GROUP/PERSONAL INVENTORY

GROUP
1. Are our groups interesting and helpful?

2. Do we encourage everyone to take part in the discussion?

3. Do we stay on the subject without wandering off on personal tangents?

4. Are we forming into cliques and not paying attention to other group members?

5. As a group, are we open to having new group members? Do we explain to them the group rules?

PERSONAL
6. Do I make it a point to welcome new members and talk with them?

7. Do I interrupt another group member who is taking time?

8. Am I an active and supportive group member?

9. Do I criticize others in the group, or gossip about them?

10. Is it difficult for me to realize that my point of view may not always be right? Can I accept disagreement good-naturedly?
11. Do I offer ideas for the improvement of group?

12. Do I use telephone therapy to help myself and other group members?

13. Do I carry on a side conversation while somebody is speaking?

14. Do I really take part in group, or do I just sit and listen?

15. Do I use group as a place just to come and get out of class?
TITLE: Rate Your Personality

OBJECTIVE: To identify one's primary personality traits.

PROCEDURE: Instruct students to read the handout. It should be pointed out that the corresponding word in row two is an antonym of the word in the first row. After the students have read the words, have them circle the number as to where they see themselves in regards to the specific traits. When they have accomplished this task, have them connect the numbers vertically. With the completion of this task, the students can see where their primary personality traits are. Ask the students to identify one or two traits that they would like to work on to improve. Discuss this exercise with them.

MATERIALS: Handout on "Rate Your Personality" and a pencil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composed</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5 6</th>
<th>Nervous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>Depressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Social</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive-responsive</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
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<td>Secure</td>
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<td>Insecure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sober</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>Active User</td>
</tr>
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</table>
TITLE: What Would You Most Like to Be Remembered For?

OBJECTIVE: To take a look at personal values and to identify the values we regard to be most important.

PROCEDURE: Instruct the student to read the handout and rate three things that they would most like to be remembered for. Discuss the answers with the students.

MATERIALS: Handout on "What Would You Most Like to Be Remembered For," and pencil

WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED FOR?

___ A good student
___ Successfully employed
___ Religious
___ Concerned about others
___ Open-minded
___ Creative
___ Wealthy
___ Coöperative
___ "Being my own person"
___ Easygoing
___ Dependable
___ Happy
___ Sober
___ Other (Explain)
**TITLE:** Which Words Describe You Best

**OBJECTIVE:** To provide an opportunity for group members to disclose their view of themselves to other group members and to receive feedback on how the other group members perceive them.

**PROCEDURE:** Group members circle six words they think are most descriptive of themselves. Each member then shares with the group the adjectives he or she circled. Members of the group provide feedback to the person by telling what adjective they would have checked if they were to describe him/her.

**MATERIALS:** Handout on "Which Words Describe You Best" and a pencil

### WHICH WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST

| unforgiving | thoughtless | boring |
| sharing     | caring      | out-going |
| easily-approached | shy | attentive |
| easily hurt | demanding | opinionated |
| good natured | interested | easy going |
| selfish     | cold | easily led |
| serious     | loyal | concerned |
| talkative   | affectionate | aggressive |
| dependent   | trusting | generous |
| argumentative | fun-loving | independent |
| moody       | dependable | compromising |
| interesting | reserved | likeable |
| truthful    | selfish | unpredictable |
| humorous    | indifferent | sensitive |
| dynamic     | stand-offish | loud |
| quiet       | competitive | proud |
| tall        | short | bossy |
| petite      | mean | happy |
| well-built  | mouthy | creative |
| nervous     | dependent | sloppy |
| kind        | sympathetic | ||
EVERYDAY PRESSURES

Discussion Statements:

1. Everyone must deal with pressures, conflicts, and tensions.

2. We are responsible for how we view life. We are responsible for our behavior . . . for the way we react to other people. We are responsible for and can control our own attitudes.

3. When we feel put down or pressured by others . . . when one of our "buttons" is pushed . . . we often fight back. This is usually the beginning of a push/push back cycle, and the put-down which is a common part of our culture.

4. "Stuffing" feelings doesn't help us cope with problems. We need to learn how to let go of pressure and stop the push/push back cycle.

5. By taking the pressure off, we are making possible cooperation and good feelings for everyone concerned. The person who takes the pressure off is the responsible individual, setting the new direction.

