you need is the desire, effort and faith in yourself. Don't forget, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again".

Nothing just happens by accident. You have to go out there and make it happen.

A famous golfer once recounted a story about a day where he had a magnificent round where everything had gone right. He was approached by a spectator who said “Gee you were lucky today”. “Yes” he said, “and the funny thing is, the more I practise, the luckier I get”.



*You only live once a lifetime
- make the most of it.*

Regardless of your spiritual beliefs, you are here now. This is your life and you may as well make the very best of it you can. Make your mark, make people smile or just find your own happiness, but do something!

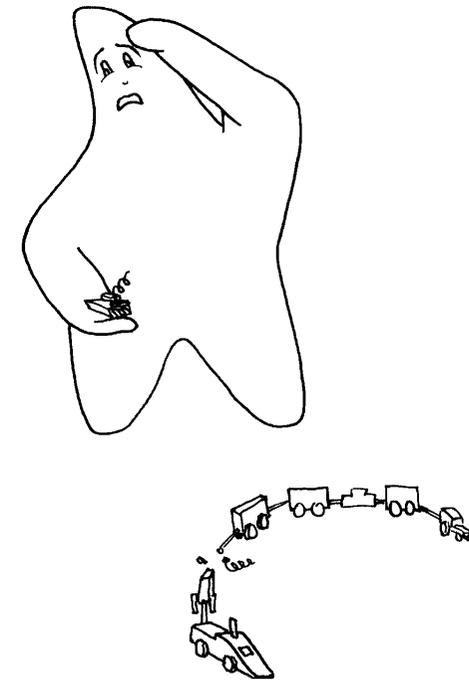
*Don't be afraid to accept
responsibility for your past
mistakes.*

Someone once said “Show me a man who has never made a mistake and I will show you a man who has never achieved anything”. We all make mistakes.

Without taking responsibility for our mistakes we can not learn from them. In accepting responsibility, we gain the freedom to resolve the issues of the past and move forward to a new and happy future.

Feeling guilty helps no one. It is a destructive emotion that is useful only as a trigger for action to resolve the issue.

Guilt serves no purpose. Just fix the problem.



In our busy lives it is easy to ignore our body. It is important to look after ourselves, as when we get run down we do not function as well, we become irritable and may end up quite sick.

If we feel stressed, we need to relax, if we get sick, it generally means we need to slow down. It is best to prevent these situations before they arise, or pay attention to them as soon as they do.

Listen to your mind and body.

*Thinking for
yourself*

*Think for yourself. Listen
to the opinions of others,
but make your own
judgements.*

The best way to find the truth is to get as much information as you can then make you own judgements. As we are all subjective beings, people's opinions are amazingly diverse, but you have just as much capacity to determine the truth as anyone.

Meditation and quiet contemplation are good tools for finding the answers to all sorts of problems.

Our minds are often filled with a lot of noise which makes it difficult to think clearly. Sitting down quietly and clearing our mind of all thoughts often helps tremendously in making a decision or sorting out a problem.



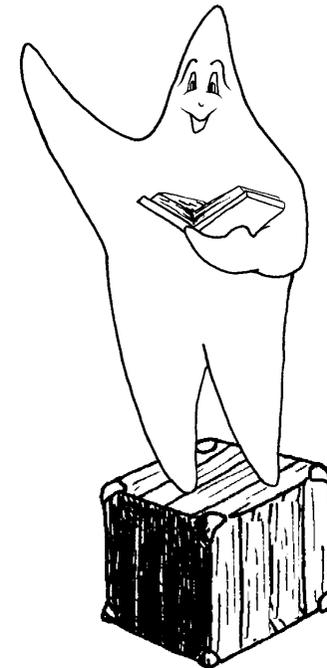
Don't limit yourself to believing you have a limited capacity for understanding.

There are many different ways of learning and some suit us better than others. If you have trouble understanding something, keep at it or try a different tack and all will eventually become clear.

Many people are passionate about their beliefs though almost everyone's beliefs are different.

Just because someone is passionate about their beliefs does not make them right. There are many passionate people whose beliefs are contradictory. They can't all be right, and it is far more likely that their beliefs are in part true.

Don't be swayed by the conviction of others. It is often best to listen to what someone has to say, learn from them and retain those things that seem right to you.

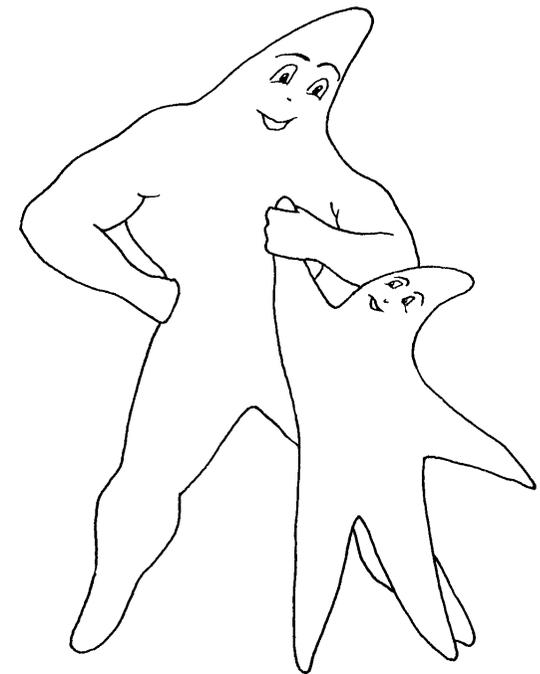


Being Understanding

Understand and forgive the weaknesses in yourself and others.

Nobody's perfect. We expect people to forgive our shortcomings though we are often lax in extending the same courtesy to others.

Looking seriously at our own weaknesses gives us the capacity to work on them or concentrate on our strengths.



Don't take offence as people seldom mean to hurt you. If they do mean to hurt you, they don't deserve the satisfaction of seeing it happen.

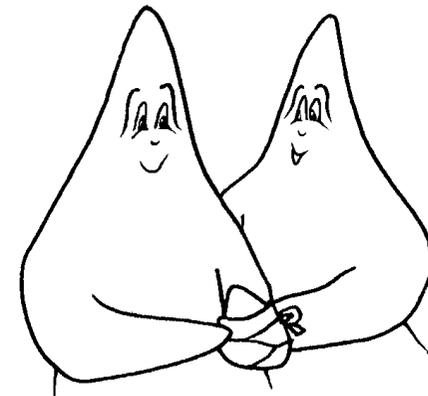
We are often hurt not by what is said, but by our interpretation of it. Often the other party would be distressed to learn that we had been hurt by what was said.

Look at it from the other person's point of view and try to understand why they have said what they have, and whether any hurt was intended. It may be that they have had a bad day and need our support and comfort.

If they did intend to hurt you, they deserve your pity and sympathy as they are bound to be unhappy. They also do not deserve the satisfaction of seeing you hurt.

Be sensitive to the needs of others.

Thinking about the needs of others gives us a greater capacity to respond to them. Everyone benefits in the long run.



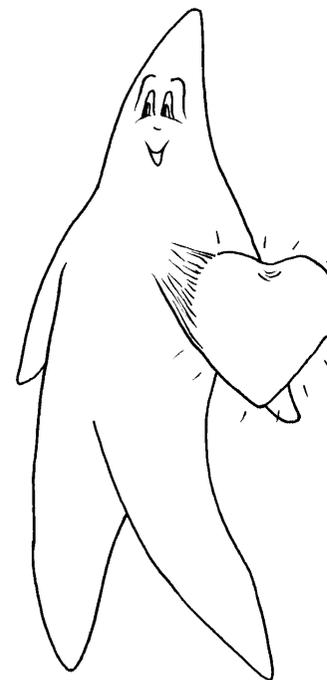
Have respect for all living things. Their life is a marvellous thing that should not be taken lightly.

It is easy to forget the value of a life. In our society we often arbitrarily place the value of one life above another. We may, for example, help save a stranded whale and then go fishing.

All life is precious and has a right to exist. Think before you take the life of another living thing.

Anyone can be cold and hard but only a special person is capable of compassion.

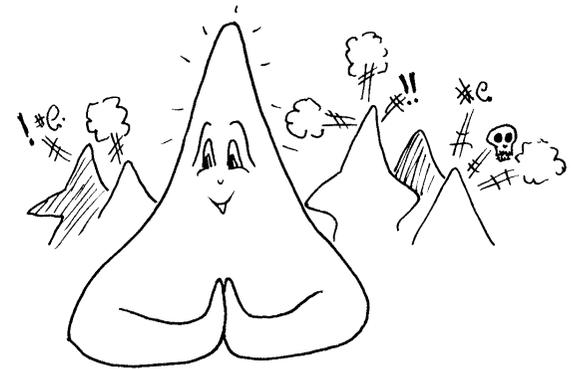
To have mercy and compassion is a sign of great strength and understanding.



Keep a cool head.

When there is a problem we often become anxious, upset or angry. Although these are quite normal reactions, they don't achieve anything.

A far better way of solving the problem is to slow down. Try and remain calm and think things through. If you can remain calm, things won't seem nearly as bad and you will be much more in control of the situation. It is also easier for others to help if you are being cool and rational.



If you are honest with yourself you will not be so affected by the opinions of others.

We all have faults though we often try to convince ourselves that we don't, because it seems easier than dealing with the problem.