6. We cannot change other people, we can change our attitudes toward them. Changing our reactions to others does not mean we approve of their actions or agree with their ideas.
7. It is often necessary in dealing with another person to ask ourselves, "What relationship would I like to have? How do I want to feel when I'm with that person? Are there some attitudes I have which would be good for me to change?"

8. It is helpful to wish others well. It is also important to wish ourselves well. The "put-up" (not put-down) way is an attitude we can develop. Another way of saying "put-up" is saying I will try to find ways of giving more "warm fuzzies" to people.

EVERYDAY PRESSURES HANDOUT

WHEN I AM...

_____ Being bullied
I cope by ....

_____ The center of attention
I cope by ....

_____ Conforming to standards of others
I cope by ....

_____ Late
I cope by ....

_____ Accepting praise
I cope by ....

_____ Meeting a schedule set by others
I cope by ....

_____ Meeting my own schedule
I cope by ....

_____ Accepting criticism
I cope by ....

_____ Feeling awkward
I cope by ....

_____ Accepting responsibility
I cope by ....

_____ Feeling self-confident
I cope by ....

_____ Embarrassed
I cope by ....

_____ Showing affection
I cope by ....

_____ Being put down by others
I cope by ....

_____ Dealing with lack of consideration by others
I cope by ....

_____ Handling angry feelings
I cope by ....

_____ Taking on too many responsibilities
I cope by ....

_____ Being offered drugs
I cope by ....
TEN WAYS TO AVOID STRESS

1. Feeling healthy is always a good place to start. This means consistent eating, sleeping, and exercise habits. Remember, exercise enhances rather than drains your energy.

2. Organize your time, set priorities, and don't waste a lot of time and energy on small problems. Most of what you worry about never comes to pass anyway. Figure out what part of the day you're most productive, and save your essential tasks for then.

3. Expect to succeed in whatever you do, and celebrate your successes.

4. Find a creative outlet. Working with your hands does wonders for relaxation.

5. Learn relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or stretching tensed muscles. Develop your imagination; and when the going gets rough, go to your favorite spot in your mind.

6. Keep your surroundings at home clean and pleasing to the senses so that you enjoy being there.

7. Communicate, don't alienate. Have friends with whom you can share burdens rather than keeping them inside yourself. Tell your friends how much you value your relationship and when necessary, break the ice and apologize.

8. Avoid saying to yourself, "I can't wait until my troubles are over," because life's struggles never end. Just realize that no problem is too big to handle, and then seek to discover what your struggles can teach you.
9. Learn how to love others. Transcend that ego of yours — not an easy task with a "Look-out-for-Number One" attitude. Get outside yourself and do something nice for someone else. Don't be so keen on getting your point across and winning all the time. Rid yourself of rigidity and pride, and give in once in a while.

10. Finally, know yourself. Live consistently with your goals, values, and beliefs. Keep your conscience clean because the major source of stress is doing or saying something that doesn't jibe with your inner code. But when there is inconsistency, try a little forgiveness. You won't be sorry you did!
Some Characteristics of People Who Enjoy Life

OBJECTIVE: To become more aware of how people can enjoy life.

PROCEDURE: 1. Read handout aloud.
2. Group members share the items they are presently practicing. Also, they should try to gain insights into personality traits they can work on to make their lives more enjoyable.

MATERIALS: Handout on "Some Characteristics of People Who Enjoy Life"

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE WHO ENJOY LIFE

I. They feel comfortable about themselves:

- are not bowled over by their own emotions — by their fears, anger, love, jealousy, guilt, or worries
- take life's disappointments in stride
- have a tolerant, easy-going attitude towards themselves as well as others; they can laugh at themselves
- neither underestimate nor overestimate their abilities
- accept their own shortcomings
- have a good level of self-respect
- feel able to deal with most situations that come their way
- get satisfaction from simple, everyday pleasures

II. They feel right about other people:

- are able to give love and to consider the interests of others
- have personal relationships that are satisfying and lasting
- expect to like and trust others, and take it for granted that others will like and trust them
- respect the many differences they find in people
- do not push people around, nor do they allow themselves to be pushed around
- feel they are part of a group
- feel an appropriate sense of responsibility to their neighbors and fellow humans

III. They are able to meet the demands of life:

- do something about their problems as they arise
- accept their responsibilities
- shape their environment whenever possible; adjust to it whenever necessary
- plan ahead, but do not fear the future
- welcome new experiences and new ideas
- make use of their natural capacities
- set realistic goals for themselves
- think for themselves and make their own decisions when necessary
- put their best effort into what they do and get satisfaction out of doing it

(Adapted from a National Association for Mental Health list of characteristics of people with good mental health.)
TITLE: Praise — What Do I Do With It?