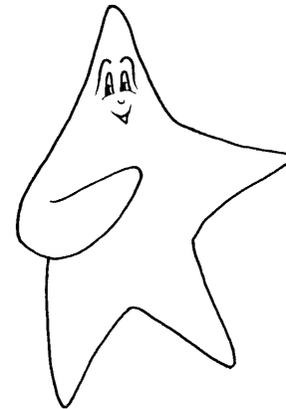
Trying to convince ourselves that we are something we are not will tend to result in us getting hurt, as others will see and point out our faults whether we acknowledge them or not. If, however, we recognise our faults then we have the chance to understand and resolve them.

*Look at hurt as an
opportunity for change.*

Sometimes we are hurt by a comment primarily because the person has pointed out a flaw or inadequacy that we have. If we get hurt it is a good idea to try and determine why we feel hurt, and if it is because of a weakness on our part, we should use it as an opportunity to grow and move forward. We can take it on board as a personal project and be a better person next time.

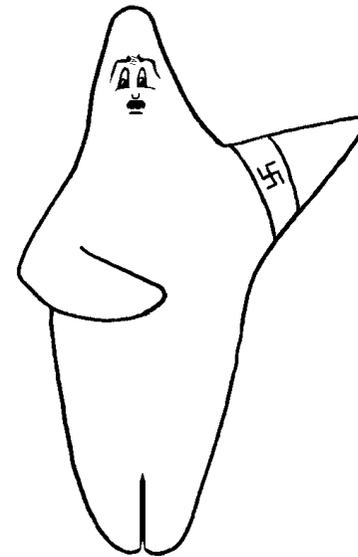
Express your feelings.

It is difficult for others to read our minds. If we want someone to know how we feel, we need to tell them. It often makes a tremendous difference to open up communications.



Being fanatical about something may achieve the desired results but it will also makes it very difficult to be objective and see anyone else's point of view.

Avoid Fanaticism.

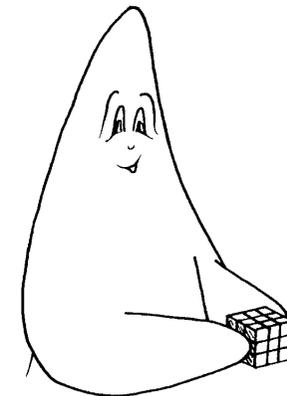


Solving Problems

*View problems as
challenges, not obstacles.*

Life is full of challenges. If viewed negatively, even the smallest of problems can become an enormous difficulty.

If viewed in a positive light, apparently insurmountable problems become tremendous challenges. When we solve such challenges we gain strength.



*Tomorrow, today's crisis
will be yesterday's
experience.*

Take heart in the fact that the crisis you are experiencing now will not seem so bad tomorrow. Time is a wonderful healer.

*In order to resolve a problem,
detach yourself from it.*

Problems are seldom as serious as they seem at the time. Much of the problem is created in our own minds as we tend to imagine the worst possible outcome.

Sit down, relax and think pleasant thoughts or focus on something else for a while. When you come back to the problem it won't seem so bad.



Obstacles and difficulties help us to grow and make us strong and independent.

Without ever facing adversity, we cannot become strong.

It is often the most painful experiences in our lives that help us grow the most. They may seem difficult at the time, but in years to come we can look back on them with gladness as they will have helped to make us what we are.

The reward at the end of the journey is directly related to the difficulty in getting there.

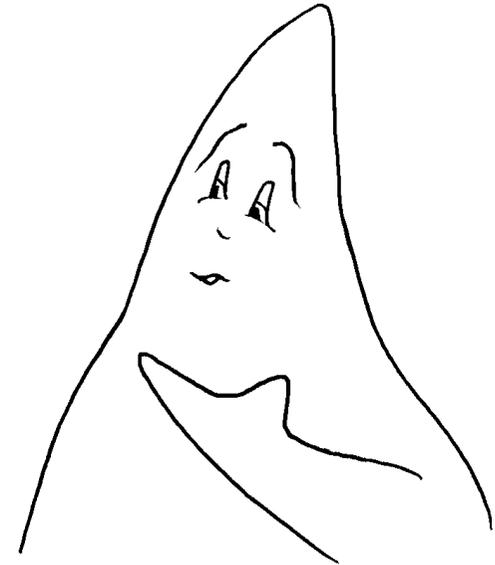


*The point at which things
can't get any worse is also the
point at which things can only
get better.*

If you look at things in a positive way and believe things will get better, then they will.

*Nothing is ever as bad as it seems.
No matter how bad things get,
consider why things may not be
so bad.*

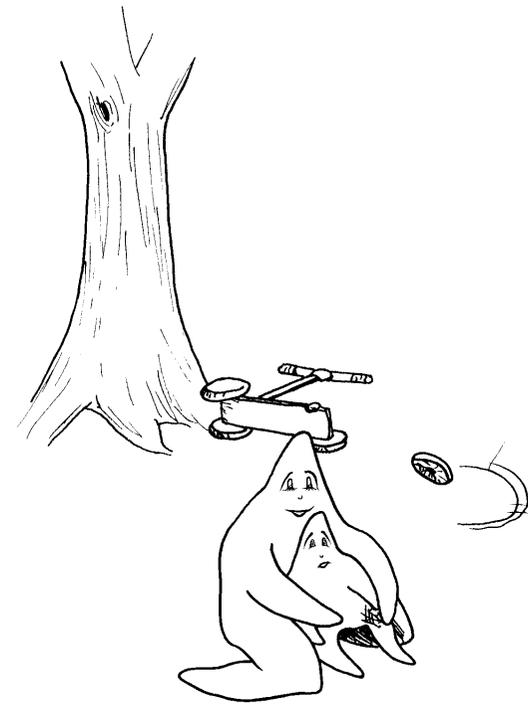
Much of what makes a situation seem so bad is our perception of it. There is always a positive side to things and always a reason why things are not as bad as they seem. If you can find those reasons then things will indeed not seem so bad.



*Being Positive or
Negative*

Viewing things in a positive light is the first step in attaining happiness and contentment.

Everything viewed in a positive light brings happiness. If we fell over and hurt our knee we could be upset and angry or we could be grateful and happy that we weren't more injured. The choice is ours.



Emotions such as bitterness, jealousy, hatred, prejudice and resentment are self created, unproductive and are bound to make you unhappy.

Negative emotions serve no purpose other than to make us feel bad. They make us feel terrible but often have a less significant affect on the person to whom the feelings are directed.

In the long run, the negative feelings achieve nothing and as they only serve to hurt us, we are far better off without them.

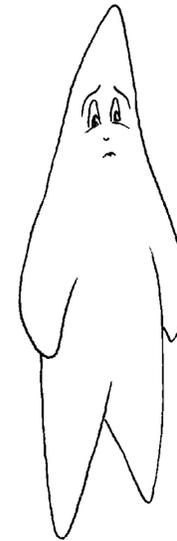
Next time you feel really angry at someone or something, stop and think what good it's doing and who you are hurting.

Being positive benefits everyone, costs nothing, and is really not that difficult.

There is no need to feel hatred and ill-feeling. You create it yourself then blame the target of your anger.

It is not them causing the hatred, it is you. It achieves nothing except to make you feel bad. You have no need for it and you will feel a lot better yourself if you just accept people for what they are.

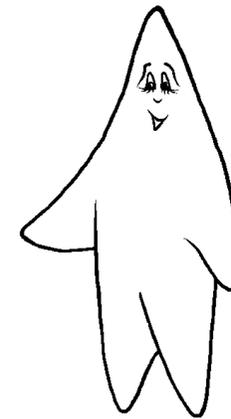
Don't forget that we are not perfect, and it is often the imperfections in ourselves that annoy us most when we see them in others.



*You can only ever be as
happy as you let yourself
be.*

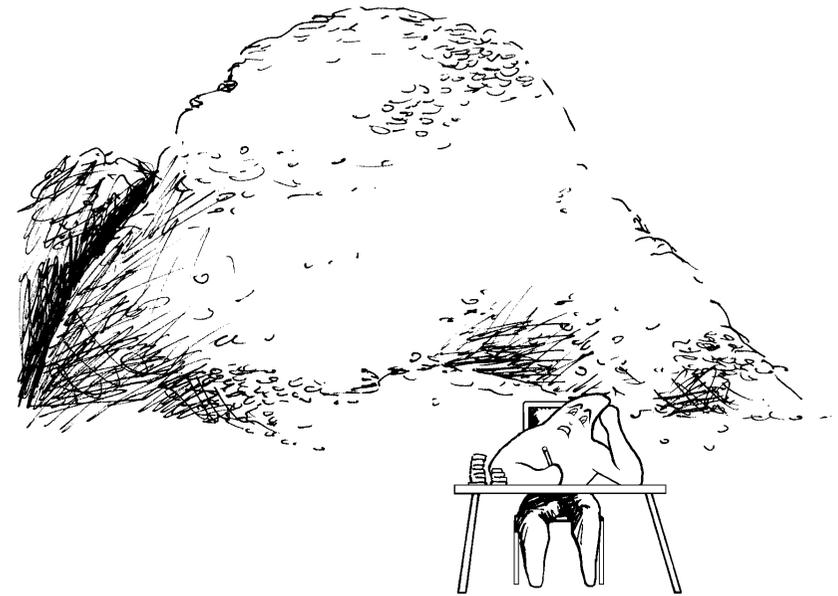
The only thing stopping you from being happy is you. Regardless of your circumstances, there is someone somewhere who is worse off and still smiling.

Life is a wonderful, joyous experience. Let yourself experience that joy.



Material possessions do not sustain happiness but may cause pain when they are taken away.

There is no connection between material wealth and happiness. Just as the richest of men may be unhappy because they don't have more money, the poorest of men may be happy because they need so little.