OBJECTIVE: To learn how to accept praise and understand one's self in regard to accepting praise.

PROCEDURE: Hand out the sheet on "Praise." Ask students to read this. Discuss the material and ask students to identify their own patterns of giving and receiving praise.

MATERIALS: Handout entitled "Praise — What Do I Do With It?"

PRAISE — WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?

Definition

What is praise?

"Nice work, you've done a fine job."

"You're a good boy."

"That painting of yours is excellent."

These are examples of praise.

What are the problems with praise?

Watch people answering to praise. Don't they usually seem to be reacting with discomfort, uneasiness, and defensiveness? Notice that a very common response is something like:

"I really can't take the credit for it."

"You're just saying that."
"Well, we like it."

"I like yours, too."

"Well, I do the best I can."

The one thing that these statements have in common is that they are all defensive reactions—efforts to cope with the difficult situation. Praise a house or garden and its owner hastens to point out its defects; praise a student for a project and he/she is quick to play down his/her role in it. Under the stress of praise, some people often become uncomfortable.

Why do people react to praise with defensiveness?

Check yourself when you give or receive praise:

- How do you feel when you receive praise?
- What do you do and say in response to it?
- How do you feel when you give praise?
- What are you trying to accomplish by it?

Another experiment, perhaps even more telling, is to accept the praise offered to you just as it seems to be intended. That is, the next time some praise comes your way indicating that the praiser wants you to believe you are competent, or good, or smart, or attractive, show him/her that you accept this evaluation of you by simply saying, "Thank you."
TITLE: Just for Today

OBJECTIVE: To take an insightful look at our individuality as unique human beings.

PROCEDURE: Read the handout, "Just for Today," out loud in the group. Discuss handout with the students. Also have students answer the question, "Why are you a worthwhile human being?"

MATERIALS: Handout entitled "Just for Today"

JUST FOR TODAY

JUST FOR TODAY ... Say that all people are, in fact, fantastic and capable and worthwhile!

JUST FOR TODAY ... Talk to myself in different ways about a big dislike.

JUST FOR TODAY ... Talk to myself and others in ways I like.

JUST FOR TODAY ... Say what I dislike and drop it.

JUST FOR TODAY ... Reinforce behaviors that I like.

JUST FOR TODAY ... Say that it's okay for other people to dislike what I like.

JUST FOR TODAY ... Get rid of a dislike without getting rid of the person!

JUST FOR TODAY ... Say that I have never made a mistake in my life. It's just what I and others have learned to dislike.
I, ____(name)____, take myself as a PERFECT, CHANGING, NEW stranger, every minute, every second!

I take myself as a CAPABLE, CARING, FANTASTIC person!

I take myself as TOTALLY WORTHWHILE, with no proof!

I take myself as a WARM, LOVING survivor, who can reinforce and be reinforced!

I now pronounce myself truly AMAZING! I am at peace with myself; I want to share myself with others!
ROLE PLAYING

Role playing is fun. We have all enjoyed it at one time or another, as we act out a joke, mimic someone we know, or use it in group games. Role playing helps students focus on their own experiences. They can also see that other students have experiences and perceptions both similar to and different from their own. Role playing helps students explore new strategies for conflict management. Students not only act out their own conflict experiences, but they learn from the others about new alternatives and strategies that can be applied to the original conflict.

The following are introductions to conflict situations. The students can role play each conversation and how it might continue and then return to that situation and role play what could be said to reduce the conflict.

CONFLICT #1

Statement 1: Son to Mother

"Can I go to the store with some friends?"

Response to Statement #1: Mother to Son

"You know I don't like you hanging around stores. Who knows what kind of trouble you could get into."
CONFLICT #2

Statement 2: Son to Parent

"Why can't I stay up and watch the late movie? Everybody else does."

Response to Statement 2: Parent to Son

"I don't care what everybody else does—you live in this family."

CONFLICT #3

Statement 3: Mother to Daughter

"Do you have to wear jeans to school? You look so sloppy!"

Response to Statement 3: Daughter to Mother

"You always complain about what I do. Just once I wish you could let me do what I want."

CONFLICT #4

Statement 4: Daughter to Father

"Can I go to the school party Friday?"

Response to Statement 4: Father to Daughter

"After what you pulled last week! You will be lucky to ever go anywhere again."
TITLE: Ten Irrational Ideas

OBJECTIVE: To recognize the folly of irrational behavior.