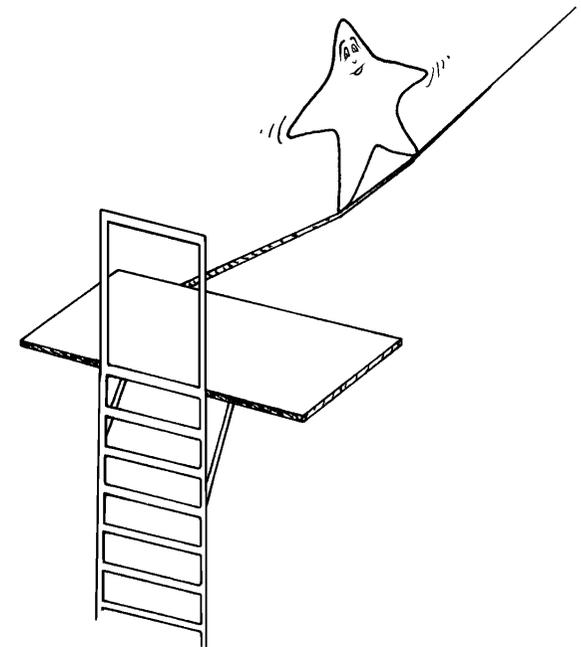
Courage

Fears are self imposed obstacles. You can do anything. You have no need for fear.

Fear feels as though it comes from the thing we are afraid of, but it is entirely generated within us.

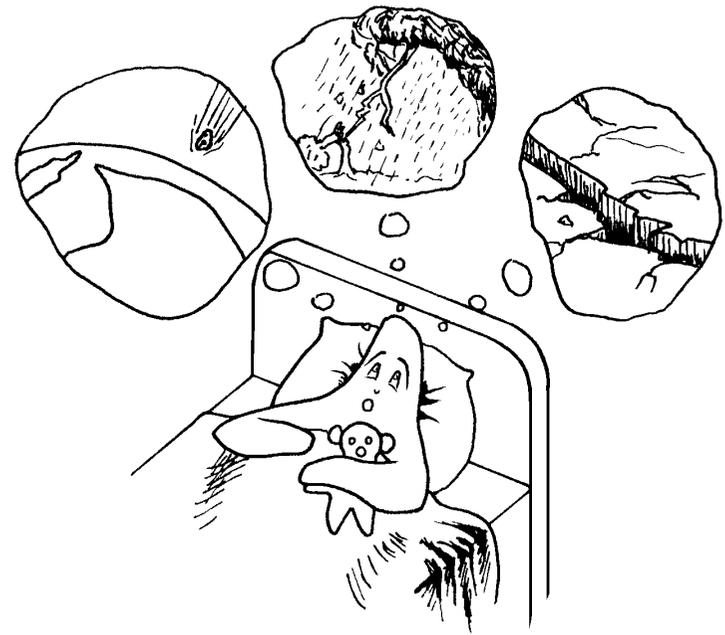
You have no need for fear and you have the capacity to overcome it. Understanding that you have that capacity is the first step to resolving your fears.

Face your fears knowing that they are not necessary, helpful or constructive in any way. You do have the power to conquer them. Just trust in yourself.



Do not be fearful of things that might happen in the future.

Life will take its course whether we worry about it or not. Just enjoy life and try not to worry. Things will seldom turn out as badly as we could imagine.



Clarity of thought and understanding the problem are major steps in conquering fear.

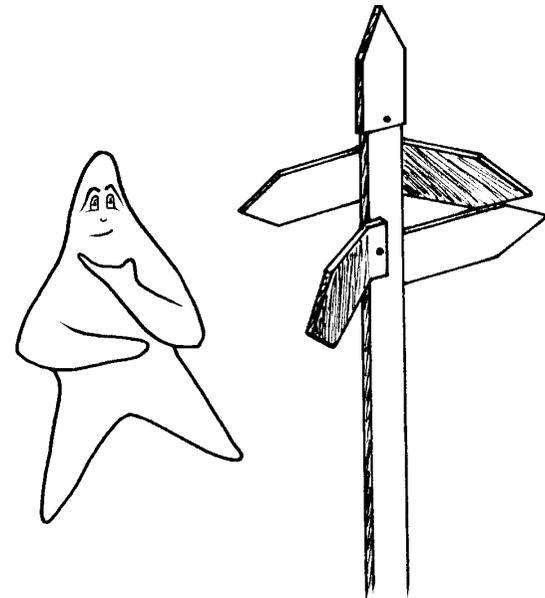
Fear is a natural defence mechanism against something that we perceive as being dangerous.

If we can look at our fears rationally, try and understand why we have them and why they are not necessary, we will have come a long way towards resolving them.

Trusting Your Heart

*You have the capacity to know
the best course of action in any
given situation.*

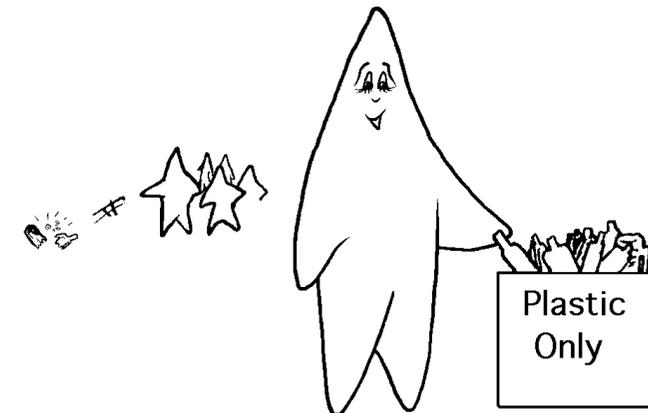
Never underestimate your intuition. The best course of action in any event is generally to do what “feels” right.



Don't compromise your values to the standard of those that surround you. In order to be happy, it helps to do those things we feel are right, and not those we feel are wrong.

Try and discover what is right and wrong. Just because others do it does not make it “right”. Each culture has its own set of morals but these are not necessarily right or complete.

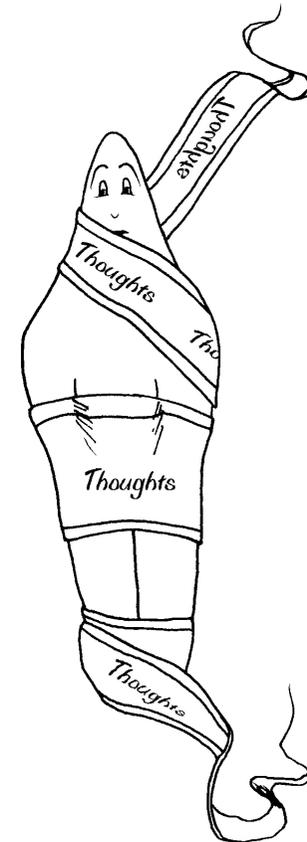
Comply to the morals of society, but feel free to go beyond these standards if you believe it is right. It is difficult to be content if we are constantly doing things we know are wrong.



Feelings from the heart tend to be simple and pure. Thinking too much about them may cause you to lose the way.

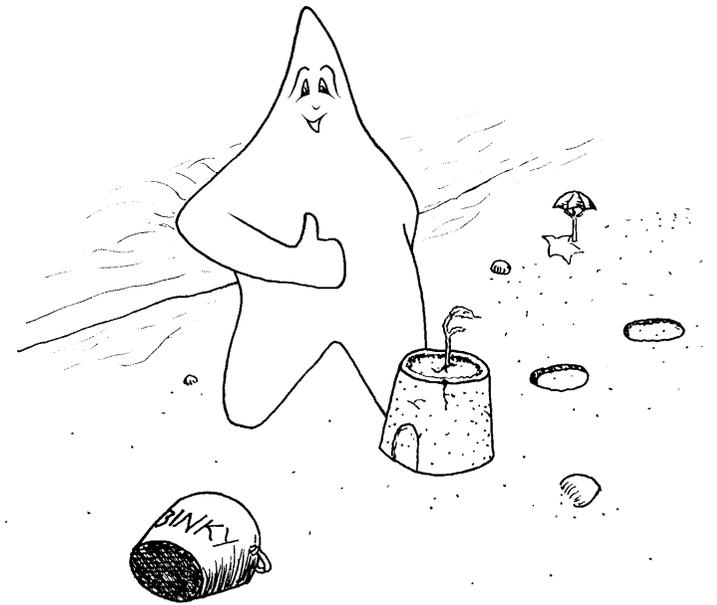
Our head and heart often have very different ideas about what is good for us.

On occasion, thoughts can be quite shallow and transient and based on an incomplete set of facts. It is sometimes a good policy to just trust our feelings rather than thinking about it too much.



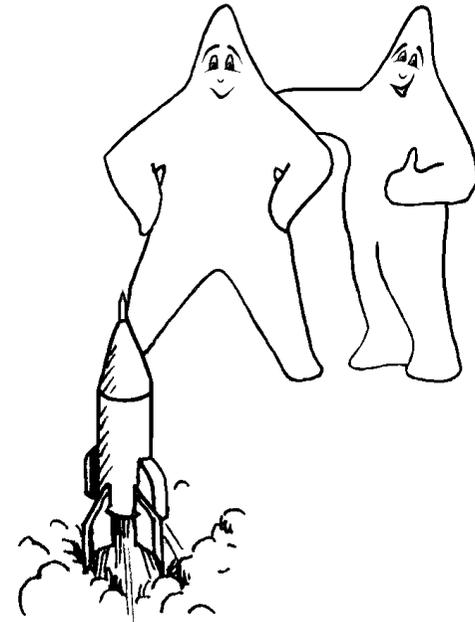
Making an Effort

*Effort is the key to
making something great.
Nothing worthwhile will
come without effort.*



There is an inherent satisfaction in knowing you have done your best. Make the effort and you will be rewarded.

You are capable of wonderful things. Give it your best and you will be amazed at what you can achieve. The reward for a job well done is well worth the effort.



*Be persistent. Don't give up
and you will eventually get
there.*

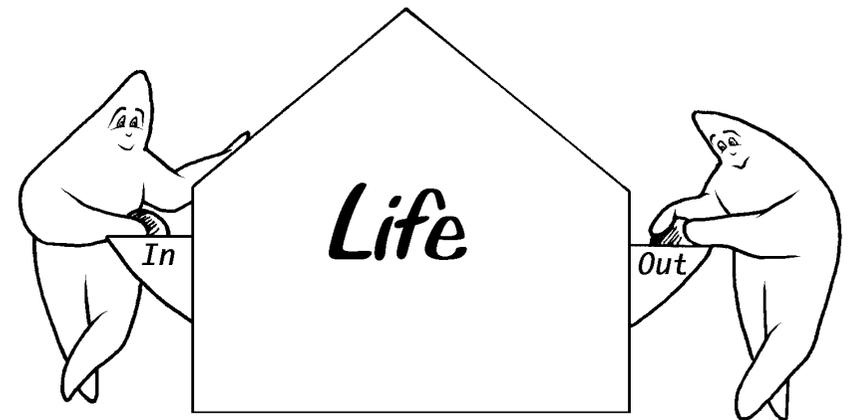
Don't forget "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again". If you keep going you will eventually solve the problem.



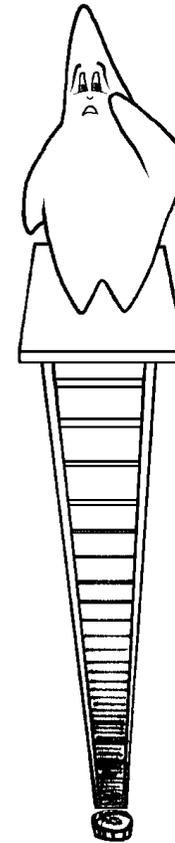
*If you do your best then
no one can ask for more.*

There is little satisfaction in knowing you could have done a job better. If you do your best, then you can be proud of what you have achieved, and you will learn skills and develop talent that will allow you to do even better next time.

*Expect to get as much
out of life as you put
into it.*



*If you do it properly the
first time, you won't have
to do it again.*



Direction and Focus

*What is important is
not so much where we
are but where we are
going.*

It is a great idea to decide on a goal or a direction in life, for without aim or direction progress may be slow.

Setting goals gives us direction and allows us to take decisions based on what we want to achieve. If we do not set any goals then our next step could be in any direction and will not necessarily take us where we want to be.

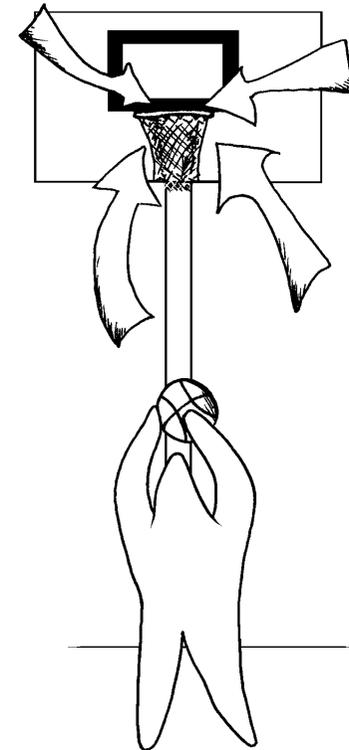
Achieving even the smallest goal brings joy, a sense of satisfaction, and makes the time spent on it seem worthwhile.

Think of something that you would really like to do, then set about doing it. Go to the zoo, read that book, whatever it is, just do it.

*Be focused on the job
at hand. Concentrate
and do it well.*

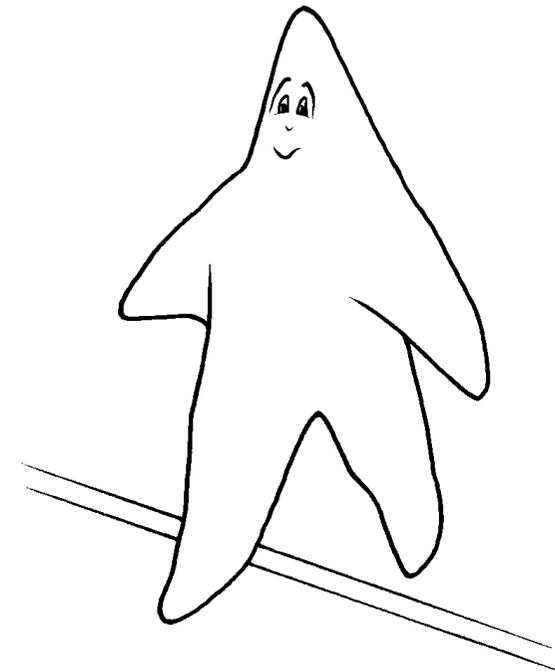
Being focused makes an enormous difference in our capacity to achieve goals. Whether they are short or long term goals, focusing on them enhances our abilities and makes it easier to get the job done.

Have faith that any goal is achievable if you work at it hard enough.



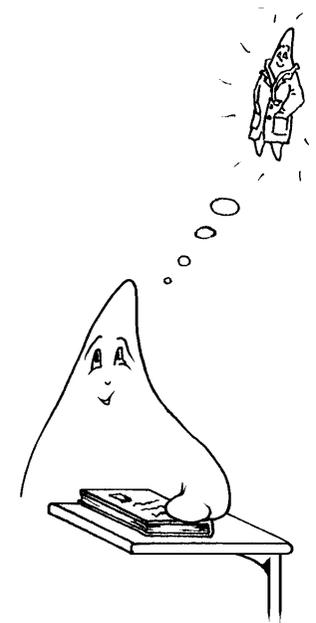
*A Journey of a
thousand miles starts
with just one step.*

Achieving any goal, great or small, is just a series of steps. Taken piece at a time, any task is simple. It is important to have a goal but our aim should be to complete the next step.



*Keep updating your goals
as you should always have
something to strive for.*

It is important to continually review our goals and set ourselves some new ones. If we find ourselves without something to strive for we may lose direction and momentum.



Taking Action

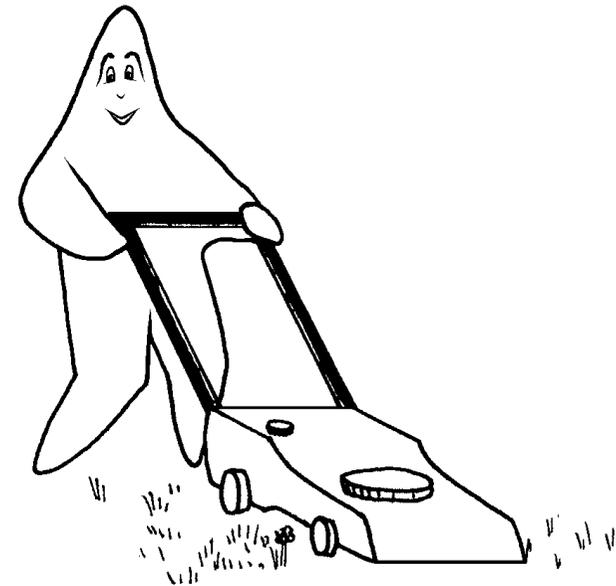
Until you get done what you need to do now, you will have no time to do what you intend to do later.

If you have something that needs doing now, do it and get it out of the way because until you do, you will feel that you have no time for anything else.

*Just Do it. To talk
about it takes much
more energy.*

Every time we say “I really must...” or “I need to something”, this is accompanied by a feeling of anxiety caused by not having done it. This feeling is often almost as bad if not worse than having done the thing itself.

Just doing it solves the problem.



*The power we possess to
make things happen is
greater than any task.*

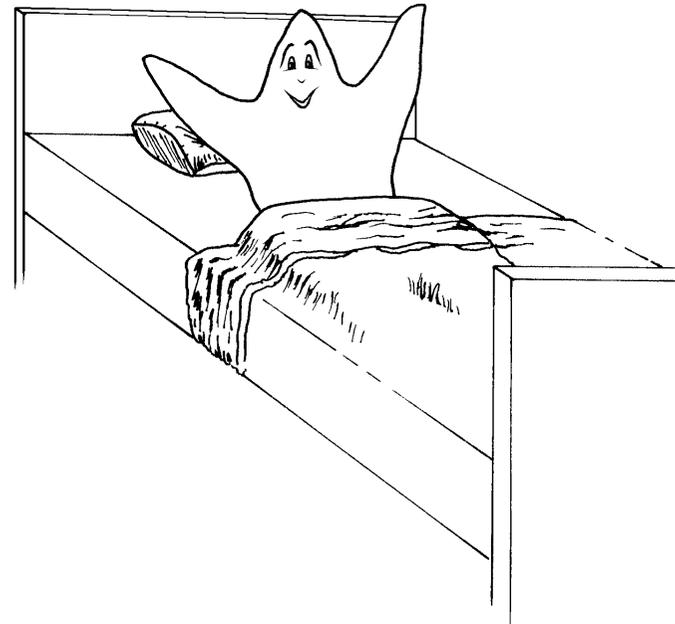
We can do just about anything. With enough effort and determination the job will get done. Have faith that you are capable of doing it.

Being committed to the task will give you all the strength you need to achieve your goal.

Life is far too short for procrastination. Get on with the project at hand, then move onto the next thing.