PROCEDURE: Read and discuss "Ten Irrational Ideas" and "Dictionary."

MATERIAL: Handout on "Irrational Ideas"

TEN IRRATIONAL IDEAS

1. I must have love and approval from all the important people in my life.

2. I must be the best in all areas or at least have some great talent.

3. People who act like jerks are evil, wicked, or rotten people.

4. When things go wrong, it's the end of my life.

5. I have no control over my feelings, I can't change them.

6. If something seems dangerous, I have to worry myself to death about it.

7. Because I made mistakes in my past, I'm never going to be O.K.

8. The easy way out in life is to ignore my responsibilities.

9. If things don't turn out better than they do, then it's awful.

10. I can become very happy by doing nothing, being "laid back" and just having a good time.
Dictionary:

**Acting-Out** — Holding feelings inside which come often from irrational thoughts, then taking these feelings out on someone else like a parent, sister or brother, or friend. Sometimes property is damaged too.

**Depression** — Commonly known as "stuffing." Not dealing with our feelings honestly.

**Happening** — An event which we experience either directly or indirectly.

**Thinking** — The way we respond in thought to the happening.

**Feeling** — The emotion we feel after we think about the event.

**Action** — How we behave after we begin to feel the emotion.
TITLE: Reacting to a Reading

OBJECTIVE: To gain new insights by sharing reactions to a poem, essay, etc.

PROCEDURE: The facilitator or another group member reads the selection and then solicits comments, reactions, application to own life, etc., from other group members.

MATERIALS: Student handout of the day's selection.

EXERCISE IN OWNING MY "WANTS"
"WANTS" ARE OKAY

Basic Needs and Wants of Youth

I want to be loved.

I want to be recognized as a person.

I want to be trusted.

I want to be accepted.

Total rejection is hell.
Rejection or deprivation of acceptance leads to deep psychological and emotional problems.

I want to be listened to.

We all tend to be great on giving advice without listening to the problem. But, oh, the pain of not listening.
I want to be forgiven.

I want to say I'm sorry.

I want to learn how to forgive others and myself.

I want authority and discipline. (Certain limits and restrictions)

I want a faith. (Viable philosophy of life; something I can believe in.) Something that will give me purpose, meaning, peace of mind, a challenge, something I can sacrifice for and deny myself for. The answers to my questions on life, a reason for being alive, a reason to motivate me, to give me hope.

I want to feel good about my relationships with those around me.

I want to be able to better express my feelings and emotions.

I want to understand myself better; accept myself better.

I want to be able to contribute.

I want to not hurt others.
JUST FOR TODAY

Just for today I will try to live through this day only, and not set far-reaching goals to try to overcome all my problems at once. I know I can do something for 12 hours that would appall me if I felt I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

Just for today I will try to be happy. Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds up to be." He was right. I will not dwell on thoughts that depress me. I will chase them out of my mind and replace them with happy thoughts.

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is. I will face reality. I will try to change those things that I can change and accept those things I cannot change.

Just for today I will try to improve my mind. I will not be a mental loafer. I will force myself to read something that requires effort, thought, and concentration.

Just for today I will do a good deed for somebody without letting him know it. (If he or she finds out I did it, it won't count.)

Just for today I will do something positive to improve my health. If I am a smoker, I'll make an honest effort to cut down. If I am overweight, I'll eat nothing I know is fattening. And I will force myself to exercise - even if it's only walking around the block or using the stairs instead of the elevator.

Just for today I will be totally honest. If someone asks me something I don't know, I will not try to bluff. I will simply say, "I don't know."

Just for today I will do something I've been putting off for a long time. I will finally write that letter, make that phone call, clean that closet, or straighten out those dresser drawers.

Just for today before I speak I'll ask myself, "Is it true?" "Is it kind?" And if the answer to either of those questions is negative I won't say it.

Just for today I will make a conscious effort to be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress becomingly, talk softly, act courteously, and not interrupt when someone else is talking.
Just for today I will not try to improve anybody except myself.

Just for today I will have a program. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it, thereby saving myself from two pests: hurry and indecision.

Just for today I will have a quiet half-hour to relax alone. During this time, I will reflect on my behavior and will try to get a better perspective on my life.

Just for today I will be unafraid. I will gather the courage to do what is right and take the responsibility for my own actions. I will expect nothing from the world, but I will realize that as I give to the world, the world will give to me.
LET GO...