It is one thing to plan something, another to think about something for so long that it never happens. If you begin to get too bogged down in what you are doing, try a different tack or put it aside and get on with something else.

*Each day is a fresh start
and an opportunity to live
life to the fullest.*

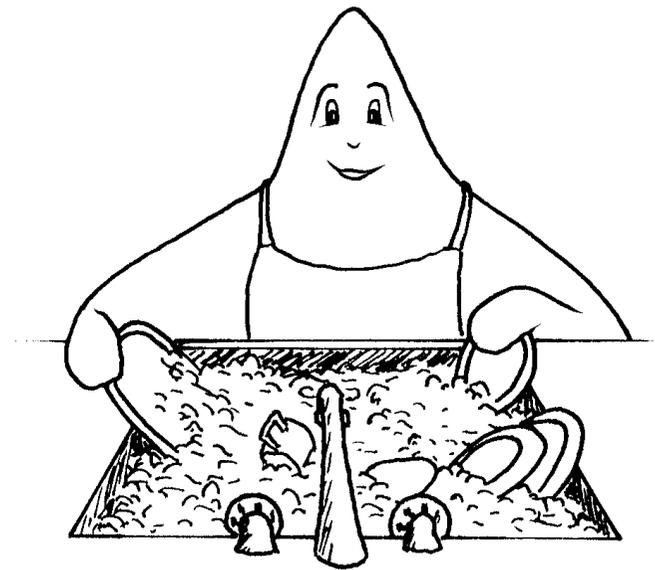


Always try and take action when you feel it is required and not when you feel it is wrong.

*If it needs doing - do it,
If you think it needs doing - do it,
If it feels right - do it,
If it feels wrong - don't do it.*

If you make a promise, make it a priority to ensure it happens. Empty promises will cause disappointment for all concerned.

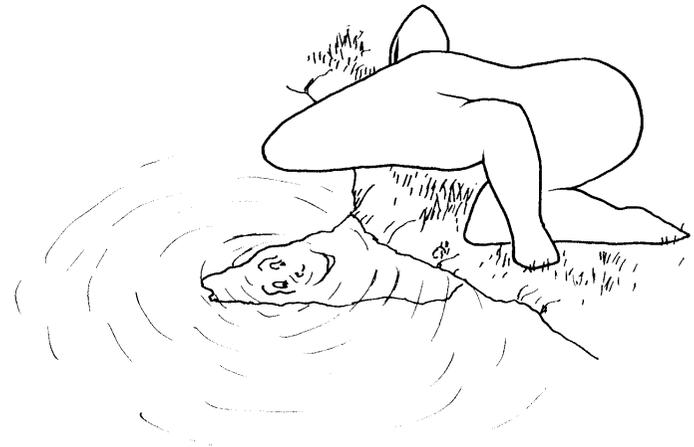
Make a Promise, Keep a Promise.



*Making a
Difference*

*You can change the world
and you can make a
difference.*

Everything we do and everything we say makes some kind of difference. Making someone feel good about themselves will change their whole day then they will change the day of all those they encounter and so on. Like ripples in a pool, a little effect goes a long way.



Never forget that you can make a difference, you do make a difference and no matter how small it may seem, it is a difference.

John saw a figure in the distance throwing something from the beach into the water. As he approached, he saw that the beach was littered with starfish that had been washed up by a storm and a woman was tossing them back into the sea. "What are you doing" he said. "Saving starfish" she replied, "They will die on the beach". "But you can't possibly make a difference" said John, "There are millions of them". The woman quietly picked up another starfish and threw it into the water saying "Well, I made a difference to that starfish".



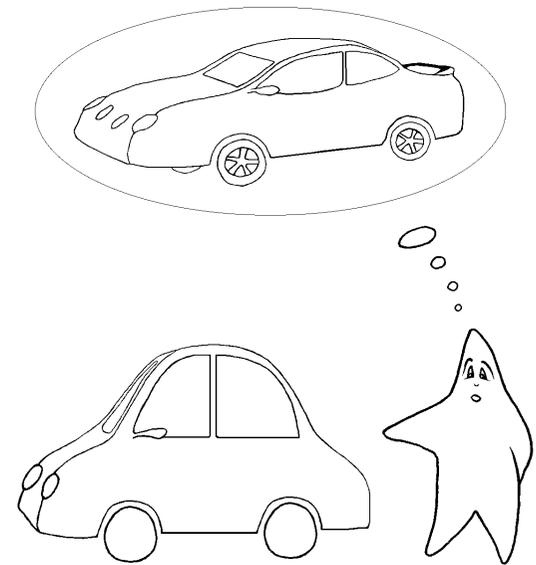
Expectations

*Don't depend on others to
bring you happiness or you
will be sure not to get it.*

You are the only one who has control over your happiness and trying to get it from others is a sure way of remaining unhappy.

*Appreciate what you have,
don't think of what you don't.*

We always have something to be happy about, but no matter how much we have, there is much more that we could choose to be unhappy about.



*Learn to rely on yourself.
If you don't expect too much of
others then you won't be
disappointed.*

When we expect too much from others we are often disappointed as our expectations may exceed their capacity or willingness to deliver.

If you don't need much from anyone then what you do get is likely to be more than you need, and then it becomes a pleasant surprise rather than a bitter disappointment.

*If you need praise then you
may be hurt by criticism.*

Every one of us is capable of great things. Be proud of your successes, and accept and learn from your failures, but try not to put too much store on the critical opinion of others.

It is always nice to receive praise from others but if we rely too heavily on getting it then we will be hurt if it is not given or if we are criticised.

You are a very capable person and you shouldn't need others to tell you that. Accept praise graciously and view criticism as a means of improving yourself.

*Don't be greedy for it will
only bring you grief.*

Greed is an unfortunate trait that invariably leads to disappointment and sorrow when we don't get what we want. We have no need for greed.

*Plan to succeed, as doubt
may lead to failure.*

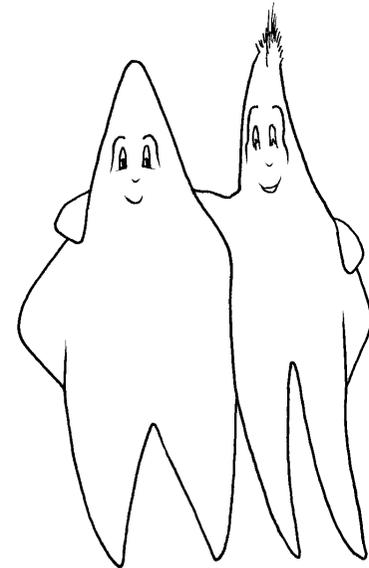
If you doubt yourself you will not perform as well as you can and this may cause you to fail in your endeavours. Have faith in yourself, believe you will succeed and succeed you will.



Caring & Giving

*Care for and respect
others, no matter what
their faults.*

Have respect for the opinions of others as you would have them respect yours. Having respect for others is one of the best ways of earning their respect.



Loving someone should be positive. Don't let yourself be hurt because you care too much.

It is easy to get into a situation where we get hurt because we care so much about someone. This may be through an action of theirs or as a result of them being hurt.

No one who loves us would want us to be hurt by what they say or do or by what happens to them. For their sake, if not your own, try not to let yourself be hurt.

Being kind has no cost though it brings us joy and helps others. We should never need a reason to be kind.

Display gratuitous kindness.



There is no room for enemies in a happy life. Make them your friends or at least stop wasting your energy on them.

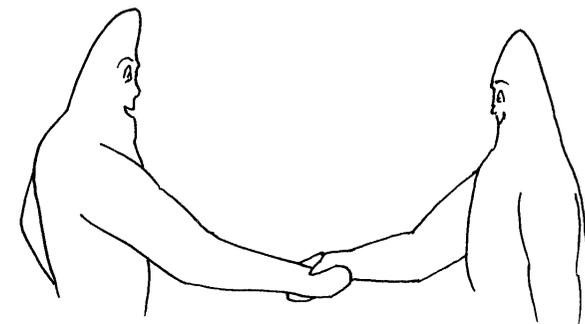
Enemies are a strong negative force that are simply unnecessary. It takes two to be enemies and if you take no part then it ceases to be your problem.

The reason for someone becoming an enemy is often just a misunderstanding and it is far better to clear it up than let it brood.

*It is attachment, not caring
too much, that causes pain.*

Attachment is a desperate longing to be with someone. Being too attached will put a subtle pressure on them which may drive them away. We can care deeply for someone without being attached.

If you really care about someone, give them the freedom to come and go.

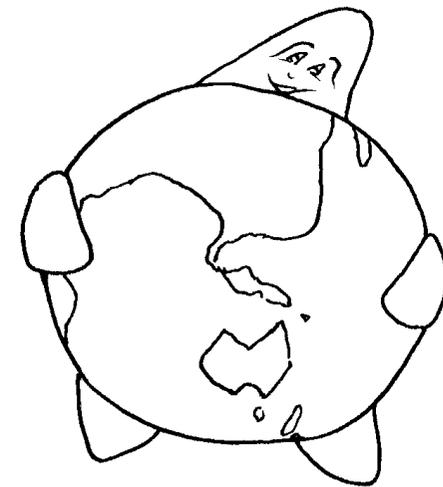


*Share your knowledge
with others.*

If you can help someone, do so. Sharing your knowledge with another will benefit you both.