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's the realization 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's 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 destinies

to "let go" is not to be protective, it's 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 correct them

to "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes and
         cherish myself in it

to "let go" is not to criticize and regulate anybody, 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 for the future

to "let go" is to fear less and love more.
MY DECLARATION OF SELF-ESTEEM

I am me.

In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me, but no one adds up exactly like me. Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine, because I alone chose it.

I own everything about me — my body, including everything it does; my mind, including all its thoughts and ideas; my eyes, including the images of all they behold; my feelings, whatever they may be — anger, joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement; my mouth, and all the words that come out of it — polite, sweet or rough, correct or incorrect; my voice, loud or soft; and all my actions, whether they are to others or to myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears.
I own all my triumphs and successes, and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. By so doing, I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts, I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interests.

I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know. But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment and time is me. It is authentic and represents me at that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting. I can discard that which is unfitting, and keep that which proved fitting, and invent something new for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me, and therefore I can engineer me.
THE MASK

Please hear what I am not saying.
Don't be fooled by me.
Don't be fooled by the face I wear.
For I wear a thousand masks, masks that I am afraid to take off,
And none of them is me.
Pretending is an art that is second nature with me but don't be fooled,
For God's sake don't be fooled.
I give the impression that I am secure, that all is sunny and unruffled with me, within as
well as without, that confidence is my name and coolness my game, that the water is
calm and I'm in command, and that I need no one.
Please don't believe me.
Please.

My surface may seem smooth, but my surface is my mask.
Beneath this lies no complacency.
Beneath dwells the real me in confusion, in fear and aloneness.
But I hide this, I don't want anybody to know it.
I panic at the thought of my weakness and fear of being exposed.
That's why I frantically create a mask to hide behind, a nonchalant, sophisticated facade,
to help me pretend, to shield me from the glance that knows.
But such a glance is precisely my salvation.
My only salvation and I know it.
That is if it is followed by acceptance, if it's followed by love,
It's the only thing that will assure me of what I can't assure myself,
That I am worth something.

But I don't tell you this, I don't dare.
I'm afraid to.
I'm afraid your glance will not be followed by acceptance and love.
I'm afraid you'll think less of me, that you'll laugh at me, and your laugh would kill me.
I'm afraid that deep-down I'm nothing, that I'm no good, and that you will see this and
reject me.
So I play my game, my desperate game, with a facade of assurance without,
And a trembling child within.
And so begins the parade of masks
And my life becomes a front.

I idly chatter to you in the suave tones of surface talk.
I tell you everything that is really nothing, and nothing of what is everything.
Of what's crying within me; so when I'm going through my routine do not be fooled by
what I'm saying.
Please listen carefully and try to hear what I'm not saying, what I'd like to be able to say,
what for survival I need to say, but what I can't say.

I dislike the superficial game I'm playing, the phony game.
I'd really like to be genuine and spontaneous, and me, but you've got to help me.
You've got to hold out your hand, even when that's the last thing I seem to want.
Only you can wipe away from my eyes the blank stare of breathing death.
Only you can call me into aliveness.
Each time you're kind and gentle, and encouraging, each time you try to understand
because you really care,
My heart begins to grow wings, very small wings, very feeble wings, but wings
With your sensitivity and sympathy, and your power of understanding,
You can breathe life into me.
I want you to know that.
I want you to know how important you are to me, how you can be creator of the person
that is me if you choose to.
Please choose to, you alone can break down the wall, behind which I tremble.
You alone can remove my mask.
You alone can release me from my shadow-world of panic and uncertainty, from my lonely
person.
Do not pass me by.
Please . . . . . do not pass me by.

It will not be easy for you.
A long conviction of worthlessness builds strong walls.
The nearer you approach me, the blinder I strike back.
I fight against the very thing I cry out for.
But I'm told that love is stronger than walls, and in this lies my hope.
Please try to beat down those walls with firm hands, but with gentle hands for a child is
very sensitive.
Who am I, you may wonder.
I am someone you know very well.
For I am every man you meet, and I am every woman you meet.

Author Unknown
GROWTH
Unknown Author

After a while you learn
the subtle difference
between holding a hand
and chaining a soul.
And you learn
that love doesn't mean leaning
and company doesn't mean security.
And you begin to learn
that kisses aren't contracts
and presents aren't promises.
And you begin to accept your defeats
with your head up and your eyes ahead
with the grace of a woman or a man
not the grief of a child,
and learn to build all your roads on today
because tomorrow's ground is
too uncertain for plans
and futures have a way of falling down
in mid-flight.
After a while you learn
that even sunshine burns if you ask too much.
So you plant your own garden
and decorate your own soul
instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers.
And you learn
that you really can endure
that you really are strong
that you really do have worth.
And you learn
and you learn
with every goodbye
you learn ....