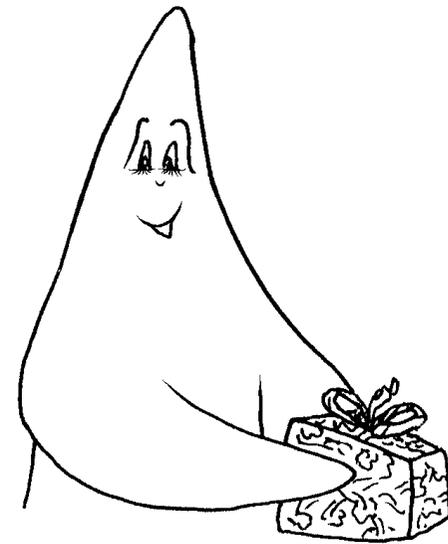
*Care for the world around
you - It's the only one we
have.*

There is only one planet Earth and we can't trade it in once we have worn it out. We must think of the future and ensure that apathy or greed does not result in us not having one.



Never count the cost of giving.

Seeing the joy you create should be payment enough for any cost. Be generous and you will be rich indeed.

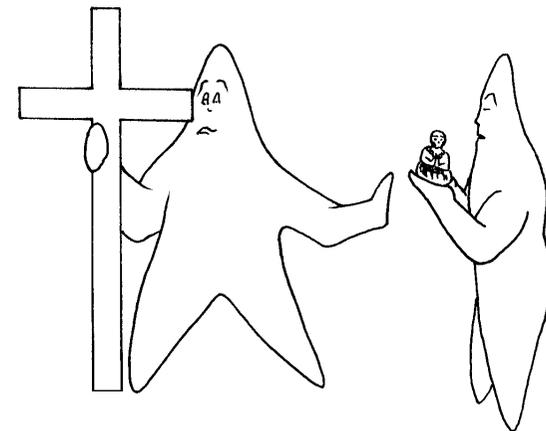


Letting Go

*Don't be too dogmatic
about your beliefs.*

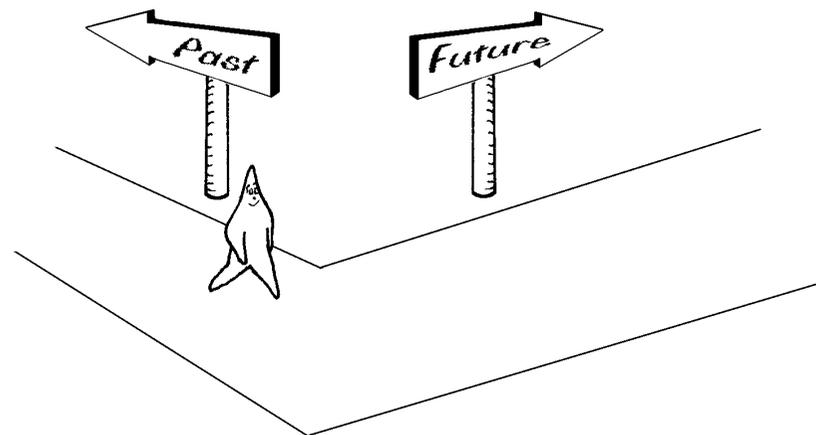
Our beliefs, although very real to us, are beliefs only. It is easy to hold on so tightly to our beliefs that it prevents us from learning anything new.

It could be that there is something we don't know and if our beliefs are flexible then we may one day learn it.



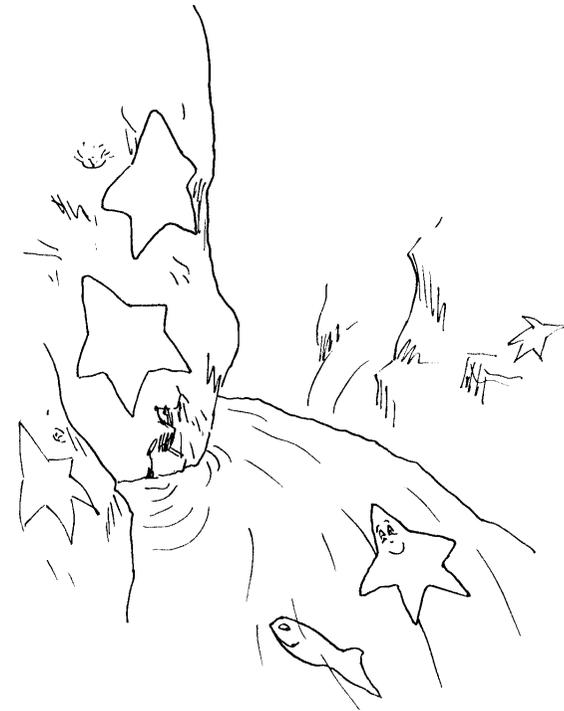
Let go of the past. The future has a lot more potential.

Learn from the past and keep it as a good memory. Retaining anything negative from the past is pointless. You have the capacity to make the future what you want, you can do nothing with the past.



*Do not be afraid to let go of
what you have, in order to
search for something better.*

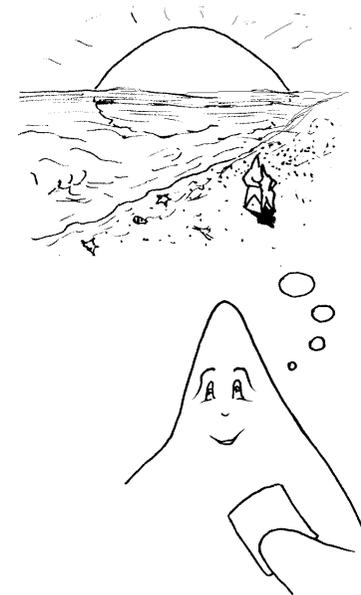
If you don't leave the mountains you will never see the sea. Life is rich and full of wonderful opportunities. Don't be too attached to where you are now or you may never get anywhere else.



*Be grateful for the time
you had with loved ones,
not sorry for the time
you missed.*

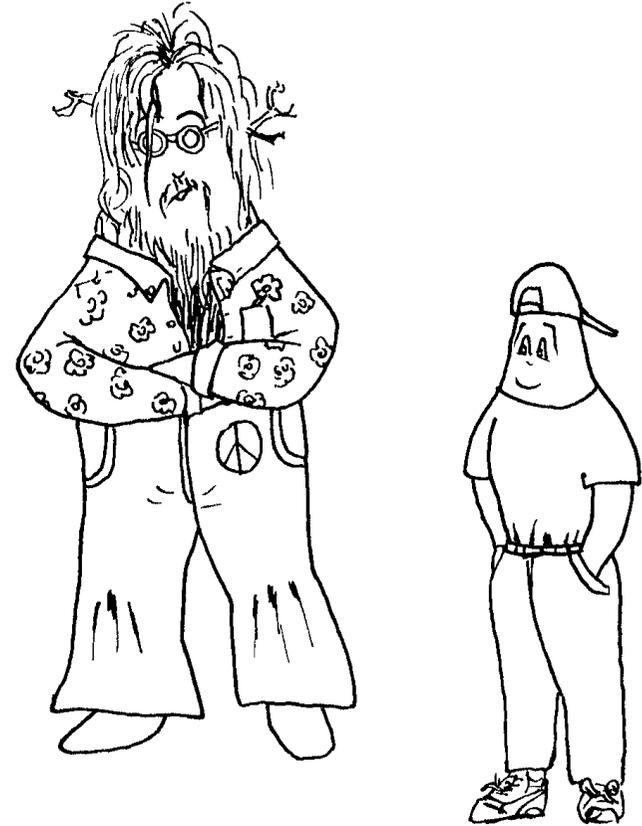
Losing a loved one is difficult and traumatic. One thing is for certain though, they would not want to see you unhappy.

Remember the wonderful time you had together and be grateful for it. You must try and be positive for their sake and yours.



Change

*Be open to change unless you
are perfect.*



*Don't be afraid of change as
it brings new and valuable
experience.*

There is no need to fear change. It is a natural part of life and will occur whether you like it or not.

Change is not always positive, but changing something you are not happy with, is likely to make it better.

Learn to love yourself and strive to be a person worthy of love. There is nothing you can do about the way you were yesterday, though tomorrow is another day.

Everyone has faults but it is a special person who can acknowledge them and try to change. You can do nothing about your past mistakes but a willingness to try and change for the better more than makes up for any past misgivings.

Tomorrow is a brand new day and the start of the rest of your life. Take the opportunity to make a fresh start.



*Accept who you are but
make the changes necessary
for you to become what
you want to be.*

There is a difficult balance to strike between accepting how you are, but acknowledging your faults and changing. It is important that you love yourself for what you are and at the same time aspire to be a better person.

If you are unhappy with yourself, don't be too harsh as at least you have acknowledged that you have faults. This is the first step required to fix them.

*Focus on what you need
to change and make it
clear in your own mind.*

Determine what it is that you feel you need to change. Until you understand what it is you are trying to change, it is impossible to change it.

There is no time like the present. If you wish to be a better person one day, start right now.

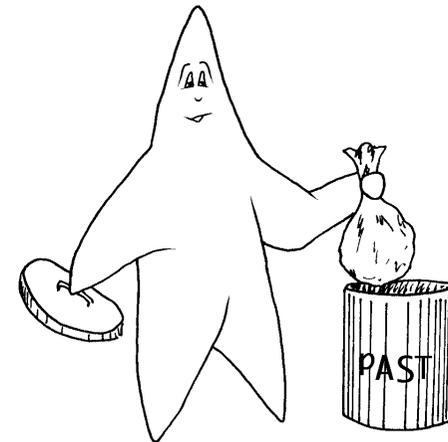
At any time you can choose to change yourself for the better.



Forgiveness

*Let go of the past as it can
bring sorrow and pain.*

Dwelling on the past achieves nothing. Learn from it, remember the positives, forgive and move on. If you don't, you could affect your entire future for no good reason.



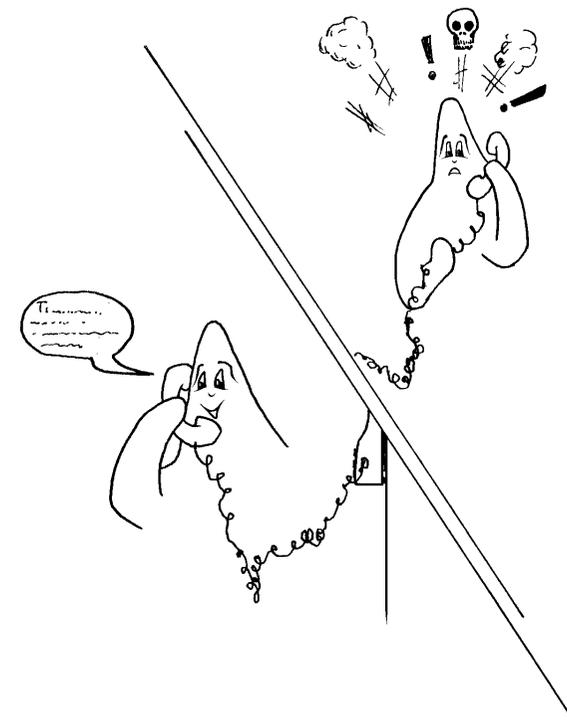
*Not forgiving others will
cause you more pain than
you inflict.*

It may not be wise to rely on those that have continually let you down in the past, though it certainly does not hurt to forgive them.

Forgiveness has no price but it will lift a great burden from the shoulders of everyone involved.

Often, a rift between two people is caused by a misunderstanding or circumstances beyond anyone's control. A rift can only remain firm if neither party attempts to bridge the gap.

Few arguments would occur if each party understood the other's point of view. Try and do so.



If a person does something to hurt you, they have done it because they do not understand the consequences of their actions, or have not taken responsibility for them. Such people need your love, understanding and help, not bitterness.

*"Forgive them for they know
not what they do".*

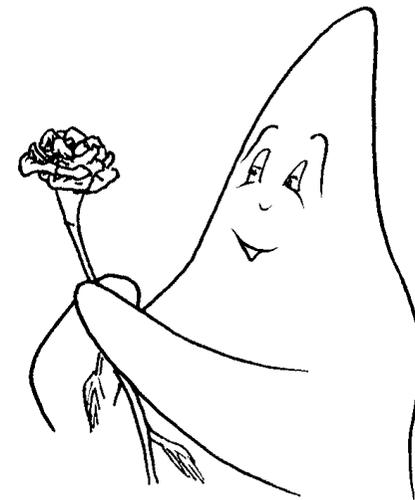
*Bitterness and resentment
result in sorrow. They serve
no useful purpose and you
are better off without them.*

It is entirely up to you whether you forgive someone or remain bitter and resentful. As you are really only hurting yourself, forgiveness is a much better option than remaining bitter.

*Perceptions &
Judgements*

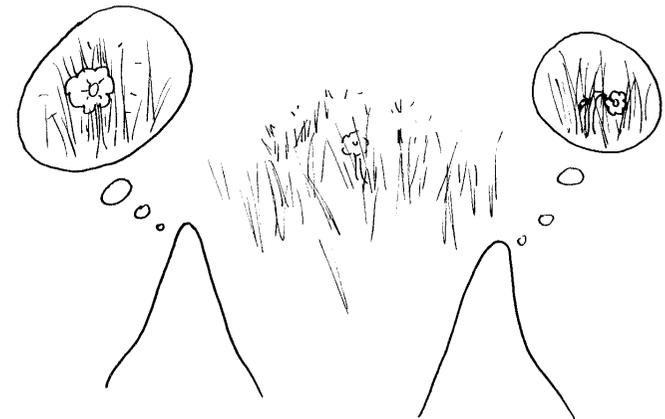
"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder". Look at everything with a positive view and it is indeed a beautiful world, look at it with negativity and it is a place of doom and gloom.

The way you look at things is up to you. If you choose to be positive then you will find life a joy, if you are negative then life will be unpleasant. Know that you should be positive and re-enforce this whenever you feel down.



*Reality is constant,
though our perceptions of
it are not.*

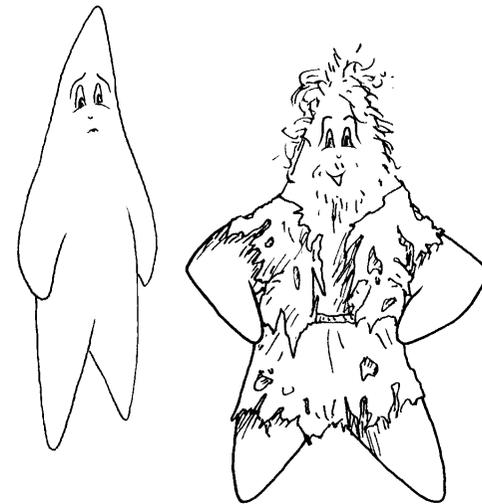
Our perceptions are not reality, they are merely a representation of it and they are subject to change. Our perceptions have more to do with the way we choose to perceive things rather than the way they actually are. Life is a wonderful adventure but you need to believe it for it to be so.



In judging others we tend to only see what we want to see. If we want to feel better about ourselves then it is easy to find flaw with others. If we feel insecure, it is easy to only see the outstanding qualities of others to reinforce our insecurity.

Be the best person you can, do the best you can, and be proud of your achievements. Respect others and be proud of their achievements also.

Don't judge others.



There is good in everyone. If you look for the good in people you will find happiness and many friends.

*Appreciate the good
and forgive the bad in
everyone.*

Never forget that our judgements are subjective.

The difference between a weed and a flower is only in the way we perceive and classify them, not in the flowers themselves.

Any judgement we make is based on our perceptions of the evidence we see. However, we have no way of knowing if we have seen all the evidence or if our perceptions are correct. If we were all objective and had access to all the evidence then all our opinions would be the same.

As humans, we make millions of different interpretations of the truth. You have just as much right to your opinions as anyone else but you should never forget that they are subjective and therefore not necessarily as correct as they may seem.

*Making Your
Own Reality*

*Believe in your goal
strongly enough and you
will attain it.*

Something magical happens when we really commit ourselves to something. Trust that if you really believe in something and work hard enough you can achieve any goal.

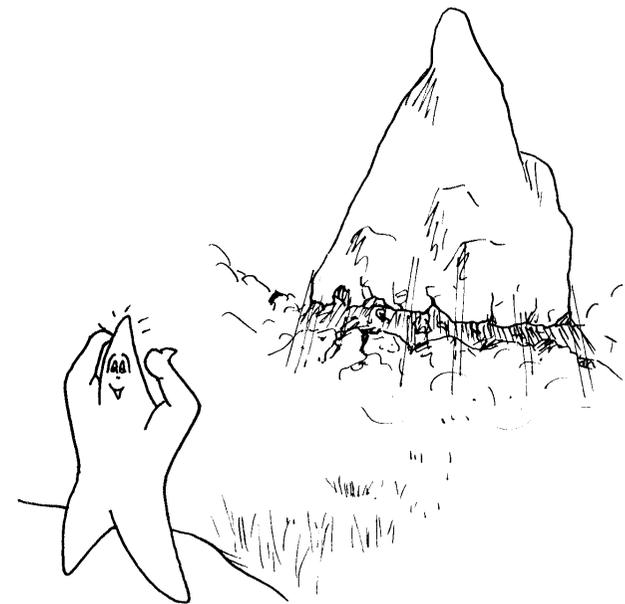


*With positive thought, desire
and determination we can
move mountains.*

Particularly if you have a big shovel!

Seriously, with the right attitude we are capable of just about anything. Believe in yourself, put in the effort, and you will achieve your highest goals.

Ultimately, we have control over what we do, where we end up and how we feel when we get there.



*Being negative will
create self fulfilling
prophecies.*

If we continually repeat to ourselves "nothing good ever happens to me", of course it won't. If by some miracle it does, we won't recognise it.

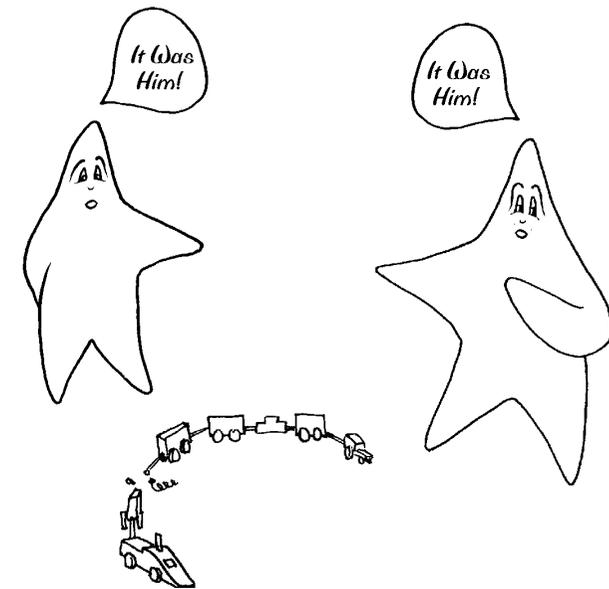
We tend to have selective memories and perceptions that reflect our state of mind. If we are very negative and something great happens to us we tend to look at it as an isolated fluke whereas any everyday event can be taken as evidence that life really is against us.

Just by looking at life in a positive light makes an enormous difference.