-123-
THE ART OF BEING HUMAN
by Leo Buscaglia

Nobody teaches you the most essential thing - about life.

Don't live without knowing rapture.

You are uniquely something that will never occur again.

All growth involves risk.

Live nutty - just occasionally - just once in a while.

Because you are human - you are magic. Turn the mundane into magic.

There's nobody better or worse than you are.

Live the now. Life is a wonderful series of nows.

Don't be a professional collector.

There is so much togetherness but we're still dying of loneliness.

You cannot give to anyone what you don't have yourself.

Most of us die before we have lived.

The opposite of love is not hate - its apathy.

Value every moment as if it was your last.

If you have nothing - you have nothing to worry about.

If you are bored - it's probably because you are boring as hell.

No one will get out of this world alive.

We have a fetish for perfection. Try not to be so perfect.

Life with all its wonder is God's gift to us. What you do with it, is your gift to God.
THE PERSON IN THE GLASS

When you get what you want in your struggle for self
And the world makes you king for a day,
Just go to a mirror and look at yourself,
And see what THAT person has to say.

For it isn't your father or mother or wife
Who judgment upon you must pass;
The person whose judgment counts most in your life
Is the person staring back from the glass.

Some people may think you're a straight-shootin' chum
And call you a wonderful guy,
But the person in the glass says you're only a bum
If you can't look him straight in the eye.

He's the person to please, never mind all the rest
And he's with you clear up to the end,
And you've passed your most dangerous difficult test
If the person in the glass is your friend.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years
And get pats on the back as you pass,
But your final reward will be heartaches and tears
If you've cheated the person in the glass.
I'm special. In all the world, there is nobody like me.

Since the beginning of time, there has never been another person like me. Nobody has my smile. Nobody has my eyes, my nose, my hair, my hands, my voice. I'm special.

No one can be found who has my handwriting.

Nobody anywhere has my taste; for food or music or art. No one sees things just as I do.

In all of the time there has been no one who laughs like me, no one who cries like me. And what makes me laugh and cry will never provoke identical laughter and tears from anybody else, ever.

No one reacts to any situation just as I would react. I'm special.

I'm the only one in all of creation who has my set of abilities. Oh, there will always be somebody who is better at one of the things I'm good at, but no one in the universe can reach the quality of my combination of talents, ideas, abilities, and feelings. Like a room full of musical instruments some may excel alone, but none can match the symphony sound when all are played together. I'm a symphony.

Through all of eternity no one will ever look, talk, walk, think, or do like me. I'm special. I'm rare.

And, as in all rarity, there is a great value.

Because of my great rare value, I need not attempt to imitate others. I will accept - yes, celebrate, my differences.

I'm special. And I'm beginning to realize it's no accident that I'm special. I'm beginning to see that I was made for a very special purpose. There must be a job for me that no one else can do as well as I. Out of all of the billions of applicants, only one is qualified, only one has the unique combination of what it takes.

That one is me. Because... I'm special.
WINNERS VS. LOSERS

The WINNER is always a part of the answer.
The LOSER is always a part of the problem.

The WINNER always has a program.
The LOSER always has an excuse.

The WINNER says "Let me do it for you."
The LOSER says "That's not my job."

The WINNER sees an answer for every problem.
The LOSER sees a problem in every answer.

The WINNER sees a green near every sand trap.
The LOSER sees two or three sand traps near every green.

The WINNER says "It may be difficult but it's possible."
The LOSER says "It may be possible but it's too difficult."

BE A WINNER!

LIVE EACH DAY TO THE FULLEST

Live each day to the fullest. Get the most from each hour, each day and each age of your life. Then you can look forward with confidence and back without regrets. . . .

. . . Be yourself, but be your best self. Dare to be different and to follow your own star.

And don't be afraid to be happy. Enjoy what is beautiful. Love with all your heart and soul. Believe that those you love, love you.

Forget what you have done for your friends, and remember what they have done for you. Disregard what the world owes you, and concentrate on what you owe the world.

When you are faced with a decision, make that decision as wisely as possible, then forget it. The moment of absolute certainty never arrives.

And above all, remember God helps those who help themselves. Act as if everything depended on you, and pray as if everything depends on God.

S. H. Payer