Be careful not to solve problems through self-deception or blaming others for our mistakes.

Sometimes we try and resolve a problem by kidding ourselves that it wasn't our fault. This does nothing to resolve the problem and in deluding ourselves we take away any chance we have of resolving it.

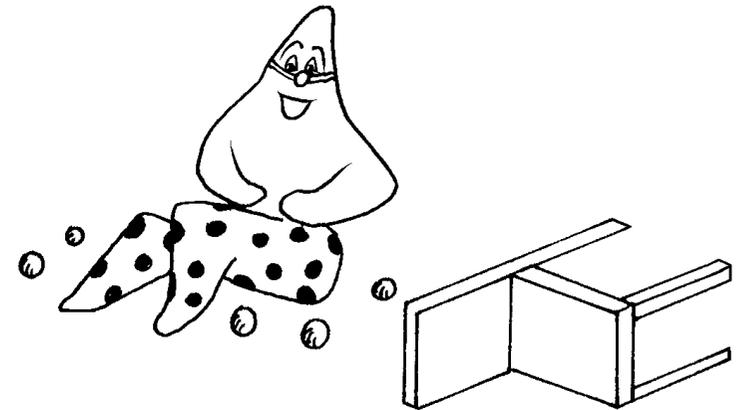
Take the blame where blame is due and fix the problem so that it doesn't happen next time.



Don't take life too seriously.

There are times when we must be serious though life should, and can easily be, a light and joyful experience. Make the most of it and share it with others.

Remember that we all make mistakes, we all have embarrassing moments, we are all human. Besides, laughing at yourself can be quite entertaining.

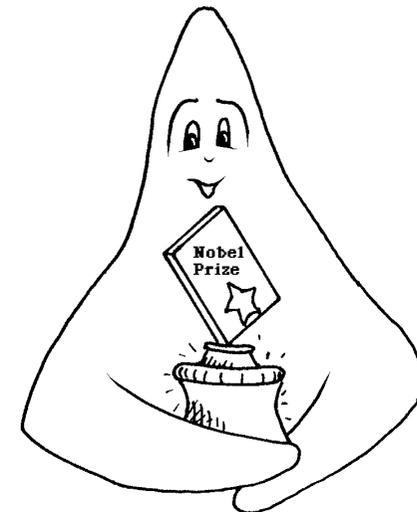


*The Law of
Karma*

Rest assured that in one way or another we will pay for our sins and be rewarded for our kindness.

Karma simply means that you “reap what you sow” or “what goes around, comes around”.

Karma affects us all in a very practical way. If, for example, we are positive, happy and caring, then we will on the whole have a great life. If we are negative and selfish then we are likely to be very unhappy.



Being kind, caring, understanding and giving will ensure that for the most part, you will be treated the same way.

The love and kindness you show to others will be reflected back to you.

Sincerely wishing someone a terrific weekend will brighten their spirits, if not their weekend, will make them feel special, and will make you feel good. All that benefit for so little cost!

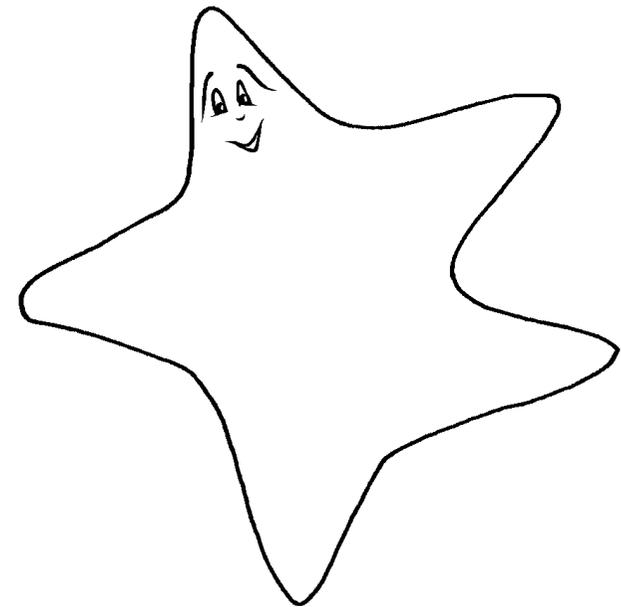
Negative feelings are reflected in exactly the same way as positive emotions. If we are rude and nasty to people then they are likely to be the same back. All that negativity is bound to make us feel awful.

*Don't waste your energy
with hatred and bitterness
towards those doing wrong.
Fate will catch up with them
before too long.*

Rest assured that we end up paying for our sins. Those doing wrong deserve pity, not hatred, for theirs is a guaranteed path to despair. All the misery they cause others will at some time return to them.

Even if for purely pragmatic reasons you want people to like you, be genuine, happy, friendly and caring.

Not only will you be well liked, you will feel great and have a terrific time.

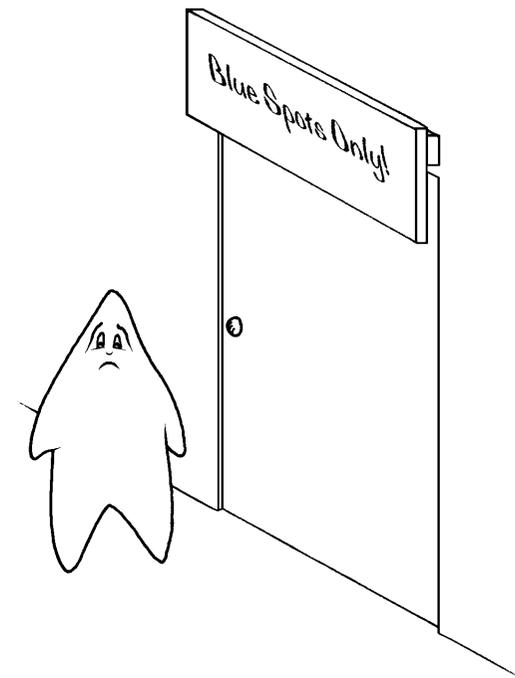


*Objectiveness &
Religion*

We do not have the right to assume superiority over other people or creatures.

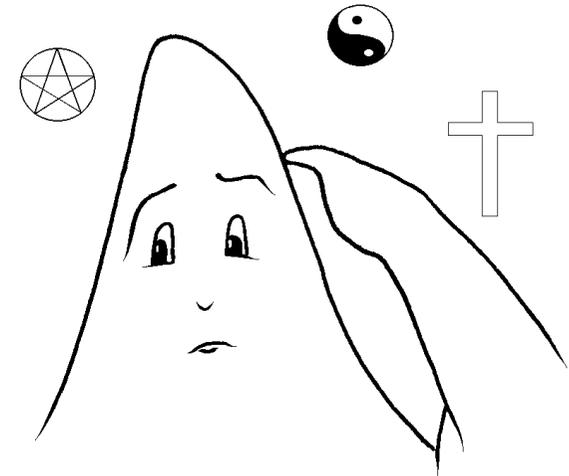
All life is valuable and worthy of our respect be it human or small and fluffy.

To assume superiority based on species, religion, race, gender, skin colour or some other arbitrary classification makes no more sense than making judgements about someone based on their shoe size.



Many religions postulate that they represent the absolute truth. They can't all be right.

Understand that our beliefs are subjective, and although they feel very true to us, they are not necessarily any more or less valid than anyone else's. Unless we fully understand someone else's beliefs, how can we objectively state that they are any less valid than ours?



*Do not use religion to
justify action. Just
because others believe it
to be right does not make
it right.*

Something we know in our heart is wrong, is wrong whether our religion condones it or not. We are free to make our own moral choices.

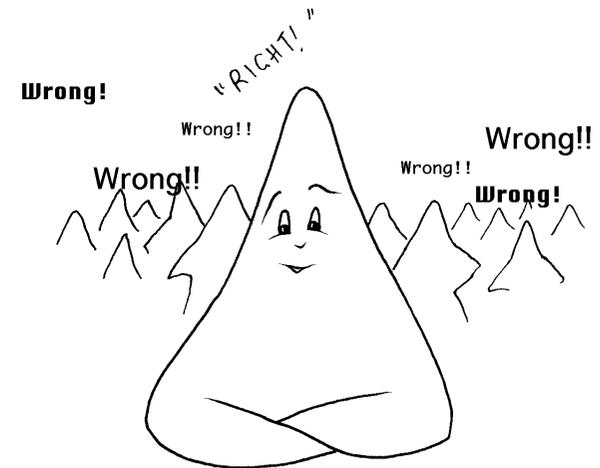
Beliefs of others should be respected and in situations of conflict, understand that the person opposite you feels just as passionate and "right" about their beliefs as you do.

If we are passionate about our beliefs we “know” they are true. Others with an entirely different set of beliefs “know” their beliefs are true also. They understand only too well how we feel about our beliefs as that is exactly how they feel about theirs.

There is no objective way of telling who is right, so it is best just to accept that others have just as much right to believe what they do as we do.

We are all human and we are all fallible. It is best to try and learn why other's believe what they do rather than assume we are right.

Who are we to judge the beliefs of others and say they are wrong?



*Destiny &
Opportunity*

*Don't expect life to deliver
you opportunities. You need
to make them happen.*

If you wish to be successful, you must make your own opportunities. Don't expect things to fall in your lap.

*You are someone very special.
There is no one else like you
in the world. Go out and
fulfil your dreams because
only you can do it.*

Don't underestimate yourself. You are capable of amazing things and only you have the capacity to fulfil your dreams.

*You are responsible for
where you end up and
how you get there.*

You are the force that drives your life. Have faith in yourself and strive to do your best. You can achieve it, you will achieve it. Now go out there and do it.

